

中文导读英文版

*The Time Machine / The Invisible Man*

# 时间机器/隐形人

[英] 赫伯特·乔治·威尔斯 原著

王勋 纪飞 等 编译

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## 内 容 简 介

*The Time Machine, The Invisible Man* 中文译名分别为《时间机器》和《隐形人》，由英国著名作家赫伯特·乔治·威尔斯编著。

《时间机器》讲述“时间旅行”的故事。时间旅行家发明了一种能穿越时空的时间机器，之后他乘坐该机器穿越了 80 多万年的时空抵达公元 802701 年，展现在他眼前的是一个恐怖的人吃人的世界：地球上生活着两支人，一支是生活在黑暗地下世界的摩洛克斯人，他们借助机器进行劳作，为生活在地面上的另一支身体已经退化的埃洛厄伊人创造生活必需品，而反过来摩洛克斯人把埃洛厄伊人作为他们的食物。《隐形人》讲述一个对隐形术充满狂热追求的科学家妄想借助科学对人类实行“恐怖统治”的故事。主人公格里芬是一位才华横溢的科学家，他研究出了一种隐形的办法，并把自己变成了隐形人。隐形实验的成功使格里芬欣喜若狂。由于隐形使他挣脱了社会“看得见”的监督，格里芬开始我行我素，痛殴他人、恐吓威胁、行窃、纵火与谋杀，最后甚至想建立“隐形王国”统治世界。朋友规劝他停止这些疯狂的举动，而他却一意孤行、众叛亲离，最后误入歧途的他在人们的喊打声中被剿灭。

这两部小说一经出版，很快就成为当时最受关注和最畅销的小说，至今已译成几十种文字，并曾经先后多次被改编成电影、电视和动画片等。书中所展现的科幻故事伴随了一代又一代人的美丽童年、少年直至成年。无论作为语言学习的课本，还是作为通俗的文学读本，本书对当代中国的青少年都将产生积极的影响。为了使读者能够了解英文故事概况，进而提高阅读速度和阅读水平，在每章的开始部分增加了中文导读。

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## 图书在版编目（CIP）数据

时间机器/隐形人=The Time Machine / The Invisible Man: 中文导读英文版/（英）赫伯特·乔治·威尔斯（Wells, H. G.）原著；王勋等编译. —北京：清华大学出版社，2009.8

ISBN 978-7-302-20601-9

I. ①时…②隐… II. ①赫…②王… III. ①英语—语言读物②科学幻想小说—作品集—英国—现代 IV. H319.4: I

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字（2009）第 118411 号

责任编辑：李 晔

责任校对：徐俊伟

插图绘制：王 轲

责任印制：王秀菊

出版发行：清华大学出版社

地 址：北京清华大学学研大厦 A 座

<http://www.tup.com.cn>

邮 编：100084

社 总 机：010-62770175

邮 购：010-62786544

投稿与读者服务：010-62776969, c-service@tup.tsinghua.edu.cn

质 量 反 馈：010-62772015, zhiliang@tup.tsinghua.edu.cn

印 刷 者：清华大学印刷厂

装 订 者：北京市密云县京文制本装订厂

经 销：全国新华书店

开 本：170×260 印 张：17.25 字 数：304 千字

版 次：2009 年 8 月第 1 版 印 次：2009 年 8 月第 1 次印刷

印 数：1~5000

定 价：29.00 元

本书如存在文字不清、漏印、缺页、倒页、脱页等印装质量问题，请与清华大学出版社出版部联系调换。联系电话：(010)62770177 转 3103 产品编号：033528-01



赫伯特·乔治·威尔斯（Herbert George Wells, 1866—1946），英国著名作家，被誉为“科幻小说界的莎士比亚”、“英国的儒勒·凡尔纳”。

威尔斯于 1866 年 9 月 21 日生于英格兰肯特郡的一个贫穷家庭。因为家庭破产，他十四岁就开始分担家庭负担，先后当过药房学徒、邮递员、售货员和教师等。通过自学，他于 1884 年进入伦敦自然科学师范学院学习，并于 1890 年获理科学士学位；之后，在雷克萨姆·霍尔特学院任教。

1891 年，威尔斯开始为一些报刊撰写文章。1893 年，他出版了第一部作品《生物学读本》。1895 年，出版了科幻小说《时间机器》，该书一经出版便成为当时最畅销图书，并引发了人们对科学幻想的热烈讨论，威尔斯从此一举成名。之后，陆续出版了《莫洛博士岛》、《隐形人》、《星球大战》、《神的食物》等科幻小说。除了科幻小说，威尔斯还出版了喜剧小说《爱情和路易先姆先生》、《玻利先生的历史》、《基普斯》等，反映社会现实的小说《像神一样的人们》、《梦》、《巴海姆先生的独裁统治》和《怎么小心都不会过分》等以及长篇历史著作《世界史纲》。

威尔斯一生共创作、出版了一百多部作品，但影响最大、最成功的是科幻小说，其中《时间机器》、《隐形人》、《星球大战》等已成为现代科幻小说的经典之作。一百多年来，他的科幻小说被译成世界上的多种文字，并不断被改编成电影、电视、动画片等，在全世界范围内广泛传播。时至今日，他的科幻小说仍是世界上最受欢迎的作品。

在中国，威尔斯的科幻小说同样广受读者特别是青少年读者的欢迎。目前，在国内数量众多的威尔斯的科幻小说中，主要的出版形式有两种：一种是中文翻译版，另一种是中英文对照版。而其中的中英文对照读本比较受读者的欢迎，这主要是得益于中国人热衷于学习英文的大环境。从英文学习的角度来看，直接使用纯英文的学习资料更有利于英语学习。考虑到对英文内容背景的了解有助于英文阅读，使用中文导读应该是一种比较



好的方式，也可以说是该类型书的第三种版本形式。采用中文导读而非中英文对照的方式进行编排，这样有利于国内读者摆脱对英文阅读依赖中文注释的习惯。基于以上原因，我们决定选编威尔斯两部科幻小说经典之作《时间机器》和《隐形人》，并采用中文导读英文版的形式出版。在中文导读中，我们尽力使其贴近原作的精髓，也尽可能保留原作的风格。我们希望能够编出为当代中国读者所喜爱的经典读本。读者在阅读英文故事之前，可以先阅读中文导读内容，这样有利于了解故事背景，从而加快阅读速度。我们相信，该经典著作的引进对加强当代中国读者，特别是青少年读者的人文修养是非常有帮助的。

本书主要内容由王勋、纪飞编译。参加本书故事素材搜集整理及编译工作的还有郑佳、赵雪、熊金玉、李丽秀、刘乃亚、熊红华、王婷婷、孟宪行、胡国平、李晓红、贡东兴、陈楠、邵舒丽、冯洁、王业伟、徐鑫、王晓旭、周丽萍、熊建国、徐平国、肖洁、王小红等。限于我们的科学、人文素养和英语水平，书中难免不当之处，衷心希望读者朋友批评指正。



CONTENTS

上部 时间机器/Part I The Time Machine	1
第一章/Chapter 1	2
第二章/Chapter 2	12
第三章/Chapter 3	18
第四章/Chapter 4	25
第五章/Chapter 5	36
第六章/Chapter 6	53
第七章/Chapter 7	60
第八章/Chapter 8	67
第九章/Chapter 9	74
第十章/Chapter 10	82
第十一章/Chapter 11	86
第十二章/Chapter 12	93
尾声/Epilogue	99

下部 隐形人/Part II The Invisible Man 101

第一章 奇怪的来客/

Chapter 1 The Strange Man's Arrival	102
-------------------------------------	-----

第二章 泰德·亨弗瑞先生的初次印象/

Chapter 2 Mr. Teddy Henfrey's First Impressions	108
---	-----

第三章 一千零一个瓶子/

Chapter 3 The Thousand and One Bottles	114
--	-----

第四章 库斯先生拜访陌生人/

Chapter 4 Mr. Cuss Interviews The Stranger	120
--	-----

第五章 牧师家被盗/

Chapter 5 The Burglary at the Vicarage	128
--	-----

第六章 发疯的家具/

Chapter 6 The Furniture That Went Mad	131
---------------------------------------	-----





## 第七章 陌生人剥去伪装/

Chapter 7 The Unveiling of the Stranger ..... 136

## 第八章 在途中/

Chapter 8 In Transit ..... 145

## 第九章 托马斯·马维尔先生/

Chapter 9 Mr. Thomas Marvel ..... 146

## 第十章 马维尔先生走访伊平/

Chapter 10 Mr. Marvel's Visit to Iping ..... 153

## 第十一章 在车马旅馆/

Chapter 11 In the Coach and Horses ..... 156

## 第十二章 隐形人大发雷霆/

Chapter 12 The Invisible Man Loses His Temper ..... 160

## 第十三章 马维尔先生想放弃/

Chapter 13 Mr. Marvel Discusses His Resignation ..... 166

## 第十四章 在斯托港/

Chapter 14 At Port Stowe ..... 170

## 第十五章 奔跑的人/

Chapter 15 The Man Who was Running ..... 176

## 第十六章 在“快乐的板球手”旅馆里/

Chapter 16 In the Jolly Cricketers ..... 179

## 第十七章 肯普医生的访客/

Chapter 17 Doctor Kemp's Visitor ..... 184

## 第十八章 隐形人睡觉/

Chapter 18 The Invisible Man Sleeps ..... 193

## 第十九章 一些基本原理/

Chapter 19 Certain First Principles ..... 197

## 第二十章 住在波特兰大街/

Chapter 20 At the House in Great Portland Street ..... 203

## 第二十一章 在牛津街上/

Chapter 21 In Oxford Street ..... 213

## 第二十二章 在商场/

Chapter 22 In the Emporium ..... 218

## 第二十三章 在德鲁利小巷/

Chapter 23 In Drury Lane ..... 225



第二十四章 计划失败/

Chapter 24 The Plan That Failed.....235

第二十五章 追捕隐形人/

Chapter 25 The Hunting of the Invisible Man .....240

第二十六章 威克斯迪德被害/

Chapter 26 The Wicksteed Murder .....243

第二十七章 包围肯普的住宅/

Chapter 27 The Siege of Kemp's House.....248

第二十八章 玩火者必自焚/

Chapter 28 The Hunter Hunted .....258



上部 时间机器

Part I The Time Machine

# 第一章

## Chapter 1



在丰盛的晚饭后，时间旅行家向我们讲述起他新近研究的深奥问题。他认为，在空间除了长度、宽度和高度三维以外，还存在第四维，就像在二维平面描绘三维图画一样，通过三维空间也同样可以表现四维空间。同一个人在不同时间的肖像，便正是用三维表现的四维生命。

在座的医生与心理学家对这一论断产生了很大的疑问——如果确实存在第四维时间，那么我们自然能够在时间里自由来回，可事实并非如此。这个问题正好问到了点上。如果文明人可以通过飞机或气球抵制地心引力，那么就可以通过一种机器来穿越时间，这正是时间旅行家的伟大发明。

时间旅行家很自豪地把他的时间机器呈现在我们面前，并借助心理学家的手指按下时间机器的白色杠杆，眼看着它慢慢变得模糊直到消失。我们面面相觑。

时间旅行家对大家的反应感到很满足，但他还不能断定这台小小的时间机器是走向了未来，还是回到了过去。他还带我们参观了他的实验室，并认真地告诉我们，他要完成一台真正可以载人的时间机器，带着他穿越时空，揭开时间的奥秘。

*T*he Time Traveler was expounding a recondite matter to us. His gray eyes shone and twinkled, and his usually pale face was flushed and animated.

The fire burned brightly, and the soft radiance of the incandescent lights in the lilies of silver caught the bubbles that flashed and passed in our glasses.

Our chairs, being his patents, embraced and caressed us rather than submitted to be sat upon, and there was that luxurious after-dinner atmosphere when thought roams gracefully free of the trammels of precision. And he put it to us in this way—marking the points with a lean forefinger—as we sat and lazily admired his earnestness over this new paradox (as we thought it) and his fecundity.

‘You must follow me carefully. I shall have to controvert one or two ideas that are almost universally accepted. The geometry, for instance, they taught you at school is founded on a misconception.’

‘Is not that rather a large thing to expect us to begin upon?’ said Filby, an argumentative person with red hair.

‘I do not mean to ask you to accept anything without reasonable ground for it. You will soon admit as much as I need from you. You know of course that a mathematical line, a line of thickness NIL, has no real existence. They taught you that? Neither has a mathematical plane. These things are mere abstractions.’

‘That is all right,’ said the Psychologist. ‘Nor, having only length, breadth, and thickness, can a cube have a real existence.’

‘There I object,’ said Filby. ‘Of course a solid body may exist. All real things—’

‘So most people think. But wait a moment. Can an instantaneous cube exist?’

‘Don’t follow you,’ said Filby.

‘Can a cube that does not last for any time at all, have a real existence?’ Filby became pensive.

‘Clearly,’ the Time Traveler proceeded, ‘any real body must have extension in FOUR directions: it must have Length, Breadth, Thickness, and—Duration. But through a natural infirmity of the flesh, which I will explain to you in a moment, we incline to overlook this fact. There are really four dimensions, three which we call the three planes of Space, and a fourth, Time. There is, however, a tendency to draw an unreal distinction between the former

three dimensions and the latter, because it happens that our consciousness moves intermittently in one direction along the latter from the beginning to the end of our lives.'

'That,' said a very young man, making spasmodic efforts to relight his cigar over the lamp. 'that...very clear indeed.'

'Now, it is very remarkable that this is so extensively overlooked,' continued the Time Traveler, with a slight accession of cheerfulness. 'Really this is what is meant by the Fourth Dimension, though some people who talk about the Fourth Dimension do not know they mean it. It is only another way of looking at Time. There is no difference between time and any of the three dimensions of space except that our consciousness moves along it. But some foolish people have got hold of the wrong side of that idea. You have all heard what they have to say about this Fourth Dimension?'

'I have not,' said the Provincial Mayor.

'It is simply this. That Space, as our mathematicians have it, is spoken of as having three dimensions, which one may call Length, Breadth, and Thickness, and is always definable by reference to three planes, each at right angles to the others. But some philosophical people have been asking why three dimensions particularly—why not another direction at right angles to the other three? —and have even tried to construct a Four-Dimension geometry. Professor Simon Newcomb was expounding this to the New York Mathematical Society only a month or so ago. You know how on a flat surface, which has only two dimensions, we can represent a figure of a three-dimensional solid, and similarly they think that by models of three dimensions they could represent one of four—if they could master the perspective of the thing. See?'

'I think so,' murmured the Provincial Mayor. and, knitting his brows, he lapsed into an introspective state, his lips moving as one who repeats mystic words.

'Yes, I think I see it now,' he said after some time, brightening in a quite transitory manner.

'Well, I do not mind telling you I have been at work upon this geometry of Four Dimensions for some time. Some of my results are curious. For instance,

here is a portrait of a man at eight years old, another at fifteen, another at seventeen, another at twenty-three, and so on. All these are evidently sections, as it were, Three-Dimensional representations of his Four- Dimensioned being, which is a fixed and unalterable thing.

‘Scientific people,’ proceeded the Time Traveler, after the pause required for the proper assimilation of this, ‘know very well that Time is only a kind of Space. Here is a popular scientific diagram, a weather record. This line I trace with my finger shows the movement of the barometer. Yesterday it was so high, yesterday night it fell, then this morning it rose again, and so gently upward to here. Surely the mercury did not trace this line in any of the dimensions of Space generally recognized. But certainly it traced such a line, and that line, therefore, we must conclude was along the Time-Dimension.’

‘But,’ said the Medical Man, staring hard at a coal in the fire, ‘if Time is really only a fourth dimension of Space, why is it, and why has it always been, regarded as something different? And why cannot we move in Time as we move about in the other dimensions of Space?’

The Time Traveler smiled. ‘Are you sure we can move freely in Space? Right and left we can go, backward and forward freely enough, and men always have done so. I admit we move freely in two dimensions. But how about up and down? Gravitation limits us there.’

‘Not exactly,’ said the Medical Man. ‘There are balloons.’

‘But before the balloons, save for spasmodic jumping and the inequalities of the surface, man had no freedom of vertical movement.’

‘Still they could move a little up and down,’ said the Medical Man.

‘Easier, far easier down than up.’

‘And you cannot move at all in Time, you cannot get away from the, present moment.’

‘My dear sir, that is just where you are wrong. That is just where the whole world has gone wrong. We are always getting away from the present moment. Our mental existences, which are immaterial and have no dimensions, are passing along the Time-Dimension with a uniform velocity from the cradle to the grave. Just as we should travel down if we began our existence fifty miles above the earth’s surface.’

‘But the great difficulty is this,’ interrupted the Psychologist. ‘You can move about in all directions of Space, but you cannot move about in Time.’

‘That is the germ of my great discovery. But you are wrong to say that we cannot move about in Time. For instance, if I am recalling an incident very vividly I go back to the instant of its occurrence: I become absent- minded, as you say. I jump back for a moment. Of course we have no means of staying back for any length of Time, any more than a savage or an animal has of staying six feet above the ground. But a civilized man is better off than the savage in this respect. He can go up against gravitation in a balloon, and why should he not hope that ultimately he may be able to stop or accelerate his drift along the Time-Dimension, or even turn about and travel the other way?’

‘Oh, this,’ began Filby. ‘is all—’

‘Why not?’ said the Time Traveler.

‘It’s against reason,’ said Filby.

‘What reason?’ said the Time Traveler.

‘You can show black is white by argument,’ said Filby. ‘but you will never convince me.’

‘Possibly not,’ said the Time Traveler. ‘But now you begin to see the object of my investigations into the geometry of Four Dimensions. Long ago I had a vague inkling of a machine—’

‘To travel through Time!’ exclaimed the Very Young Man.

‘That shall travel indifferently in any direction of Space and Time, as the driver determines.’ Filby contented himself with laughter.

‘But I have experimental verification,’ said the Time Traveler.

‘It would be remarkably convenient for the historian,’ the Psychologist suggested. ‘One might travel back and verify the accepted account of the Battle of Hastings, for instance!’

‘Don’t you think you would attract attention?’ said the Medical Man. ‘Our ancestors had no great tolerance for anachronisms.’

‘One might get one’s Greek from the very lips of Homer and Plato,’ the Very Young Man thought.

‘In which case they would certainly plough you for the Little-go. The German scholars have improved Greek so much.’

‘Then there is the future,’ said the Very Young Man. ‘Just think! One might invest all one’s money, leave it to accumulate at interest, and hurry on ahead!’

‘To discover a society,’ said I. ‘erected on a strictly communistic basis.’

‘Of all the wild extravagant theories!’ began the Psychologist.

‘Yes, so it seemed to me, and so I never talked of it until—’

‘Experimental verification!’ cried I. ‘You are going to verify that?’

‘The experiment!’ cried Filby, who was getting brain-weary.

‘Let’s see your experiment anyhow,’ said the Psychologist. ‘though it’s all humbug, you know.’

The Time Traveler smiled round at us. Then, still smiling faintly, and with his hands deep in his trousers pockets, he walked slowly out of the room, and we heard his slippers shuffling down the long passage to his laboratory.

The Psychologist looked at us. ‘I wonder what he’s got?’

‘Some sleight-of-hand trick or other,’ said the Medical Man, and Filby tried to tell us about a conjurer he had seen at Burslem; but before he had finished his preface the Time Traveler came back, and Filby’s anecdote collapsed.

The thing the Time Traveler held in his hand was a glittering metallic framework, scarcely larger than a small clock, and very delicately made. There was ivory in it, and some transparent crystalline substance.

And now I must be explicit, for this that follows—unless his explanation is to be accepted—is an absolutely unaccountable thing.

He took one of the small octagonal tables that were scattered about the room, and set it in front of the fire, with two legs on the hearthrug.

On this table he placed the mechanism. Then he drew up a chair, and sat down.

The only other object on the table was a small shaded lamp, the bright light of which fell upon the model. There were also perhaps a dozen candles about, two in brass candlesticks upon the mantel and several in sconces, so that the room was brilliantly illuminated.

I sat in a low armchair nearest the fire, and I drew this forward so as to be almost between the Time Traveler and the fireplace.



Filby sat behind him, looking over his shoulder. The Medical Man and the Provincial Mayor watched him in profile from the right, the Psychologist from the left. The Very Young Man stood behind the Psychologist. We were all on the alert. It appears incredible to me that any kind of trick, however subtly conceived and however adroitly done, could have been played upon us under these conditions.

The Time Traveler looked at us, and then at the mechanism.

‘Well?’ said the Psychologist.

‘This little affair,’ said the Time Traveler, resting his elbows upon the table and pressing his hands together above the apparatus, ‘is only a model. It is my plan for a machine to travel through time. You will notice that it looks singularly askew, and that there is an odd twinkling appearance about this bar, as though it was in some way unreal.’ He pointed to the part with his finger. ‘Also, here is one little white lever, and here is another.’

The Medical Man got up out of his chair and peered into the thing. ‘It’s beautifully made,’ he said.

‘It took two years to make,’ retorted the Time Traveler. Then, when we had all imitated the action of the Medical Man, he said: ‘Now I want you clearly to understand that this lever, being pressed over, sends the machine gliding into the future, and this other reverses the motion. This saddle represents the seat of a time traveler. Presently I am going to press the lever, and off the machine will go. It will vanish, pass into future Time, and disappear. Have a good look at the thing. Look at the table too, and satisfy yourselves there is no trickery. I don’t want to waste this model, and then be told I’m a quack.’

There was a minute’s pause perhaps.

The Psychologist seemed about to speak to me, but changed his mind.

Then the Time Traveler put forth his finger towards the lever.

‘No,’ he said suddenly. ‘Lend me your hand.’ And turning to the Psychologist, he took that individual’s hand in his own and told him to put out his forefinger.

So that it was the Psychologist himself who sent forth the model Time Machine on its interminable voyage. We all saw the lever turn. I am absolutely

certain there was no trickery. There was a breath of wind, and the lamp flame jumped. One of the candles on the mantel was blown out, and the little machine suddenly swung round, became indistinct, was seen as a ghost for a second perhaps, as an eddy of faintly glittering brass and ivory; and it was gone—vanished! Save for the lamp the table was bare.

Everyone was silent for a minute.

Then Filby said he was damned.

The Psychologist recovered from his stupor, and suddenly looked under the table.

At that the Time Traveler laughed cheerfully. ‘Well?’ he said, with a reminiscence of the Psychologist. Then, getting up, he went to the tobacco jar on the mantel, and with his back to us began to fill his pipe.

We stared at each other.

‘Look here,’ said the Medical Man. ‘are you in earnest about this? Do you seriously believe that that machine has traveled into time?’

‘Certainly,’ said the Time Traveler, stooping to light a spill at the fire. Then he turned, lighting his pipe, to look at the Psychologist’s face.

The Psychologist, to show that he was not unhinged, helped himself to a cigar and tried to light it uncut.

‘What is more, I have a big machine nearly finished in there,’ he indicated the laboratory. ‘and when that is put together I mean to have a journey on my own account.’

‘You mean to say that that machine has traveled into the future?’ said Filby.

‘Into the future or the past—I don’t, for certain, know which.’

After an interval the Psychologist had an inspiration. ‘It must have gone into the past if it has gone anywhere,’ he said.

‘Why?’ said the Time Traveler.

‘Because I presume that it has not moved in space, and if it traveled into the future it would still be here all this time, since it must have traveled through this time.’

‘But,’ I said. ‘If it traveled into the past it would have been visible when we came first into this room; and last Thursday when we were here; and the