

英汉对照·英美经典文学丛书

主编 李维光 李华田

# 经典短篇 小说欣赏

文斌 朱卫红 编译

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## 致读者(代序)

《英汉对照·英美经典文学丛书》同广大读者见面了。她凝聚着我们的心血和殷切的期望。

我们期待她能够为我国广大读者展现西方英语文学日新月异的概貌,记录文学精英们开拓进取另辟蹊径的伟大创举,反映人类认识和追求真理的悠悠历程,启发莘莘学子对祖国命运和未来社会的思考。

中国特色的社会主义建设事业是世界文明大道的延伸和拓展。走向世界的中国需要继承全人类的优秀文化遗产,需要具有全球意识的建设者。为了迎接21世纪的巨大机遇与挑战,我国广大的青年朋友正孜孜终日地匍伏于全人类的文化田壤中,以史为镜,洞察未来,开始中华民族的又一次复兴。

英美文学是人类文明成果不可缺少的组成部分,具有较高的思想成就和艺术价值,蕴含着深刻的客观真理和历史的启迪。面向世界,走向世界意味着我们需要勇敢地拥抱世界,忧天下所忧,思人类所思,举人类大业,让中华民族的参天大树挺拔于世界民族之林。在我们前进的征途上,欧美文学的星辰将从不同

的角度和高度为我们送来思想的闪光。西方文明曲折的发展和更迭将使我们更深刻地理解中华民族的伟大和历史地位,将进一步激发我们对祖国,对民族的热爱和义不容辞的责任感。

《英汉对照·英美经典文学丛书》集各种体裁的文学佳作于一身,共分8册,依类别分为:(一)经典散文欣赏;(二)经典诗歌欣赏;(三)经典短篇小说欣赏;(四)经典电影对白欣赏;(五)经典文学故事选粹;(六)经典小品文选粹;(七)经典幽默故事选粹;(八)名人书信选粹。

这套丛书将为青年读者架起通往外国文学宫殿的天桥,是青年朋友漂游西方文学海洋的指南,是莘莘学子了解英美文学的内涵,提高文学修养的必修课。

朋友,在这个充满希望和梦幻的世界,《英美文学精品丛书》向你们走来了。让我们借助文学思想的灵光,肩负着民族的希望,去迎接新世纪的曙光。

**李维光**

1996年8月于武昌

## 前 言

短篇小说就是叙述一个故事。作为一种文学形式,它在19世纪和20世纪初达到鼎盛时期。但作为一种叙述故事的方法,在《圣经》中就已被大量使用。

许多读者都读过短篇小说,但如果要给它下一个定义,却不像想象的那么简单。当然我们可以说短篇小说就是篇幅较短的小说,但其篇幅究竟应短到什么程度,却没有统一的认识。其实,短篇小说既可以是一页,也可以是十几页,甚至一百多页。如果只凭长度,有时我们很难区分长的短篇小说和短的长篇小说。过去有些作家和文学批评家认为衡量短篇小说长度的标准应该是读者能在一个单位时间内将其读完。他们还认为短篇小说应有明显的开端、发展、高潮与结尾。但是,随着时代的发展,这些看法都受到不同程度的冲击。受此影响,现在短篇小说的定义又有了新的发展。有的作家甚至认为短篇小说几乎可以是作家创作的任何作品。

当然,《经典短篇小说欣赏》的的编译者不同意这种偏激的观点。作为一种文学形式,短篇小说应有自己的特点。本书在选材时,尽量做到了把各种不同形式的作品介绍给读者。

此分册有以下几个特点:

一、本书收集的都是名家名作。其目的在于使读者对英美短篇小说的发展及现状有一个粗略的了解。

二、本书的对象是具有中等英语水平的读者,所以选用的大都是较现代的作家作品,目的在于使读者不会因太多的语言障碍而失去信心。

三、编译者在收集材料时尽量选用英美不同时期、不同流派及不同写作风格的作家作品。读者在提高英语阅读水平的同时也能欣赏到英美名家高超的写作技巧。

四、编译者在选材时,尽量突出短篇小说的特点。被选用的作品大都故事性很强,结构紧凑,生动有趣,引人入胜,使读者想一口气把作品读完。

每篇作品之前的导读部分,介绍了作者生平、主要作品及所选作品的概要和写作特点。但欣赏短篇小说与欣赏其它文学作品一样,都是仁者见仁,智者见智。由于读者的生活阅历不同,对作品意义的理解也可能不同。因此,希望读者不要为没能得出和编译者一样的体会而烦恼。另外,我们还希望读者在阅读本书时能先看原文,只把译文作为辅助手段,帮助自己理解原文。

在编译过程中,我们感到最困难的就是作家、作品的取舍和选文篇幅的长短。例如,谁都不会否认爱伦·坡是著名的美国短篇小说家,但选了坡而没选海明威是否合适?而选了坡的《黑猫》而没选《泄密的心》又是否妥当?当然,由于多方面原因,对于许多名家名篇我们不得不忍痛割爱。如果读者对某位作家有特殊的兴趣,可在导读部分的引导下,阅读此作家的其他一些作品,以满足自己的愿望。

该书由华中师范大学英语系李维光教授负责审定,并提出了宝贵意见,谨此致谢。由于编译者水平有限,在选文、导读、译文方面一定还存在不少缺点和错误,希望本书的广大读者提出批评、建议。

编译者

1996年8月



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# 蒙罗先生智斗蝙蝠

詹姆斯·瑟伯 (James Thurber)

## 【导读】

詹姆斯·瑟伯 (1894—1961) 是美国当代作家。瑟伯出生于美国俄亥俄州，哥伦布市。1919 年毕业于俄亥俄州立大学，曾为多家报纸撰稿。1927 至 1933 年任一家新创杂志《纽约人》(*The New Yorker*) 的编辑。瑟伯以其漫画、短篇小说和杂文闻名。主要作品有《顶楼的猫头鹰及其它困惑》(*The Owl in the Attic and Other Perplexities*, 1931), 《卧室里的海豹及其它困境》(*The Seal in the Bedroom and Other Predicaments*, 1932), 《我的生活及艰难世事》(*My Life and Hard Times*, 1933) 《我们时代的寓言》(*Fables for Our Times*, 1940), 《男人, 女人和狗》(*Men, Women and Dogs*, 1943)。

瑟伯的短篇小说结构紧凑, 语言机智, 幽默而含蓄。他大部分短篇小说的主题是人性的弱点。他描写的对象大多是对现代文明迷惑不解, 在生活中屡遭挫折的小人物。瑟伯声称他宁愿相信动物也不相信人类。而他在用夸张幽默的笔调对他们进行讽刺之余, 却又对他们流露出深切的同情。

《蒙罗先生智斗蝙蝠》描写的是瑟伯短篇小说中经常出现的主题——无能的丈夫。蒙罗先生和太太一起到乡间别墅避暑。晚上, 一只蝙蝠在他房间里盘旋, 弄得他不能入睡, 吓得他

头都不敢伸出被单外面，被迫逃到在另一个房间就寝的太太那里。他不愿在太太面前丢面子，便说是到她房间找东西收拾那只蝙蝠。他用一张报纸卷成一个纸筒，佯装要回去教训那只蝙蝠。而一出太太的房门，他便轻手轻脚，缩头缩脑地走到自己卧室门口，用纸筒在门框上猛拍几下，让太太以为他是在驱赶蝙蝠。而后却连房门也不敢进，溜到走廊的沙发上熬了一夜，直到天明蝙蝠飞走才摸回自己的房间。

瑟伯的文笔简练，而刻画出来的人物却栩栩如生。例如，在故事开头作者写道：

“蒙罗先生十分愿意帮太太弄死蜘蛛……这使他感到自己很有能力，同时也表明娇妻对他的依赖，心里觉得美滋滋的。当他睡觉的时候，还在得意洋洋，有点激动。”

几笔勾画，就把一个没什么本事，却又偏喜欢逞能的人物形象呈现在读者眼前。这篇小说的另一特点就是瑟伯娴熟地利用幽默的技巧。既有语言的幽默，又有动作的幽默。例如，在描写蒙罗先生受到蝙蝠侵扰的情景时，作者写道：

“慢慢地他把头和肩膀露了出来。蝙蝠好像知道他会来这一招，早就有了准备。“嗖”地一声，贴着他的面颊飞了过去。他赶忙抽身缩回，躲在被单下面。床上的弹簧被他震得嘎嘎直响。”

读者看到的俨然是一幅蒙罗先生“智斗”蝙蝠的漫画形象。

## Mr Monroe Outwits a Bat

The Monroes opened their summer place a little late, for carking cares had kept them long in town. The grass was greening and tangled when they arrived, and the house had a woodsy smell. Mr Monroe took a deep breath. 'I'll get a great sleep tonight,' he said. He put on some old clothes, potted around inspecting doors and windows, whistling. After dinner he went out under the stars and smelled the clear fine air. Abruptly there came to his ears a little scream from inside the house—the scream his wife gave when she dropped a cup or when some other trivial tragedy of the kitchen occurred. Mr Monroe hurried inside.

'Spider!' cried Mrs Monroe. 'Oh, kill it, kill it!' She always held that a spider, encountered but not slain turned up in one's bed at night. Mr Monroe loved to kill spiders for his wife. He whacked this one off a tea towel with a newspaper, and scooped it outside the door into the petunia bed. It gave him a feeling of power, and enhanced the sweetness of his little wife's dependence on him. He was still glowing with his triumph, in a small, warm way, when he went to bed.

'Good night, dear,' he called, deeply. His voice was always a little deeper than usual, after a triumph.

'Good night, dear,' she called back from her room.

The night was sweet and clear. Nice old creaking sounds ran down the steps and back up again. Some of them sounded like the steps of a person.

‘Afraid, dear?’ he called out.

‘Not with you here,’ she answered sleepily. There was a long pleasant silence. Mr Monroe began to drowse. A very ominous sound brought him out of it, a distinct flut, a firm, insistent, rhythmic flut.

‘Bat!’ muttered Mr Monroe to himself.

At first he took the advent of the bat calmly. It seemed to be flying high, near the ceiling. He even boldly raised up on his elbows and peered through the dark. As he did so the bat, apparently out of sheer malice, almost clipped the top of his head. Mr Monroe scrambled under the covers, but instantly recovered his composure and put his head out again—just as the bat, returning on its orbit, skimmed across the bed once more. Mr Monroe pulled the covers over his head. It was the bat’s round.

‘Restless, dear?’ called his wife, through her open door.

‘What?’ he said.

‘Why, what’s the matter?’ she asked, slightly alarmed at his muffled tone.

‘I’m all right, it’s okay,’ responded Mr Monroe, from under the covers.

‘You sound funny,’ said his wife. There was a pause.

‘Good night, dear,’ called Mr Monroe, poking his head out to say this, and pulling it in again.

‘Good night.’

He strained his ears to hear through the covers, and found he could. The bat was still flitting above the bed in measured, relentless intervals. The notion came to the warm and stuffy Mr Monroe that the incessant repetition of a noise at regular intervals might drive a person crazy. He dismissed the thought, or tried to. If the dripping of water on a man’s head, slowly, drip, drip, drip—flut, flut, flut—

‘Damn it,’ said Mr Monroe to himself. The bat was apparently just getting into its swing. It was flying faster. The first had just been practice. Mr Monroe suddenly bethought himself of a great spread of mosquito netting lying in a closet across the room. If he could get that and put it over the bed, he could sleep in peace. He poked his nose out from under the sheet, reached out a hand, and stealthily felt around for a match on a table by the bed—the light switch was yards away. Gradually his head and shoulders emerged. The bat seemed to be waiting for just this move. It zipped past his cheek. He flung himself back under the covers, with a great squeaking of springs.

‘John?’ called his wife.

‘What’s the matter now?’ he asked querulously.

‘What are you doing?’ she demanded.

‘There’s a bat in the room, if you want to know,’ he said, ‘and it keeps scraping the covers.’

‘Scraping the covers?’

‘Yes, scraping the covers.’

'It'll go away,' said his wife. 'They go away.'

'I'll drive it away!' shouted John Monroe, for his wife's tone was that of a mother addressing a child.

'How the devil the damn bat ever ...' His voice grew dim because he was now pretty far under the bed clothes.

'I can't hear you, dear,' said Mrs Monroe. He popped his head out.

'I say how long is it before they go away?' he asked.

'It'll hang by its feet pretty soon and go to sleep,' said his wife, soothingly. 'It won't hurt you.' This last had a curious effect on Mr Monroe. Much to his own surprise he sat upright in bed, a little angry. The bat actually got him this time, brushed his hair, with a little 'Squeep!'

'Hey!' yelled Mr Monroe.

'What is it dear?' called his wife. He leaped out of bed, now completely panic-stricken, and ran for his wife's room. He went in and closed the door behind him, and stood there.

'Get in with me, dear,' said Mrs Monroe.

'I'm all right,' he retorted, irritably. 'I simply want to get something to rout that thing with. I couldn't find anything in my room.' He flicked on the lights.

'There's no sense in your getting all worn out fighting a bat,' said his wife. 'They're terribly quick.' There seemed to him to be an amused sparkle in her eyes.

'Well, I'm terribly quick too,' grumbled Mr Monroe, trying to keep from shivering, and he slowly folded a newspaper into a sort of club. With this in his hand he



stepped to the door. 'I'll shut your door after me,' he said, 'so the bat won't get in your room.' He went out, firmly closing the door behind him. He crept slowly along the hall till he came to his own room. He waited a while and listened. The bat was still going strong. Mr Monroe lifted the paper club and struck the jamb of the door, from the outside, a terrific blow. 'Wham!' went the blow. He hit again, 'Wham!'

'Did you get it, dear?' called his wife, her voice coming dimly through the door.

'Okay,' cried her husband, 'I got it.' He waited a long while. Then he slipped, on tiptoe, to a couch in the corridor halfway between his room and his wife's and gently, ever so gently, let himself down upon it. He slept lightly, because he was pretty chilly, until dawn, got up and tiptoed to his room. He peered in. The bat was gone. Mr Monroe got into bed and went to sleep.

## 【参考译文】

### 蒙罗先生智斗蝙蝠

蒙罗夫妇到他们避暑住地的时间比往年晚了一些,由于镇上一些琐事拖着,他们迟迟不能动身。他们到达时,草已转成绿色,长得缠在一起。房里有种木头的味道。蒙罗先生深深地吸了一口气说:“今晚可以好好地睡上一觉了。”他换上一身旧衣服,吹着口哨,四处转了转,看看门窗是否都完整无缺。晚