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# 小妇人

(美)奥尔科特 著  
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## 导 读

《小妇人》的作者路易莎·梅·奥尔科特(1832——1888),是美国一位著名的女作家。她的父亲布朗逊·奥尔科特是马萨诸塞州康科德的哲学家、教育家,也是一位乌托邦主义者。与爱默生、霍桑、梭罗等人的关系甚好,由于他一生都沉醉于对自己理想的追求,一直无力挑起家庭的重担,仅靠他妻子的微薄收入来维持生活。作者在成长时期,便不得不经常出外做工,十九岁时,甚至做过佣人,也曾做过教师、裁缝、护士、洗熨工。直到她的作品出版后,才使家庭经济状况有所好转。她曾经在文章中写道:“我要以自己的头脑作武器,在这艰难的尘世中闯出一条路来。”

路易莎在艰难的生活环境中,十五岁便写出了第一部情节剧,二十一岁开始发表诗歌及小品。她把自己内战期间短暂的护士经历,写成《医院随笔》(1863)一书,名气也越来越大。1868年,在她成名后,一个出版商要她写一部关于“女孩子的书”。她便根据孩提时的记忆,写成《小妇人》一书。书中的人物均取自现实生活,书中的很多故事也取材于现实生活,她把自己描写为乔·马奇,把自己的姐妹安娜、亚碧·梅和伊丽莎白分别写成梅格、艾米和贝思。路易斯最初并未意识到它的阅读价值,只把它当作一本普通畅销书而已,出版后马上获得了巨大的社会轰动,马奇家的女孩感动了成千上万的读者,尤其是打动了无数美国女性读者的心。这当然出乎作者的意料,随后,路易莎又写了《小男人》和《乔的男孩们》。路易莎在成名后继续撰写小说和故事,并投身于女权运动和禁酒运动,为提高妇女的地位而到处呼喊。1888年,路易莎·梅·奥尔科特和她的父亲布朗逊·奥尔科特同一年逝世于波士顿。

《小妇人》是一本小说化的家庭日记,一本道德家世小说。马奇家四姐妹对自主权力的追求,以及她们对家庭的忠诚眷顾,成为贯穿全书的两条主要线索。如梅格的高贵、虚荣,艾米的优雅、自私,乔并不

影响家庭安宁的创造力,贝思的那种无私的生活。在作者笔下,马奇家的女人个个都是艺术家。乔写作,艾米绘画,贝思弹琴,梅格演出、管理家务,在读者眼前,时常可以闪现出这样一幅温馨动人的家庭生活图景,由于她们母亲的谆谆善诱,营造了一种异常活跃而又自立的家庭生活。她们各自得到了自己需要的和应当得到的东西。四姐妹的成长故事告诉我们,作为构成社会最基本单位的家庭是人类的快乐之源,家庭具有使人类和平相处、互爱互助的亲合力。正是这些具有人类共性的主题,使小说非但没有因时间的流逝而消失,却越来越显示出其永恒的价值。这本以家庭成员的感情纠葛为线索,虽然采用的是朴素的现实主义手法而写成的小说,尽管没有跌宕起伏的情节、引人入胜的悬念,但书中所描写的天伦之乐却深深地打动了读者,在他们身上体现出的对家庭的眷恋、对爱的忠诚以及对亲情的渴望,无一不揭示了人生的真谛,让人体会到生活中的真善美。

另外,《小妇人》一书,处处都受美国著名思想家爱默生的影响。爱默生强调人的个性与尊严,但又主张自我约束。而自立自强却是本书人物性格的共同点,梅格为爱而甘于贫困,乔通过自己的艰苦奋斗而最后成为作家,贝思坦然面对死亡以及以扶弱济困为己任的艾米,她们都具有这样的精神实质。

译者

## CHAPTER ONE

‘Christmas won’t be Christmas without any presents,’ grumbled Jo, lying on the rug.

‘It’s so dreadful to be poor!’ sighed Meg, looking down at her old dress.

‘I don’t think it’s fair for some girls to have plenty of pretty things, and other girls nothing at all,’ added little Amy, with an injured sniff.

‘We’ve got Father and Mother, and each other,’ said Beth contentedly from her corner.

The four young faces on which the firelight shone brightened at the cheerful words, but darkened again as Jo said sadly, ‘We haven’t got Father, and shall not have him for a long time.’ She didn’t say ‘perhaps never,’ but each silently added it, thinking of Father far away, where the fighting was.

Nobody spoke for a minute; then Meg said in an altered tone, ‘You know the reason Mother proposed not having any presents this Christmas was because it is going to be a hard winter for everyone; and she thinks we ought not to spend money for pleasure, when our men are suffering so in the army. We can’t do

## 第一章

“圣诞节没有礼物,还叫什么圣诞节呀?”乔躺在地毯上,低声发着牢骚。

“贫穷是多么可怕呀!”梅格叹息了一声,低下头打量着自己的旧衣服。

“有些女孩子应有尽有,而有的却一贫如洗,我不认为这个世界是公平的。”小女儿艾米说道,她用鼻子吸着冷气,与其说是抗议倒不如说是嫉妒。

“可是我们有父母姐妹呀。”一直在房间的角落里坐着的贝思抗议道。

在炉火映衬下的四张年轻的面庞,都因为贝思的这句令人快乐的话而变得明亮起来。“但是爸爸并不在我们身边,很长一段时间我们都将看不到爸爸,”乔伤感地说道,姐妹们的情绪也都受到了感染,神情不由得黯然失色。尽管她们都没有说出“可能再也不会回来”的话,不过每一个人都在心里默默地念了一遍,并且想起了远在战场的父亲。

在那一刻,没有一个人说话。然后梅格换了个话题说道:“妈妈取消了今年圣诞节的礼物,你们知道是什么原因吗?因为寒冷的冬天就要来了,她认为当我们的男子汉在冰天雪地里奋战的时候,我们不应该再为了寻求欢乐而花钱。虽然我们没有别的能

much, but we can make our little sacrifices, and ought to do it gladly. But I am afraid I don't.' And Meg shook her head, as she thought regretfully of all the pretty things she wanted.

'But I don't think the little we should spend would do any good. We've each got a dollar, and the army wouldn't be much helped by our giving that. I agree not to expect anything from Mother or you, but I do want to buy UNDINE AND SINTRAM for myself. I've wanted it so long,' said Jo, who was a bookworm.

'I planned to spend mine in new music,' said Beth, with a little sigh, which no one heard but the hearth brush and kettle holder.

'I shall get a nice box of Faber's drawing pencils. I really need them,' said Amy decidedly.

'Mother didn't say anything about our money, and she won't wish us to give up everything. Let's each buy what we want, and have a little fun. I'm sure we work hard enough to earn it,' cried Jo, examining the heels of her shoes in a gentlemanly manner.

'I know I do - teaching those tiresome children nearly all day, when I'm longing to enjoy myself at home,' began Meg, in the complaining tone again.

'You don't have half such a hard time as I do,' said Jo. 'How would you like to be shut up for hours with a nervous, fussy old lady, who keeps you trotting, is never satisfied, and

力,不过在这方面做一些微不足道的牺牲还是可以的,并且应该愉快地去做。只是我恐怕自己不会高兴。”当梅格沮丧地想到她盼望了很久的漂亮礼物泡了汤,不由得摇头叹息。

“但是我认为我们那点可怜的钱也发挥不了什么作用。我们每人只得一元钱。根本不能给部队多少帮助。我们不指望妈妈为我们买什么礼物,只是我特别想买一本《水中女神》,我很久以前就想买那本书子。”乔说,她一向嗜书如命。

“我计划去买一些新乐谱。”贝思轻声叹息着说,她的声音轻得没有一个人能听到。

“我还想买一盒高级的费伯氏画笔呢,我的确很需要它们。”艾米直截了当地说道。

“关于这些钱怎么花,妈妈从来没有说起过,她也不愿意我们节日里一无所有。不如让我们大家谁喜欢什么就随意买点什么算了,图个高兴嘛。为了挣这些钱,我们受了多少苦!”乔带着一种绅士的派头审视着自己的鞋跟,大声地说道。

“就是嘛——几乎每天都得教那些难缠的孩子们,现在真是好想在家轻松轻松!”梅格又诉起苦来了。

“你的辛苦还赶不上我的一半呢,”乔说,“我总是与一个神经兮兮的老太太在一起关上好几个小时,被她使唤得一刻也闲不住,而且从来都不



worries you till you you're ready to fly out the window or cry?'

'It's naughty to fret, but I do think washing dishes and keeping things tidy is the worst work in the world. It makes me cross, and my hands get so stiff, I can't practice well at all.' And Beth looked at her rough hands with a sigh that any one could hear that time.

'I don't believe any of you suffer as I do,' cried Amy, 'for you don't have to go to school with impertinent girls, who plague you if you don't know your lessons, and laugh at your dresses, and label your father if he isn't rich, and insult you when your nose isn't nice.'

'If you mean libel, I'd say so, and not talk about labels, as if Papa was a pickle bottle,' advised Jo, laughing.

'I know what I mean, and you needn't be statistical about it. It's proper to use good words, and improve your vocabulary,' returned Amy, with dignity.

'Don't peck at one another, children. Don't you wish we had the money Papa lost when we were little, Jo? Dear me! How happy and good we'd be, if we had no worries!' said Meg, who could remember better times.

'You said the other day you thought we were a deal happier than the King children, for they were fighting and fretting all the time, in spite of their money.'

'So I did, Beth. Well, I think we are. For

会让她感到满意,委屈得你真想离开这个世界或者大哭一场。"

"虽然抱怨是不对的,可是我的确感到洗碗打扫房子在这个世界上最难以忍受的事情。它让我的脾气越来越坏,而且我的双手也变得粗糙僵硬,无法灵活地弹琴了。"贝思叹息着看着自己粗糙的双手,这一次每个人都听清楚了。

"我不相信你们哪一个人会比我受的苦更多,"艾米叫道,"因为你们不必去上学,那些女孩子粗俗无礼,她们会因为你上课听不懂而讽刺你,会嘲笑你简朴的衣着,由于爸爸没有钱,我就要遭受她们的侮辱诽谤,就连鼻子长得不好看,也成了她们攻击我的一种借口。"

"你的发音太成问题了,听你这么一念,别人会把爸爸理解为一个坛子的。"乔笑着纠正道。

"行了,我知道怎么发音,用不着你来'冷嘲热讽',我用这种古怪的读法是为了增强'字(词)汇'的表现力,"艾米针锋相对地反击乔。

"不要再拌嘴了,姑娘们。乔,难道你不希望重回到小时候我们有钱的日子吗?哦,假如我们没有任何烦恼,我们将会多么幸福和睦呀!"梅格想起了过去的好日子,说道。

"可是你前几天说过,你认为我们比王孙公子幸福得多,因为尽管他们有钱,可是他们之间勾心斗角,一天到晚忧心忡忡,烦恼不堪。"

"我的确这样说过,贝思,一直到

though we do have to work, we make fun of ourselves, and are a pretty jolly set, as Jo would say.'

'Jo does use such slang words!' observed Amy, with a reproving look at the long figure stretched on the rug.

Jo immediately sat up, put her hands in her pockets, and began to whistle.

'Don't, Jo. It's so boyish!'

'That's why I do it.'

'I detest rude, unladylike girls!'

'I hate affected, niminy - piminy chits!'

'Birds in their little nests agree,' sang Ceth, the peacemaker, with such a funny face that both sharp voices softened to a laugh, and the 'pecking' ended for that time.

'Really, girls, you are both to be blamed,' said Meg, beginning to lecture in her elder - sisterly fashion. 'You are old enough to leave off boyish tricks, and to behave better, Josephine. It didn't matter so much when you were a little girl, but now you are so tall, and turn up your hair, you should remember that you are a young lady.'

'I'm not! And if turning up my hair makes me one, I'll wear it in two tails till I'm twenty,' cried Jo, pulling off her net, and shaking down a chestnut mane. 'I hate to think I've got to grow up, and be Miss March, and wear

现在我仍然这么认为,因为,尽管我们必须去干活,可是我们能够快乐地生活在一起,就像乔说的那样,是一个快乐的团体。"

"乔总是喜欢用那些粗俗的俚语!"艾米说道,责怪地瞥了一眼在地毯上躺着的长身躯。

乔马上坐了起来,把双手往衣袋里一插,然后开始吹口哨。

"不要这样,乔,这太男孩子气了。"

"这就是我为什么要吹的原因。"

"我讨厌行为粗鲁、没有淑女风度的女孩子!"

"我痛恨那些虚伪的、装腔作势的大小姐!"

"'巢穴里的鸟儿一起唱。'"和平天使贝思唱起了停战的圣歌,她脸上带着欢快而幽默的表情,使那针锋相对的两姐妹不禁一笑,就这样结束了"拌嘴"。

"说真的,姑娘们,你们两个都应该受到责备,"身为大姐的梅格开始了说教,"你已经长大了,完全应该放弃男孩子玩的把戏,应该多注意自己的言谈举止,约瑟芬。当你还是个小女孩的时候,这倒没什么,可是现在你已经这么高了,头发也盘起来了,就应该牢记自己的淑女身份。"

"我可不是什么淑女!如果把头发盘起来就被看作淑女,那么我情愿梳成两条辫子,一直到二十岁,"乔大声叫着。把发网拉了下来,一头浓密的深褐色的头发垂落下来。"我真不

long gowns, and look as prim as a China Aster! It's bad enough to be a girl, anyway, when I like boy's games and work and manners! I can't get over my disappointment in not being a boy. And it's worse than ever now, for I'm dying to go and fight with Papa. And I can only stay home and knit like a poky old woman!'

And Jo shook the blue army sock till the needles rattled like castanets, and her ball bounded across the room.

'Poor Jo! It's too bad, but it can't be helped. So you must try to be contented with making your name boyish, and playing brother to us girls,' said Beth, stroking the rough head with a hand that all the dish washing and dusting in the world could not make ungentle in its touch.

'As for you, Amy,' continued Meg, 'you are altogether too particular and prim. Your airs are funny now, but you'll grow up an affected little goose, if you don't take care. I like your nice manners and refined ways of speaking, when you don't try to be elegant. But your absurd words are as bad as Jo's slang.'

'If Jo is a tomboy and Amy a goose, what am I, please?' asked Beth, ready to share the lecture.

'You're a dear, and nothing else,' answered Meg warmly, and no one contradicted her, for the 'Mouse' was the pet of the fami-

想长大,因为长大就要做马奇小姐。我不喜欢穿长礼服,不喜欢做一个扭捏作态的大家闺秀。作女孩子真是一件最糟糕的事情,我喜欢男孩子的游戏,男孩子的工作和男孩子风度。今生不能成为男孩子是我的一大遗憾,而现在比以往任何时候都要糟,我多么盼望能与爸爸一起并肩作战呀,可是现在只能守在家中做家务,就跟一个毫无生气的老太婆一样!"

乔挥动着蓝色的军袜,使袜子里面的针响个不停,线团也滚得满屋子都是。

"可怜的乔!这真是太不幸了,只是我也不能帮助你,所以你就只好改换一个更有男子气的名字,来扮演我们姐妹的哥哥,使自己得到一点安慰。"贝思一边说着,一边用柔软的双手轻轻抚摸着乔倚在她膝上的乱蓬蓬的脑袋。

"至于你,艾米,"梅格继续说道,"你讲究得太过份了,简直到了呆板的地步。现在你的神情看起来滑稽有趣,不过长此下去,就会成为一个矫揉造作的小呆鹅。假如抛弃了做作的成分,你的言谈举止还是非常优雅的,只是你说的那些蠢话与乔的傻话没有什么两样。"

"假如乔是一个疯丫头,艾米就是一个小呆鹅,那么我呢?"贝思忍不住插嘴问道。

"你是一个乖女孩,不像她们。"梅格温和地回答道。没有一个人反驳她,因为这位"胆小鼠"在这个家里是

ly.

As young readers like to know 'how people look', we will take this moment to give them a little sketch of the four sisters, who sat knitting away in the twilight, while the December snow fell quietly without, and the fire crackled cheerfully within. It was a comfortable room, though the carpet was faded and the furniture very plain, for a good picture or two hung on the walls, books filled the recesses, chrysanthemums and Christmas roses bloomed in the windows, and a pleasant atmosphere of home peace pervaded it.

Margaret, the eldest of the four, was sixteen, and very pretty, being plump and fair, with large eyes, plenty of soft brown hair, a sweet mouth, and white hands, of which she was rather vain. Fifteen-year-old Jo was very tall, thin, and brown, and reminded one of a colt, for she never seemed to know what to do with her long limbs, which were very much in her way. She had a decided mouth, a comical nose, and sharp, gray eyes, which appeared to see everything, and were by turns fierce, funny, or thoughtful. Her long, thick hair was her one beauty, but it was usually bundled into a net, to be out of her way. Round shoulders had Jo, big hands and feet, a flyaway look to her clothes, and the uncomfortable appearance of a girl who was rapidly shooting up into a woman and didn't like it.

Elizabeth, or Beth, as everyone called her, was a rosy, smooth-haired, bright -

一个宠儿。

因为年轻的读者都喜欢了解“人物长得怎么样”，利用这个机会，我们就描述一下四姐妹的容貌，此时已经是黄昏时分了，雪花正静静地在屋外飘着，屋里的炉火发出噼啪的声音，她们正在做针线活儿。尽管这间旧房子铺的地毯已经褪了色，但是这是一个非常舒适的房间，家具也非常简朴：有一两幅雅致的图画挂在墙上，书柜里塞满了书本，菊花和圣诞玫瑰在窗台上绽放，宁静而温馨的气氛充满了整个房间。

玛格丽特是大姐，十六岁，长得非常漂亮，丰满而白皙。她有一双大眼睛，一头漂亮而柔软的棕色头发，甜甜的笑容，一双白皙的手，这一切使她相当的出众。十五岁的乔长得又高又瘦，皮肤黝黑，总让人联想到一匹小公马，修长的双腿好像让她感到无所适从。她的嘴巴有种刚毅果敢的味道，俊俏的鼻子，灰色的明眸锐利敏感，好像能把每一样东西看透，她的目光变幻不定，一会儿炽烈，一会儿幽默，一会儿又好像陷入了沉思。浓密的长发使她看起来非常美丽，可是为了方便，一般情况下她会用发网束住长发。她双肩圆润，大手大脚，穿的衣服又宽又大。这些都显示她已经长成一个成熟的女性，心里却极不情愿这样，所以常常流露出这个阶段的女孩所特有的尴尬神情。

伊丽莎白，或者称为贝思，每一个人都这样称呼她的，红润的皮肤，闪

eyed girl of thirteen, with a shy manner, a timid voice, and a peaceful expression which was seldom disturbed. Her father called her 'Little Miss Tranquility', and the name suited her excellently, for she seemed to live in a happy world of her own, only venturing out to meet the few whom she trusted and loved.

Amy, though the youngest, was a most important person, in her own opinion at least. A regular snow maiden, with blue eyes, and yellow hair curling on her shoulders, pale and slender, and always carrying herself like a young lady mindful of her manners.

What the characters of the four sisters were we will leave to be found out.

The clock struck six and, having swept up the hearth, Beth put a pair of slippers down to warm. Somehow the sight of the old shoes had a good effect upon the girls, for Mother was coming, and everyone brightened to welcome her. Meg stopped lecturing, and lighted the lamp, Amy got out of the easy chair without being asked, and Jo forgot how tired she was as she sat up to hold the slippers nearer to the blaze.

'They are quite worn out. Marmee must have a new pair.'

'I thought I'd get her some with my dollar,' said Beth.

'No, I shall!' cried Amy.

'I'm the oldest,' began Meg, but Jo cut in with a decided, 'I'm the man of the family now Papa is away, and I shall provide the slippers, for he told me to take special care of

着光泽的秀发,一双明亮的眼睛。她的举止总是很腼腆,说话的声音也很胆怯,神情宁静安祥,她的父亲称她为“小宁静”,这个名字是极其适合她的,因为她总是把自己关在自己的那个小天地里,只有和几个最亲近的人交往的勇气。

艾米尽管是最小的,却是一个最重要的人。至少她自己是这样认为的,她仪态端庄,身材纤细,皮肤白皙,长着一双蓝眼睛,金黄色的头发卷曲地披在肩头,她的言谈举止都显得非常成熟稳重,总是一副淑女派头。

至于四姐妹的性格如何,这还得我们以后去发现。

时钟敲了六下,贝思已经把壁炉上面打扫干净了,一双便鞋在壁炉上面放着,以便把它烘干。看到这种情景,姑娘们就意识到妈妈快要回来了,于是大家的心情又愉快起来,准备迎接妈妈。梅格没有再训教姐妹们,她把灯点上。艾米也不需要吩咐,就从安乐椅上起来了。乔则坐起来,把鞋子挪到离火炉更近的地方,好让鞋干快些,忙碌使她忘了疲倦。

“鞋子已经相当破旧了,该给妈妈买双新的了。”

“我想用我的钱为她买一双,”贝思说。

“不,我来买!”艾米大声叫道。

“我是老大,”梅格说道,但是乔果断地把她的话打断了,“爸爸不在家的时候,我就是家里的男子汉了,应该由我来买鞋。因为爸爸告诉过我,他不

Mother while he was gone.'

'I'll tell you what we'll do,' said Beth, 'let's each get her something for Christmas, and not get anything for ourselves.'

'That's like you, dear! What will we get?' exclaimed Jo.

Everyone thought soberly for a minute, then Meg announced, as if the idea was suggested by the sight of her own pretty hands, 'I shall give her a nice pair of gloves.'

'Army shoes, best to be had,' cried Jo.

'Some handkerchiefs, all hemmed,' said Beth.

'I'll get a little bottle of cologne. She likes it, and it won't cost much, so I'll have some left to buy my pencils,' added Amy.

'How will we give the things?' asked Meg.

'Put them on the table, and bring her in and see her open the bundles. Don't you remember how we used to do on our birthdays?' answered Jo.

'I used to be so frightened when it was my turn to sit in the chair with the crown on, and see you all come marching round to give the presents, with a kiss. I liked the things and the kisses, but it was dreadful to have you sit looking at me while I opened the bundles,' said Beth, who was toasting her face and the bread for tea at the same time.

'Let Marmee think we are getting things for

在家的时候要我照顾好妈妈。"

"我告诉你们,我们怎么做,"贝思说,"我们每一个人都送给妈妈一件圣诞礼物,我们自己就别要什么东西了。"

"还是你点子多,亲爱的!我们应该送什么呢?"乔大声地叫道。

每一个人都冷静地思考了一会儿,梅格先有了主意,她大声地宣布说:"我会给妈妈买一双精致的手套。"可能是自己的一双巧手启发了她。

"送双军鞋,那才是最好的,"乔大声喊道。

"我想送些镶边小手帕,"贝思说。

"我将会送一小瓶古龙香水。妈妈喜欢古龙香水,而且它花不了多少钱,我还能为自己省下一些钱买铅笔,"艾米接着说。

"这些东西我们打算怎么送呢?"梅格问道。

"把东西放到桌上,领她进来,让她当着我们的面亲手把礼物拆开。我们的生日是怎么过的,你忘记了吗?"乔回答说。

"我每次过生日都戴着花冠,坐在那张大椅子上,看着你们所有的人走过来吻我一下,并给我礼物,这时我常常心慌意乱。我喜欢你们的礼物和亲吻,不过要是你们都坐在那里看着我打开礼物,却是一件让我感到害怕的事情,"贝思说道,她一边取暖,一边烘烤着茶点。

"让妈妈以为,我们正在准备的这

ourselves, and then surprise her. We must go shopping tomorrow afternoon, Meg. There is so much to do about the play for Christmas night,' said Jo, marching up and down, with her hands behind her back, and her nose in the air.

'I don't mean to act any more after this time. I'm getting too old for such things,' observed Meg, who was as much a child as ever about 'dressing-up' frolics.

'You won't stop, I know, as long as you can trail round in a white gown with your hair down, and wear gold-paper jewelry. You are the best actress we've got, and there'll be an end of everything if you quit the boards,' said Jo. 'We ought to rehearse tonight. Come here, Amy, and do the fainting scene, for you are as stiff as a poker in that.'

'I can't help it. I never saw anyone faint, and I don't choose to make myself all black and blue, tumbling flat as you do. If I can go down easily, I'll drop. If I can't, I shall fall into a chair and be graceful. I don't care if Hugo does come at me with a pistol,' returned Amy, who was not gifted with dramatic power, but was chosen because she was small enough to be borne out shrieking by the villain of the piece.

'Do it this way. Clasp your hands so, and stagger across the room, crying frantically, "Roderigo Save me! Save me!"' and away went Jo, with a melodramatic scream which was truly thrilling.

Amy followed, but she poked her hands out

这些东西是给我们自己的,然后让她惊喜一下。明天下午我们就必须去买东西了,梅格,圣诞夜的演出还有很多事情要做呢。”乔说道,她把手背在后面,昂起头,来来回回地走着。

“演完这一次,我不打算再演了。我已经太大了,不适合做那些事情了,”梅格嘴里这么说道,其实心里还是非常留恋那种孩子们的“小把戏”。

“你不会退出的,我知道,只要你能把头发披下来,戴着金纸做的珠宝,穿上你白色的长裙,你就不会的。你是我们所拥有的最好的演员,假如你退出了,那么一切都完了,”乔说,“今天晚上我们应该进行排练。来,艾米,把晕倒那段戏再练一遍,演这幕戏时,你太僵硬了,简直就像根拨火棍。”

“我也没有办法!我从来没有见人晕倒过,我也不想直挺挺地摔倒,像你那样把自己弄得青一块紫一块的。假如我能够慢慢地倒在地上,我就倒下,否则,还不如在椅子上体面地倒下去。哪怕雨果拿枪指着,我还是这么说,”艾米答道,她在表演方面没有多高的天赋,之所以让她来演这个角色是因为她年纪小,在戏中碰到歹徒时由她发出尖叫声更加可信。

“这一点要这样做。要握着两只手,摇摇摆摆地走过房间,疯狂似地大声喊叫:‘罗德力戈!救救我!救救我!’”乔做着示范,发出一声夸张的尖叫声,那叫声真的让人毛骨悚然。

艾米模仿着她,可是她伸出来的



stiffly before her, and jerked herself along as if she went by machinery, and her 'Ow!' was more suggestive of pins being run into her than of fear and anguish. Jo gave a despairing groan, and Meg laughed outright, while Beth let her bread burn as she watched the fun with interest.

'It's no use! Do the best you can when the time comes, and if the audience laughs, don't blame me. Come on, Meg.'

Then things went smoothly, for Don Pedro defied the world in a speech of two pages without a single break. Hagar, the witch, chanted an awful incantation over her kettleful of simmering toads, with weird effect. Roderigo rent his chains asunder manfully, and Hugo died in agonies of remorse and arsenic, with a wild, 'Ha! Ha!'

'It's the best we've had yet,' said Meg, as the dead villain sat up and rubbed his elbows.

'I don't see how you can write and act such splendid things, Jo. You're a regular Shakespeare!' exclaimed Beth, who firmly believed that her sisters were gifted with wonderful genius in all things.

'Not quite,' replied Jo modestly. 'I do think THE WITCHES CURSE, an Operatic Tragedy is rather a nice thing, but I'd like to try McBETH, if we only had a trapdoor for Banquo. I always wanted to do the killing part. "Is that a dagger that I see before me?"' muttered Jo, rolling her eyes and clutching at the air, as she had seen a famous

两只手却无比僵硬,发出与情景相差万里的尖叫声。她“啊!”的那一声,不像是感到恐惧和极度痛苦,倒像是被针刺了一下。乔发出一声失望的叹息,梅格却大笑起来,贝思很感兴趣地看着,竟然把面包烤糊了。

“真是没有一点用处!等正式演出时,你尽力做到最好吧,假如观众笑话你,可以责备我。来吧,梅格。”

接下来就顺利多了。唐·佩德罗一口气读完了两页向世界挑战的宣言;女巫黑格在火上炖了满满一锅的蟾蜍,对着它们妖里妖气地念了一道可怕的咒语;罗德力戈威猛地扯断了锁链,雨果“哈!哈!”地狂叫着,就在悔恨中喝下了砒霜,痛苦地死去。

“这是我们做的最好的一次,”当“死去”的反派角色坐起来揉擦肘部时,梅格说。

“乔,我简直不能相信你竟然能写出这么优秀的剧本,而且演得那么精彩!你真是当代的莎士比亚!”贝思大声地叫道。她坚信她的姐妹们在各个方面都有令人惊奇的才华。

“不要太夸奖我嘛,”乔谦逊地答道,“我也认为《女巫的咒语》是一部相当好的具有歌剧风格的悲剧,可是我想演《麦克白》,如果我们能给班柯一个合适的舞台。我总想演刺客这一角色。‘在我面前我看到的是一把刀吗?’”乔喃喃着,她在模仿着她见过的一位著名的悲剧演员,眼珠转动着,两



tragedian do.

‘No, it’s the toasting fork, with Mother’s shoe on it instead of the bread. Beth’s stage-struck!’ cried Meg, and the rehearsal ended in a general burst of laughter.

‘Glad to find you so merry, my girls,’ said a cheery voice at the door, and actors and audience turned to welcome a tall, motherly lady with a ‘can I help you’ look about her which was truly delightful. She was not elegantly dressed, but a noble-looking woman, and the girls thought the gray cloak and unfashionable bonnet covered the most splendid mother in the world.

‘Well, dearies, how have you got on to-day? There was so much to do, getting the boxes ready to go tomorrow, that I didn’t come home to dinner. Has anyone called, Beth? How is your cold, Meg? Jo, you look tired to death. Come and kiss me, baby.’

While making these maternal inquiries Mrs. March got her wet things off, her warm slippers on, and sitting down in the easy chair, drew Amy to her lap, preparing to enjoy the happiest hour of her busy day. The girls flew about, trying to make things comfortable, each in her own way. Meg arranged the tea table, Jo brought wood and set chairs, dropping, over-turning, and clattering everything she touched. Beth trotted to and fro between parlor kitchen, quiet and busy, while Amy gave directions to everyone, as she sat with her hands folded.

手伸向天空。

“不，这是烧烤叉，你怎么拿着妈妈的鞋当作面包放上去了。贝思看得人迷了！”梅格喊道。排练就在姐妹们的笑声中结束了。

“我很高兴看到你们这么快乐，我的女儿们。”从门口传来一个愉快的声音，原来是妈妈回来了，于是大家都转身迎接。马奇太太个子高高的，面目慈祥，神情充满了母爱，令人感到和蔼可亲。她的衣着虽不华丽，不过却透着一股高贵的气质。这些女孩子都认为，这位穿着灰色外套，戴着一顶过时无边小圆软帽的女士，是天底下最了不起的母亲。

“好了，宝贝们，你们今天过得怎么样？我有太多的事情需要去做，明天就要发出的箱子还没有准备好，所以没能回家吃饭。有人来过吗，贝思？你感冒好些没有，梅格？乔，你看起来累坏了，过来吻吻我吧，宝贝。”

马奇太太关怀备至地逐一问候了自己的孩子们。她把湿衣物换掉，穿上暖和的拖鞋，在安乐椅中坐了下来，把艾米拉到膝边，准备享受她忙碌了一天后最幸福的时光。姑娘们都行动起来，各显身手，努力把事情安排得周到稳妥。梅格摆好茶桌，乔把木柴搬过来，放到椅子上，不过柴却掉得满地都是，并且打倒了椅子，弄得满地咔嚓咔嚓响，贝思来来回回地穿梭在客厅和厨房之间，默默地忙碌着，而艾米却把手臂交叉抱在胸前，指挥着每一个人。