

# The Flourishing Creativity of Chinese Online Literature Authors

According to the “2023 China Online Literature Development Research Report” by the end of 2023, the market size of China’s online literature readership had reached 40.43 billion, increased by 3.8% compared to last year. The number of online literature authors had grown to 24.05 million, with 36.2 million works available. Here we introduce five popular Chinese online literature authors who focus on different creative fields, with their works enjoying long-term market popularity and multiple adaptations into films, TV shows, and games.

■ By Xu Weiye



## Er Gen

Er Gen, whose real name is Liu Yong, was born in June 1982 in Mudanjiang, Heilongjiang. He is a platinum author on Qidian Chinese Network. Er Gen was once an English teacher at a school in Heilongjiang and enjoyed browsing literary forums in his spare time. On one occasion, he noticed that a novel he liked had not been updated for a long time, so he spontaneously continued writing and uploaded his work to the forum, where readers mistook him for the original author. This experience greatly encouraged Er Gen, leading him to start writing his own novels.

Er Gen has a deep love for traditional Chinese mythology, which serves as the foundation for his online novels. Since he began writing in 2009, he has completed works such as *Against Heaven* (《天逆》), *Renegade Immortal* (《仙逆》), *Pursuit of the Truth* (《求魔》), *I Shall Seal the Heavens* (《我欲封天》), and *A Will Eternal* (《一念永恒》). Whether in online literature or in printed books, Er Gen enjoys immense popularity. His works have won over 2 billion clicks online in total, and the Chinese editions of his books have sold over one million copies. Additionally, he ranks among the top three in Baidu’s search trends, with daily search volumes often nearing one million, and millions of dedicated readers.

Er Gen has won several prestigious literary awards, such as the 8th place in the 7th China Writers List in 2002, the 4th place in the 8th China Writers List in 2013, and the champion in the inaugural Forbes Original Literature List in 2015. His works have been translated into several languages and earned a favorable reputation in various countries around the world.



## Fang Xiang

Fang Xiang, whose real name is Chen Aiyang, graduated in 2006 with a degree in Materials Chemistry from the Civil Aviation University of China. Fang Xiang began reading martial arts novels since elementary school. Both of his parents were rural teachers, so his family had a considerable collection of books. Although his academic performance was flat, his composition skills were exceptional. His favorite subject was Chinese, and he spent most of his time reading extracurricular books. During college, Fang Xiang became obsessed with fantasy novels, often reading them in the dormitory for an entire day, to the point where his classmates thought he was crazy.

Fang Xiang’s notable works include *Starwind* (《星风》), *The War of Cards* (《卡徒》), *Legend of the Supreme Soldier* (《师士传说》), *World of Cultivation* (《修真世界》), and *The Undying God of War* (《不败战神》). His works are renowned for their vast and imaginative worlds and clean, concise writing style, earning the passionate love of millions of fans and making him a “superstar” in the online literature world. He

has won numerous significant awards, such as being listed on the Chinese Writers Rich List for online authors and being named one of the “Twelve Gods of the Web” in the first China “King of Online Literature” awards.

His works have had a profound impact. For example, *Legend of the Supreme Soldier* has pioneered the “Mecha Flow” subgenre and influenced subsequent mecha-themed online novels. *The War of Cards* built a fantasy world centered around cards, showcasing youthful passion and brotherhood. *World of Cultivation* depicted a strange and magnificent world that fully immersed its readers. Fang Xiang’s works are not only popular in China, but have also gained international recognition, showcasing the unique charm of Chinese online literature.



## Yao Ying

Yao Ying is a renowned Chinese online literature author and a member of the Fujian Writers Association. She is a resident writer on well-known literary websites such as Jinjiang Literature Website, Sina Reading, NetEase, and iQIYI Literature, with a large female readership. Yao

Ying has loved reading and writing since childhood, evolving from a novel enthusiast to a writer with over a decade of writing experience. Her works cover a wide range of genres, from romance novels to realism, and many have been successfully published and adapted into film and television.

Yao Ying has published numerous bestselling books in both simplified and traditional Chinese, including *39.2 Degrees, Slightly Wild* (《39度2, 轻微撒点野》), *The Heartbeat in the Upper Left Corner* (《左上角的心跳》), *Sweet Taster* (《甜蜜品鉴师》), *Mei Twenty-Nine* (《梅廿九》), *Enchanting Bewilderment in the Heart* (《妖娆乱君心》), *Tears of the Heart* (《心泪》), and *The Naughty Wife* (《家有恶妻不懂事》). Her works have broad online influence, not only for their captivating plots and profound themes but also for the positive energy and humanistic care they convey.

In April 2024, her work *The Starry Sea of Wild Horse Island* (《野马屿的星海》) was selected for the 2022-2023 Outstanding Realistic Online Literature Publishing Project. The novel tells the story of an electrical worker on Wild Horse Island who strives to improve the village’s power environment, working with villagers to build a better rural community. This novel showcases young people’s dedication to the grassroots level and commitment to the people in the New Era.



## Teng Ping

Teng Ping, whose real name is Ye Pingping, was born in Xiamen, Fujian, and graduated from the Law Department of Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou. She debuted in 2000 with *The Sutra of Locked Sandalwood* (《锁檀经》), winning first place in the first “Flow-

ers and Dreams” National Romance Novel Competition, marking the beginning of her literary career.

Teng Ping’s writing is elegant and beautiful, with rich and captivating stories that are concise and to the point. She has written over 20 martial arts romance novels, all of which have been published by various publishers, making her one of China’s most famous young authors. Her works, such as *Mysterious Lotus Casebook* (《吉祥纹莲花楼》), *Nine Gongs Dance* (《九功舞》), and *The Purple Extreme Dance* (《紫极舞》), span multiple genres including martial arts, romance, and suspense, and are deeply loved by readers, earning her the title of “Queen of Martial Arts Romance”.

In July 2024, Teng Ping’s *Thousand Tribulations Eyebrows: Fox Spirit Prince* (《狐妖公子》) was re-released by Jiangsu Phoenix Literature and Art Publishing House. The story follows the male protagonist Tang Lici as he investigates the dark secrets of a forbidden drug in the martial arts world, moving through a series of dangerous pursuits. Teng Ping’s works have not only received widespread acclaim online but have also been adapted into multiple films and television dramas. For example, *Mysterious Lotus Casebook* was adapted into a very popular TV drama among audience.



## Hu Shuo

Hu Shuo, whose real name is Liu Jinlong, was born in Pingliang, Gansu, in 1994, and graduated from Southwest Petroleum University. Since the beginning of his writing career, Hu Shuo has explored various genres, including fantasy, history, romance, and military fiction.

His novels are known for their meticulous plots and flexible writing style, winning the affection of many readers. He has written several well-known novels, including *Mountain Root* (《山根》), *Chen Xi Yuan* (《宸汐缘》), *Drunken Red Mansion* (《醉红楼》), *Kidnapping Earth* (《绑架地球》), and *Tashi Delek* (《扎西德勒》). His novel *Drunken Red Mansion* won the 7th Yellow River Literature Award, and *Mountain Root* was selected as a key support project by the China Writers Association. Additionally, several of his works, such as *Anti-Terrorism Special Forces: Sirius* (《反恐特战队之天狼》), have been adapted into films, radio dramas, and games, thus further expanding his influence.

The name “Hu Shuo” in Chinese means “nonsense”, but for Hu Shuo, who came from a rural place in Pingliang, online literature must be approached with sincerity. He explained that he initially chose this pen name casually, but it has latter become a reminder to him. Although there is much nonsense on online literature platforms, authors must not “write nonsense” in their works. Instead, they should write with sincerity and authenticity.

Hu Shuo has not only achieved outstanding success in online literature but also actively participated in social welfare activities. He is the initiator of the educational charity program named “Seedlings” for online writers, and his sense of social responsibility has been widely recognized. In January 2024, Hu Shuo won the Fifth Mao Dun Newcomer Award for Online Literature.