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Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio

Pu Songling

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Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio Pu Songling
Written during the early Qing Dynasty, "Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio" is a collection of nearly 500 mostly supernatural tales by Chinese author Pu Songling. The work, which was published posthumously sometime between 1740 and 1766, is comprised of stories varying in length. While the main characters of this book apparently are ghosts, foxes, immortals and demons, Pu Songling is more focused on the real life of commoners. Four main themes run throughout the book. The first is the author's complaint with the existing feudal system, which he finds to be unjust and skewed towards the elite. Secondly the author is concerned with the corruption that exists in the Imperial examination system. Thirdly the author shows his admiration of pure, faithful love between poor scholars and powerless women. And lastly is the overarching theme of morality for which Pu Songling intended "Strange Tales from a Chinese Studio" to be instructive towards bettering. This work of classical Chinese literature is translated here by Herbert A. Giles.

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