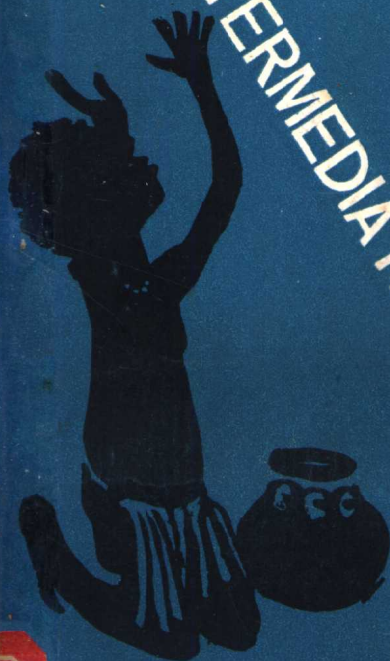


INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH READERS



世界优秀故事选

中级英语读物丛书



中 级 英 语 读 物 丛 书

World's Best Stories

**世界优秀故事选(下)**

尹晓煌 宋文伟 选注

江 苏 人 民 出 版 社

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## 编 者 的 话

为了帮助高中学生以及具有同等英语程度的读者较快地学好英语，我们特编辑《中级英语读物》丛书，由江苏人民出版社分辑出版。内容包括：《世界优秀故事选》、《英语幽默及语言游戏》、《英美名诗选》、《现代英语散文选》、《国外英语课文选》、《外国寓言童话选》、《外国神话与传说》、《英语科普小品选》以及《英语国家概况》等。选材不求系统、全面，主要是向读者提供一些英语注释读物，作为学习英语的辅助材料。

本辑《世界优秀故事选》(下)精选了英、美、德、日、俄等国的八篇故事，其中有的出自世界著名文学家托尔斯泰的手笔，有的是英、美名作家奥尔科特、艾琪渥斯等的优秀作品，还有的是一些国家中广为流传的民间传说和神话。

这些作品有的歌颂了劳动人民勤劳正直、舍己救人的崇高品质；有的赞扬了少年拾金不昧、纯朴善良的高尚思想；有的讴歌了青年人忠贞不渝的纯洁爱情；有的描述了机智勇敢、不畏强暴的斗争精神；还有的揭露了资本主义社会的黑暗以及金钱支配一切的罪恶。入选的作品文笔优美生动，语言浅近易懂，有助于读者丰富英语知识，提高阅读能力。为了便于读者了解作品内容，我们对文中出现的难句及某些语言现象加了必要的注释，对某些作家作了简要介绍，并对作品作了扼要提示。

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## THE TIDAL WAVE

MANY long years ago there lived in Japan an old man called Hamaguchi.<sup>1</sup> He was a person of consequence in the village to which he belonged,<sup>2</sup> and the villagers liked him as much as they respected him. His big thatched farmhouse stood at the verge of a small plateau overlooking a bay.<sup>3</sup> All round were rice fields hemmed in on three sides by thickly wooded hills.<sup>4</sup> In front of the house the ground sloped away to the sea in green terraces like an enormous flight of green steps,<sup>5</sup> divided in the centre by a zigzag white streak of mountain road<sup>6</sup>. Ninety thatched cottages and a Shinto temple<sup>7</sup> stood along the curve of the bay, while other houses straggled up the slope on either side of the narrow road leading to Hamaguchi's home.

One autumn evening Hamaguchi was alone on the balcony<sup>8</sup> of his house, looking down at the villagers below, for there was a merry-making afoot<sup>9</sup> to celebrate the harvest of the rice crop. The old man could see the banners fluttering above the roofs, the strings of paper lanterns festooned between bamboo

poles,<sup>10</sup> and the gay clothes of the young people.

The day had been very hot and sultry, and in spite of a rising breeze the heat still hung heavily in the air. It was that sort of heavy heat which in Japan, at certain seasons of the year, gives warning of an earthquake. Hamaguchi felt a tremor beneath his feet<sup>11</sup>. It was not strong enough to frighten him, but somehow he thought it queer<sup>12</sup>—a long, slow, spongy motion<sup>13</sup>. The house crackled and rocked gently several times,<sup>14</sup> then all became still again.

As the quaking ceased, Hamaguchi's keen old eyes<sup>15</sup> were anxiously turned towards the village. Suddenly he became aware of something unusual far off where the sea and sky met<sup>16</sup>. He rose to his feet and looked at the sea. It had darkened rapidly. It seemed to be moving against the wind. *It was running away from the land*<sup>17</sup>. Things never seen before were laid bare before the old man's startled gaze, unfamiliar spaces of ribbed sand and reaches of weed-hung rock.<sup>18</sup> And as he stared, Hamaguchi understood the terrifying significance of that monstrous ebb<sup>19</sup>. He turned and called loudly to his grandson—

"Tada<sup>20</sup>—quick! Bring a brand from the hearth."

The lad ran and kindled a pine torch and brought it to his grandfather. Hamaguchi seized it and hurried to the rice fields. Quickly he passed from stack to

stack, thrusting the blazing brand into the ripe, dry rice where it stood. The sundried stalks caught like tinder;<sup>21</sup> the sea breeze blew the blaze landwards; rank behind rank the stacks burst into flame, sending skyward columns of smoke that met and mingled in one enormous cloudy whirl.<sup>22</sup> Tada, astonished and terrified, ran after his grandfather, crying—

“Grandfather! Grandfather! What are you doing?”

But Hamaguchi did not answer; he had no time to explain—he was thinking only of the four hundred lives in peril<sup>23</sup>. For a while the boy stared wildly at the blazing rice, then burst into tears and ran back to the house, feeling sure that his grandfather had gone mad. In the meantime the big bell in the Shinto temple boomed the alarm<sup>24</sup>.

Hamaguchi watched the people hurrying in from the sands and over the beach, and up from the village, like a swarming of ants<sup>25</sup>, and, to his anxious eyes, scarcely faster, for the moments seemed terribly long to him. The sun was going down, the wrinkled bed of the bay, and a vast sallow, speckled expanse beyond it<sup>26</sup>, lay naked to the last orange glow,<sup>27</sup> and still the sea was fleeing toward the horizon.

All the village was coming, and Hamaguchi counted. The young men and boys were soon on the spot, and not a few of the more active women and girls.



Then came most of the older folk — mothers with babies at their backs, and children, and the elders, too feeble to keep up with the first rush, <sup>28</sup> could be seen well on their way up the steep ascent. The growing multitude, <sup>29</sup> still knowing nothing, looked alternately, in sorrowful wonder, at the flaming fields and at the impassive face of Hamaguchi.

And the sun went down.

"Grandfather is mad—I am afraid of him!" sobbed Tada in answer to a number of questions. "He is mad. He set fire to the rice on purpose. <sup>30</sup> I saw him do it!"

"The child tells the truth," cried Hamaguchi. "I set fire to the rice. ... Are all the people here?" Then, shouting at the top of his voice, he pointed to the open. "Say now if I be mad!" <sup>31</sup>

Through the twilight eastward all <sup>32</sup> looked, and saw at the edge of the dusky horizon a long, lean, dim line like the shadowing of a coast <sup>33</sup> where no coast ever was—a line that thickened as they gazed, that broadened as a coast-line broadens to the eyes of one approaching it, yet incomparably more quickly <sup>34</sup>. For that long darkness was the returning sea, towering like a cliff, and coursing more swiftly than the kite flies.

The people shrieked in terror as the colossal

swell smote the shore with a weight that sent a shudder through the hills, and with a foam-burst like a blaze of sheet lightning.<sup>35</sup> For an instant<sup>36</sup> nothing was visible but a storm of spray rushing up the slope like a cloud, then a white horror of sea raving over the place where the village had been. It drew back roaring, and tearing out the bowels of the land<sup>37</sup> as it went. Twice, thrice, five times the sea struck and ebbed;<sup>38</sup> then it returned to its ancient bed



and stayed—still raging, as after a typhoon.

On the plateau for a time there was no word spoken. All stared speechlessly at the desolation beneath—the ghastliness of hurled rock and naked,

riven cliff, the bewilderment of scooped-up deep-sea wrack<sup>39</sup> and shingle shot over the empty site of dwelling and temple. The village was not, the greater part of the fields was not, and of all the homes that had been about the bay there remained nothing recognizable except two straw roofs tossing madly in the offing.<sup>40</sup> In the awed stillness<sup>41</sup> the voice of Hamaguchi was heard—

*"That was why I set fire to the rice."*

He stood among them almost as poor as the poorest, for his wealth was gone<sup>42</sup>—but he had saved four hundred lives by the sacrifice. Little Tada ran to him and caught his hand, and asked forgiveness for having said naughty things.<sup>43</sup> At this the people woke from their stupor and, with tears of gratitude, flung themselves in the dust at Hamaguchi's feet.

Nor did they forget their debt when better times came. They would have made the old man rich, but he would not suffer them to do so. So they declared him a god, and built a temple in his honour, bearing upon the front of it a tablet with his name inscribed thereon in letters of gold.<sup>44</sup> How Hamaguchi felt about it I cannot say, I know only that he continued to live in his old thatched home upon the hill with his children and his children's children, just as humanly and simply as before, while his soul was being

worshipped in the shrine below. 45

A hundred years and more have gone by since these things came to pass, but the temple, they tell me, still stands, and the people still pray to the ghost of the good old farmer to help them in time of trouble and distress. 46

Adapted from *Gleanings in Buddha-Fields*,  
by Lafcadio Hearn.

〔注 释〕

1. Hamaguchi; 日本人名, 汉译为“滨口”。
2. He was a person...he belonged; 他在村子里深孚众望。a person of consequence; 举足轻重的人, 威望很高的人。
3. His big thatched farmhouse...overlooking a bay; 他的宽敞的茅屋坐落在一片小高地的边缘, 这片小高地俯视着海湾。  
overlooking a bay; 现在分词短语作定语, 修饰 “a small plateau”。
4. All round were rice fields...by thickly wooded hills; 周围三面环绕着稻田和林木葱郁的山丘。这是一句倒装句, 因主语太长, 所以把表语 “all round” 调到了句首。
5. ...the ground sloped away...flight of green steps; 青翠的山坡向着大海倾斜, 好象一段巨大的绿色台阶。slope away to: 向……倾斜。
6. ...a zigzag white streak of mountain road; 一条蜿蜒曲折玉带似的山路。
7. Shinto temple; 日本的神道教庙宇。
8. balcony; 平台, 阳台。
9. ...there was a merry-making afoot; 那儿一片欢乐的气氛。

afoot; adv. 在……之中。

10. ...the strings of paper lanterns festooned between bamboo poles; 一串串悬挂在竹竿中间的纸灯笼。
11. ...a tremor beneath his feet; 脚下一阵颤动。
12. ...somehow he thought it queer; 不知怎么地, 他觉得这颤动有点儿奇怪。此处 “it” 和句首的 “it” 都是指前面提到的 “tremor”。
13. spongy motion; 轻轻地弹跳着。
14. ...crackled and rocked gently several times; 微微晃动了几下。
15. keen old eyes; 锐利老练的目光。
16. ...he became aware of ... and sky met; 他察觉到在远方海天相连处有些异常。be(become) aware of; 意识到, 感觉到。
17. *It was running away from the land*; 大海正飞快地退离海岸。此处 “it” 和上两句中的 “it” 都是指大海。
18. ...unfamiliar spaces of ribbed sand and reaches of weed-hung rock; 一片片生疏的条纹状的沙滩和海草丛生的礁岩。
19. ...the terrifying significance of that monstrous ebb; 那异乎寻常的退潮的可怕含意。
20. Tada; 日本人名, 汉译为 “多田”。
21. The sundried stalks caught like tinder; 被太阳晒干了的稻草象引火柴似地燃烧起来。此处的 caught = caught fire.
22. ...that met and mingled in one enormous cloudy whirl; 形成一片巨大的乌云。
23. in peril; 在危急中。
24. boomed the alarm; 轰鸣着发出了巨响。
25. ...like a swarming of ants; 象一窝出巢的蚂蚁。
26. ...a vast sallow, speckled expanse beyond it; 更远处, 辽

阔的海底斑斑点点、一片灰黄。

27. ...lay naked to the last orange glow: 裸露在桔黄色的夕阳余辉下。
28. ...too feeble to keep up with the first rush: 身体太弱了, 赶不上跑在最前面的人。
29. The growing multitude: 越聚越多的人群。
30. on purpose: 故意, 有意。
31. "Say now if I be mad!": “现在你们说我是不是疯了!”  
此处 if = whether. 句中用 “be” 而不是 “am” 是强调其虚拟语气。
32. all: 所有的人。此处 all = all the people.
33. ...a long, lean, dim line like the shadowing of a coast:  
一条细而模糊的长线, 犹如海岸投下的阴影。
34. ...that broadened...yet incomparably more quickly: 这长线渐渐变粗了, 就象人们从海上驶向陆地时看见海岸线逐渐变宽一样, 但变粗的速度快得惊人。这是一个定语从句, 句中 “one” 是人称代词, = a person; “it” 指海岸线; “yet” 在此为并列连词, 后面省去了与前句相同的动词 “broaden”。
35. ...as the colossal swell smote... like a blaze of sheet lightning: 此时, 巨浪以撼山之力猛击着海岸, 溅起的浪花犹如闪电, 划破长空。colossal swell: 汹涌的浪涛。sent a shudder through the hills: 使群山发抖。
36. For an instant: 有一会儿, 等于 for a while.
37. ...tearing out the bowels of the land: 撕裂了大地。tear out: 撕开, 撕掉。the bowels of the land: 地层, 地心。
38. ...the sea struck and ebbbed: 海浪来回撞击着。
39. —the ghastliness of hurled rock...of scooped-up deep-sea wrack: ——巨浪撞击过后的山岩面貌狰狞可怖, 惊涛劈开

- 的峭壁光秃秃地裸露着，陆地上遗留着一片深海植物乱七八糟的残骸。hurled rock: 被……猛烈地冲撞过的岩石；riven cliff: 被……撕裂开的峭壁；bewilderment: n. 混乱的景象，乱糟糟的痕迹；scooped-up: 复合形容词，意为“被……席卷上来的”。
40. ...tossing madly in the offing: 在附近的海面上剧烈地颠簸着。
41. In the awed stillness: 在这令人畏惧的沉寂中。
42. ...his wealth was gone: 他的财产全完了。“be gone”含有“一去不复返”的意思。
43. ...asked forgiveness for having said naughty things: 请求原谅他刚才说的那些令人生气的话。naughty: a. 淘气的，惹人生气的。
44. ...bearing upon the front of it a tablet... in letters of gold: 庙前有一尊石碑，上面用黄金镶着他的名字。
45. ...while his soul was being worshipped in the shrine below: 与此同时，他的塑像在山下的庙里被人们顶礼膜拜着。soul 在此指“替身，塑像”。
46. ...in time of trouble and distress: 在困难和灾难来临的时刻。

〔内容提要〕 这是一篇在日本广为流传的民间故事，它生动地描述了一位年高德劭的老农，如何在海啸突然袭来的危急关头，不惜牺牲自己的全部财产来挽救村里人的性命。此后，他又谢绝了乡亲们的报答，依旧过着俭朴的生活。故事虽短，但却十分感人。

## A CHRISTMAS EVE IN BAVARIA<sup>1</sup>

THE time when home-sickness creeps most over an exiled German is Christmas-tide,<sup>2</sup> Somehow the spirit of child-hood retakes possession of<sup>3</sup> even adult Germans then, and the world becomes to them once more a world of wonder, awe, and above all of sympathy,<sup>4</sup> as it was to them long ago when they were children in the Fatherland<sup>5</sup>. Some time before Christmas Day<sup>6</sup> arrives there is observable much secrecy and bustle<sup>7</sup>, and everybody lays in with his store of good things an extra store of goodwill towards his fellows<sup>8</sup>. The brotherhood and sisterhood of mankind<sup>9</sup> is then more deeply felt, and more nearly realized than at any other time. Sorrow seems to have lost its sting, poverty certainly has, for all combine to put love—human love—into the gifts that are freely distributed in all directions.<sup>10</sup> The Christ Child<sup>11</sup> enters every home, however poor, and the knowledge of this adds greatly to the enjoyment of the festival.

But it is on Christmas Eve, or, as we call it,



Holy Eve, that the Christ Child comes laden with His gifts, Christmas Day itself being more of a religious festival.<sup>12</sup> Thus Christmas Eve is the great event—the evening of all<sup>13</sup> in the year that is the delight of children. Months beforehand they speculate on<sup>14</sup> what the Christ Child will bring them, and months beforehand the parents encourage them to extra obedience—the cardinal German virtue—<sup>15</sup> and they are told, if they are old enough to write, to put on paper all their desires, that the Christ Child may choose amongst them which are to be gratified and which are not. These children take great pains to write out a list in their very best hand;<sup>16</sup> they then give it to their parents, addressed, as a rule, “To the dear Christ Child”, and the belief that their wishes will be granted, or at least some of them, directly by Him<sup>17</sup> is still strong in many children of the sunny south<sup>18</sup>.

About five in the evening the children are dressed in their Sunday clothes, and are kept with some relative or friend in a room not far from the one<sup>19</sup> in which the Christ Child spreads His gifts. They are eager, and yet awed, by the thought of the coming hour. Their excitement is increased by any noise—footsteps, for instance, or the door bell, or the rustling of paper. Dreadfully slowly the time goes.<sup>20</sup>