

# JAPANESE TALES OF MYSTERY AND IMAGINATION Free Download



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Edogawa Rampo, Patricia Bjaaland Welch  
240 pages  
10 May 2012  
Tuttle Shokai Inc  
9784805311936  
English  
Kanagawa, Japan



It is an effective technique, focusing our attention on the content of what they are saying, and the story is dramatic and compelling. A short and excellent read! The narrator tells us of a childhood friend who became increasingly obsessed with optical equipment and mirrors and who, after inheriting a small fortune from his doting parents, put all of his resources into developing new types of mirror.

This story begins with the narrator informing us that he has been condemned to death for murder but wishes to confess to an earlier crime which he details for us. The story of his earlier crime is compelling and I enjoyed the explanation of how he is eventually caught in the case of the second killing. A man turns up to a meeting of a secret society to petition them to become a member. He tells them that he has committed 99 murders for no better reason than to amuse himself and proceeds to provide some examples of his handiwork. He then reveals how he intends to commit his hundredth.

This is an excellent story containing some striking yet simple ideas. Rampo manipulates the reader skillfully by some presentational choices that he makes and some of the murders described are very cleverly conceived. Two men, Saito and Ihara, sit and discuss their life stories. Ihara reveals that he has suffered from somnambulism since childhood and believes he committed a murder while sleepwalking. It is, once again, quite a simple but effective concept for a story. It builds to a twist ending that I think will likely be anticipated but it is well-delivered. The collection ends with what may be its strangest tale. The man proceeds to tell him the incredible story behind that picture and why he travels with it pressed to the window of the carriage.

This story is certainly more imaginative than mysterious and avoids giving any kind of definitive statement of whether the elderly man is truthful and, if so, how the events he describes could have happened. I enjoyed it and appreciated its imagination even if I was left wondering about whether we are supposed to take the account to be truthful.

Thanks for the review, which made me wonder if the short stories leaned too far away from the conventional puzzle-mystery for my tastes. Like Like. It may just be the stories selected for this particular collection. Almost all of the stories are imaginative and boast some striking ideas but few of them are structured as puzzle mysteries. The other was a novella which was about lady being stalked by a very successful writer from her past. This one I would recommend without any hesitation should it ever be translated!

Very, very good stuff! The Human Chair 2. The Psychological Test 3. The Caterpillar 4. The Cliff 5. The Hell of Mirrors 6. The Twins 7. The Red Chamber 8. Two Crippled Men 9. And mesmerizing! Edogawa Rampo truly is the master of grotesque. I've had infinite inexplicable love for "The Human Chair" since I first read it a few years ago and the rest of these stories didn't let me down either. I'd say stories and 7 were my favorites I act 1.

I'd say stories and 7 were my favorites I actually gasped a few times and 5 and 6 were good. Sep 02, DeAnna Knippling rated it it was amazing. Short stories set in Japan, the same type of thing as Edgar Allen Poe's. These dark and twisted tales aren't as well known as they should be. Great stuff. Jun 18, Ankit Agrawal rated it really liked it. This book deserves 5 points just for the first story and from there impact is lost with each story.

View all 5 comments. Apr 12, John rated it liked it. The Japanese writer Hirai Taro took the nom de plume Edogawa Rampo as a sign of his reverence for the work of Edgar Allan Poe, and is regarded as the first and greatest Japanese writer of mystery stories.

This collection of nine of his stories, published in , represents the first appearance of his work in English translation. Its title reflects, of course, the debt the author felt he owed to Poe. Only one of the stories is a mystery in the "detective story" sense, "The Psychologic The Japanese writer Hirai Taro took the nom de plume Edogawa Rampo as a sign of his reverence for the work of Edgar Allan Poe, and is regarded as the first and greatest Japanese writer of mystery stories. Only one of the stories is a mystery in the "detective story" sense, "The Psychological Test," and really, as it acknowledges, it's more of a Crime and Punishment riff with a rather weak piece of psychologizing appended.

The others are indeed Poe-ish -- they're macabre tales, all of them fantasticated in the sense that they seem designed to spark the imagination rather than make us believe them, some of them also fantasticated in the sense that their rationales transcend the natural. Of the former "The Human Chair" is the standout: an ugly master carpenter creates a chair that he can secretly hide inside so as to enjoy the sensation, and the invasion of privacy, when people, especially attractive women, wriggle their bottoms on his lap. In the latter category I very much enjoyed the moving final tale in the collection, "The Traveler with the Pasted Rag Picture": through a concatenation of circumstances a man falls accidentally in love with an embroidered illustration of a beautiful women, and engineers the situation such that he can, likewise in stitched form, join her in a picture.

Of the other tales, some are good and some are a bit so-so. Many display, like "The Human Chair," a somewhat kinky attitude toward sex that might have been acceptable in the Japanese mainstream at the time but perhaps explains why it took a while for the stories to appear in the tighter-arsed West. Because of this aspect, and because of a certain ruthlessness of view, I was often reminded of the work for grownups! This review has been hidden because it contains spoilers. To view it, click here. While this wasn't quite as good as I was thinking it was going to be, it was, at times, much weirder. The first story, The Human Chair, was one of the best, but then, at the end of the story, just thrown on in the last couple of paragraphs, you find out it wasn't real, "but don't you think I'm a good writer? Why would he the writer do that? It was great, and would have ended perfectly if he'd just cut off the end. He did the exact same thing later in another story, The Red Cham While this wasn't quite as good as I was thinking it was going to be, it was, at times, much weirder.

He did the exact same thing later in another story, The Red Chamber, which was really great, and, like The Human Chair, had a really great ending and one of the only endings in the book that I hadn't guessed , and then, exactly the same thing. Just cut off the last few paragraphs, and you have a 10 out of 10 story. Another strange thing about this book, or the author, is that these are supposed to be mystery stories, of a sort, but the reader doesn't usually get any mysteries, he's just told what happened, and then how people found out about it, which isn't quite the same thing as a mystery story. Some stories were really unsettling, like The Caterpillar, about a deaf, dumb, and finally blinded mutilated stump of a man and his extremely unhappy, angry wife and extremely unhappy suicide.

And one of them, The Hell of Mirrors I think that's the name of it I would probably rank as one of the best short stories I've ever read, definitely

one of my favorites. But beneath all this, they were mostly kind of average murder stories. Oct 08, Tosh rated it it was amazing. Edogawa Rampo say the name out loud is one of the great literary figures in 's Japan. His short stories are a combination of erotica mixed with horror. Within Japan he is probably one of the most well-known writers - and rightfully so, because's he fantastic. If you like gothic drug induced sexy stories - then this is for you. A must for those Opium nightmare nights! Sep 25, Elyse rated it liked it Shelves: japan , fiction , eerie , short-stories , mystery , male-author. I am disappointed in this book. The first story was great so I'm rating the book three stars rather than two: a man sewed himself into an upholstered chair and enjoyed when ladies sat on him.

Very creepy. But the rest of the stories were ho-hum to my modern, Western taste. The author is considered the dean of Japanese mystery writers. Ellery Queen wrote, " If you say the name Edogawa Rampo aloud, and keep repeating it, the name will seem to grow more and more familiar; and it should, because I am disappointed in this book. Ellery Queen wrote, " If you say the name Edogawa Rampo aloud, and keep repeating it, the name will seem to grow more and more familiar; and it should, because it is a verbal translation of the Japanese pronunciation of Edgar Allen Poe.

I've never been a big fan of Sherlock Holmes stories - if you are a fan you'll enjoy this book more than me, I'm sure. I was expecting a more suspense and mysterious stories, but it was just okay. Fairly thrilled, fairly presented. I fancy the idea especially The Human Chair I probably would think about the cabinet-maker every time I see a leather-covered armchair anywhere now, that was seriously spooky!

Not that much atmospheric, but the crime plotting stuff was quite fascinating. Worth a read, somehow. May 10, Chupacandrea rated it really liked it. You will never look at an armchair the same way again. Edogawa Rampo was this man. He was influenced by infamous writers Edgar Allen Poe, Agatha Christie, and Sherlock Holmes and managed to create new stories that were infused in Japanese culture. Not all these stories are a 'who done it? Most are from the perspective of the perpetrator and some are thrillers that leave you wondering on what you just read. The way the chair was described made you squirm in the very chair you sat in to read this novel. It leaves you wondering on what was true and what was false.

I have never ever encountered this in any mystery books, even modern ones. It's fantastic how forensic and psychological tests are utilized in this story. Rampo goes so far as to show how the perpetrator manages to evade these tests. It's so logical in how it unfolds and yet, still manages to make you giddy when you see how evidence and results are used by the detective. It goes so far so how the effect taking care of an invalid has on both the caretaker and the patient. It's quiet disturbing and makes you really wonder how the ending was possible. It consists of a dialogue between A man and a women.

They are married and are discussing how their marriage came to be. It's dark and definitely has a cliffhanger :P moment. I'm not quite sure what Rampo was trying to do here. It also shows how complicated committing a crime is. Holy crap. After reading this you will become suspicious of anyone you meet. It's an utterly fantastic tale of how human psychology can be so easily twisted. It even makes you wonder if mental intention can be criminalized. This was one of the best thrillers I have read and my heart was pounding at the climax! The power of suggestion is the theme here. It's a bit hard to analyze mystery without spoiling the whole thing but these stories are ones that are left in you brain long after you've read it.

It's surprising how something written so long ago can still freak you out. I can see why there is an award dedicated to him! Excellent narrative craftsmanship shines forth in these tales. Quite enjoyable from the first story to the last in a crystalline manner. True to his American namesake, Edgar Allan Poe, a couple of these tales of Rampo's feature those weird moments of horrific imagery that makes Poe's tales so unique--even when there is little in the way of plot to recommend them--and in other tales, the careful step-by-step plotting of the mystery story is at work, revealing the narrative like a gallery worker s Excellent narrative craftsmanship shines forth in these tales.

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Dry as a perfect Martini at sunset on a crisp fall afternoon. Also interesting, to me, was the translator's introduction. I always feel anxiety reading a Japanese or Chinese narrative in English, worried about how different a transmissive medium the character is from our own phonetic writing system. In this case, the translator explains that Rampo could understand English but not speak it and that he, similarly, knew spoken Japanese but not the written language. It took them five years of Rampo reading him the texts aloud and then re-checking the English sentences through his own knowledge of our Anglo-Saxon and Norman mishmash for the two to produce these few translations. I imagine, then, that this edition will remain the definitive Rampo in English. Delicate, precise, and enjoyable--with the occasional shiver. I wish they'd put another five years towards a second volume. I was fortunate to be able to visit Japan last summer and, of course, bought several books to bring home with me as souvenirs.

This one caught my eye in a little shop in Kyoto so I thought I would take a chance on it. Each one immediately captured my interest and held it through the very end. Several times after I finished a story, I sat back and just thought about it, letting it last a while longer in my mind. That sounds corny, I know, but is true, nonetheless. All stories take place in Japan, but the characters and ideas are universal. There is a reason this author is considered the father of Japanese mystery writing. I feel lucky to have discovered this author for myself and am happy to discover that there are a number of his works novels and short stories available in English translation. Highly recommended! Jun 24, Amy Gentry rated it it was amazing.

Where has "The Human Chair" been all my life? I can't believe it took me this long to read the 20th-century Japanese weird-fiction writer Rampo. This short selection of stories was not only the first Rampo to be translated into English, but, according to the translator's preface from, the first collection of any Japanese mystery stories to be translated into English. Some of the stories are truly disturbing, others silly; all of them are amazing in one way or another. Apr 03, Eadweard rated it really liked it Shelves: japanese-short-stories , horror-gothic-etc , fiction-read , favorites-or-really-liked , short-stories , japanese.

Loved The Caterpillar, a war veteran is so disfigured and maimed that he resembles a caterpillar. I read that it was banned in nationalistic war mongering Japan, wonder why. It was also recently made into a movie. Mar 17, Riju Ganguly rated it it was amazing. Related Searches. A celebration of Japanese landscape design, this book features gardens from Kyoto View Product. Early Japanese Images. This fascinating Japanese photography book features over images taken between and by This fascinating Japanese photography book features over images taken between and by the most important local and foreign photographers then working in Japan.

Almost one-fourth of the images are hand colored, superb examples of a rich art form Infinite Spaces: The Art and Wisdom of the. Based on classical Japanese writings, this Zen gardening book is full of insightful commentary and Based on classical Japanese writings, this Zen gardening book is full of insightful commentary and lush photographs. Japanese gardens have long been admired for their capacity to improve on nature through impeccable design, detail, and composition: properties that elevate them from Three friends walk you through their best Japanese recipes —in expressive, humorous illustrations!

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