被誉为最温馨、最浪漫、最诙谐有趣的成人童话经典之作!

最畅销的英汉对照 双语读物

长腿叔叔

[美]韦伯斯特/著 迪子/译

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PREFACE

或许,因为我们的生活太过丰裕,所以日渐疏离了珍惜;或许,是因为我们被太多的爱包围,所以丧失了爱的感觉;那么,就让我们走进身为孤儿的乔若莎的生活,与她一起,在人生孤寂的深渊中,体验珍惜的快乐,感受爱的温情。

美国著名女作家简·韦伯斯特诞生于 1876 年,原名爱丽丝·简·韦伯斯特。她的母亲是美国著名幽默大师马克·吐温的侄女,父亲查尔斯是一位出版商。1894 年,韦伯斯特进入寄宿学校。因为一个室友也叫爱丽丝,她便将自己的名字改为简·韦伯斯特。

1897年,简·韦伯斯特进入巴萨大学读书,大学毕业后成为自由撰稿人和小说家。她一生共写了八部小说及无数未出版的故事和剧本,其作品以朴实、清新、机智、幽默而蜚声文坛。1912年出版的《长腿叔叔》被誉为她的"最佳作品",出版后不久便被改编成舞台剧,引起强烈反响。

《长腿叔叔》是一本书信体小说,文字通俗而优美,整部小说除了开篇是第三人称描写外,其整体部分是由在孤儿院长大的少女乔若莎写给"长腿叔叔"的信组成,而"长腿叔叔"则是顽皮的乔若莎对资助她上大学却不肯透露姓名的好心理事的称呼。阅读没有回信的信札似乎是观看一场乏味的独角戏,然而,作者却以其生动、细腻的描绘,使我们从中看到了作品中所展现的不同人物,孤儿院院长李皮太太的古板、刻薄和势利;名门之后朱莉娅的保守、乏味和强烈的等级观念;中产阶级子弟莎莉的温柔、友好和善解人意;杰维少爷的温文尔雅与和蔼可亲;好心理事"长腿叔叔"的神秘、专制和对乔若莎的体贴与慈爱……当然,我们更看到了孤女乔若莎的活泼、俏皮、善良、热情及小小的虚荣、自卑与叛逆。

在乔若莎心中,"长腿叔叔"不仅是资助自己学习的恩人,更是自己幻想中的家人。她通过给长腿叔叔写信,并时不时地画上一些有趣的简笔画来表达自己对新生活的热爱及对幸福生活的向往。那些被大多数人视为理所当然的东西,在她眼里是遥不可及的,因而她能体味到更多的快乐。她拒绝了出身名门的杰维少爷的爱情,却创造了最温馨、最浪漫的爱情奇迹!

《长腿叔叔》是一部洋溢着温馨、怀旧、惊喜、明朗和热情的爱与奇迹的成人童话,它用纯真而诚挚的情感提醒生活在幸福和爱中的人们,在享受温馨和美的生活的同时,要珍惜所拥有的一切,无论是得到还是施与,都要心怀感激。

本译作在力求传达原著风采的同时,还奉送给读者原汁原味的英文版本,使读者在双语的世界里,细品名著的神韵。





- 沮丧的星期三 / 001BLUE WEDNESDAY
- 乔若莎·艾伯特小姐给长腿叔叔史密斯先生的信 / 010
 THE LETTERS OF MISS JERUSHA ABBOTT TO MR. DADDY-LONG-LEGS-SMITH



The first Wednesday in every month was a Perfectly Awful Day — a day to be awaited with dread, endured with courage and forgotten with haste. Every floor must be spotless, every chair dustless, and every bed without a wrinkle. Ninety-seven squirming little orphans must be scrubbed and combed and buttoned into freshly starched ginghams; and all ninety-seven reminded of their manners, and told to say, "Yes, sir," "No, sir," whenever a Trustee spoke.

It was a distressing time; and poor Jerusha Abbott, being the oldest orphan, had to bear the brunt of it. But this particular first Wednesday, like its predecessors, finally dragged itself to a close. Jerusha escaped from the pantry where she had been making sandwiches for the asylum's guests, and turned upstairs to accomplish her regular work. Her special care was room F, where eleven little tots, from four to seven, occupied eleven little cots set in a row. Jerusha assembled her charges straightened their rumpled frocks, wiped their noses, and started them in an orderly and willing line towards the diningroom to engage themselves for a blessed half hour with bread and milk and prune pudding.

Then she dropped down on the window seat and leaned throbbing temples against the cool glass. She had been on her feet since five that morning, doing everybody's bidding, scolded and hurried by a nervous matron. Mrs. Lippett, behind the scenes, did not always maintain that calm and pompous dignity with which she faced an audience of Trustees and lady visitors. Jerusha gazed out across a broad stretch of frozen lawn, beyond the tall iron paling that marked the confines of the asylum, down undulating ridges sprinkled with country estates, to the spires of the village rising from the midst of bare trees.

The day was ended — quite successfully, so far as she knew. The Trustees and the visiting committee had made their rounds, and read their reports, and drunk their tea, and now were hurrying home to their own cheerful firesides, to forget their bothersome little charges for another month. Jerusha leaned forward watching with curiosity — and a touch of wistfulness — the stream of carriages and automobiles that rolled out of the asylum gates. In imagination she followed first one equipage, then another, to the big



You are wan-ted In the office, And I think you'd Better hurry up! houses dotted along the hillside. She pictured herself in a fur coat and a velvet hat trimmed with feathers leaning back in the seat and nonchalantly murmuring "Home" to the driver. But on the door-sill of her home the picture grew blurred.

Jerusha had an imagination — an imagination, Mrs. Lippett told her, that would get her into trouble if she didn't take care — but keen as it was, it could not carry her beyond the front porch of the houses she would enter. Poor, eager, adventurous little Jerusha, in all her seventeen years, had never stepped inside an ordinary house; she could not picture the daily routine of those other human beings who carried on their lives undiscovered by orphans.

Je-ru-sha Ab-bot

Tommy Dillon, who had joined the choir, came singing up the stairs and down the corridor, his chant growing louder as he approached room F. Jerusha wrenched herself from the window and refaced the troubles of life.

"Who wants me?" she cut into Tommy's chant with a note of sharp anxiety.

Mrs. Lippett in the office,

And I think she's mad.

Ah-a-men!

Tommy piously intoned, but his accent was not entirely malicious. Even the most hardened little orphan felt sympathy for an erring sister who was summoned to the office to face an annoyed matron; and Tommy liked Jerusha even if she did sometimes jerk him by the arm and nearly scrub his nose off.

Jerusha went without comment, but with two parallel lines on her brow. What could have gone wrong, she wondered. Were the sandwiches not thin enough? Were there shells in the nut cakes? Had a lady visitor seen the hole in Susie Hawthorn's stocking? Had — o, horgors! — one of the cherubic little babes in her own room F "sauced" a Trustee?

The long lower hall had not been lighted, and as she came downstairs, a last Trustee stood, on the point of departure, in the open door that led to the porte-cochere. Jerusha caught only a fleeting impression of the man — and the impression consisted entirely of tallness. He was waving his arm towards an automobile waiting in the curved

drive. As it sprang into motion and approached, head on for an instant, the glaring headlights threw his shadow sharply against the wall inside. The shadow pictured grotesquely elongated legs and arms that ran along the floor and up the wall of the corridor. It looked, for all the world, like a huge, wavering daddy-long-legs.

Jerusha's anxious frown gave place to quick laughter. She was by nature a sunny soul, and had always snatched the tiniest excuse to be amused. If one could derive any sort of entertainment out of the oppressive fact of a Trustee, it was something unexpected to the good. She advanced to the office quite cheered by the tiny episode, and presented a smiling face to Mrs. Lippett. To her surprise the matron was also, if not exactly smiling, at least appreciably affable; she wore an expression almost as pleasant as the one she donned for visitors.

"Sit down, Jerusha, I have something to say to you."

Jerusha dropped into the riearest chair and waited with a touch of breathlessness. An automobile flashed past the window; Mrs. Lippett glanced after it.

"Did you notice the gentleman who has just gone?"

"I saw his back."

"He is one of our most influential Trustees, and has given large sums of money towards the asylum's support. I am not at liberty to mention his name; he expressly stipulated that he was to remain unknown."

Jerusha's eyes widened slightly; she was not accustomed to being summoned to the office to discuss the eccentricities of Trustees with the matron.

"This gentleman has taken an interest in several of our boys. You remember Charles Benton and Henry Freize? They were both sent through college by Mr. — this Trustee, and both have repaid with hard work and success the money that was so generously expended. Other payment the gentleman does not wish. Heretofore his philanthropies have been directed solely toward the boys; I have never been able to interest him in the slightest degree in any of the girls in the institution, no matter how deserving. He does not, I may tell you, care for girls."

"No, ma'am," Jerusha murmured, since some reply seemed to be expected at this point.

"Today at the regular meeting, the question of your future was brought up."

Mrs. Lippett allowed a moment of silence to fall, then resumed in a slow, placid manner extremely trying to her hearer's suddenly tightened nerves.

"Usually, as you know, the children are not kept after they are sixteen, but an exception was made in your case. You had finished our school at fourteen, and having done so well in your studies — not always, I must say, in your conduct — it was determined to let you go on in the village high school. Now you are finishing that, and of course the asylum cannot be responsible any longer for your support. As it is, you have had two years more than most."

Mrs. Lippett overlooked the fact that Jerusha had worked hard for her board during

those two years, that the convenience of the asylum had come first and her education second; that on days like the present she was kept at home to scrub.

"As I say, the question of your future was brought up and your record was discussed — thoroughly discussed."

Mrs. Lippett brought accusing eyes to bear upon the prisoner in the dock, and the prisoner looked guilty because it seemed to be expected?— not because she could remember any strikingly black pages in her record.

"Of course the usual disposition of one in your place would be to put you in a position where you could begin to work, but you have done well in school in certain branches; it seems that your work in English has even been brilliant. Miss Pritchard, who is on our visiting committee, is also on the school board; she has been talking with your rhetoric teacher, and made a speech in your favor. She also read aloud an essay that you had written entitled, Blue Wednesday."

Jerusha's guilty expression this time was not assumed.

"It seemed to me that you showed little gratitude in holding up to ridicule the institution that has done so much for you. Had you not managed to be funny I doubt if you would have been forgiven. But fortunately for you, Mr. —, that is, the gentleman who has just gone — appears to have an immoderate sense of humor. On the strength of that impertinent paper, he has offered to send you to college."

"To college?" Jerusha's eyes grew big.

Mrs. Lippett nodded.

"He waited to discuss the terms with me. They are unusual. The gentleman, I may say, is erratic. He believes that you have originality, and he is planning to educate you to become a writer."

"A writer?" Jerusha's mind was numbed. She could only repeat Mrs. Lippett's words.

"That is his wish. Whether anything will come of it, the future will show. He is giving you a very liberal allowance, almost, for a girl who has never had any experience in taking care of money, too liberal. But he planned the matter in detail, and I did not feel free to make any suggestions. You are to remain here through the summer, and Miss Pritchard has kindly offered to superintend your outfit. Your board and tuition will be paid directly to the college, and you will receive in addition during the four years you are there, an allowance of thirty-five dollars a month. This will enable you to enter on the same standing as the other students. The money will be sent to you by the gentleman's private secretary once a month, and in return, you will write a letter of acknowledgment once a month. That is — you are not to thank him for the money; he doesn't care to have that mentioned, but you are to write a letter telling of the progress in your studies and the details of your daily life. Just such a letter as you would write to your parents if they were living.

"These letters will be addressed to Mr. John Smith and will be sent in care of the

secretary. The gentleman's name is not John Smith, but he prefers to remain unknown. To you he will never be anything but John Smith. His reason in requiring the letters is that he thinks nothing so fosters facility in literary expression as letter-writing. Since you have no family with whom to correspond, he desires you to write in this way; also, he wishes to keep track of your progress. He will never answer your letters, nor in the slightest particular take any notice of them. He detests letter-writing and does not wish you to become a burden. If any point should ever arise where an answer would seem to be imperative — such as in the event of your being expelled, which I trust will not occur — you may correspond with Mr. Griggs, his secretary. These monthly letters are absolutely obligatory on your part; they are the only payment that Mr. Smith requires, so you must be as punctilious in sending them as though it were a bill that you were paying. I hope that they will always be respectful in tone and will reflect credit on your training. You must remember that you are writing to a Trustee of the John Grier Home."

Jerusha's eyes longingly sought the door. Her head was in a whirl of excitement, and she wished only to escape from Mrs. Lippett's platitudes, and think. She rose and took a tentative step backwards. Mrs. Lippett detained her with a gesture; it was an oratorical opportunity not to be slighted.

"I trust that you are properly grateful for this very rare good fortune that has befallen you. Not many girls in your position ever have such an opportunity to rise in the world. You must always remember —"

"I — yes, ma'am, thank you. I think, if that's all, I must go and sew a patch on Freddie Perkins's trousers."

The door closed behind her, and Mrs. Lippett watched it with dropped jaw, her peroration in midair.

REALES?

每个月的第一个星期三都是一个极糟糕的日子——个怀着恐惧等候、鼓足勇气忍耐,并且在忙乱中忘记的一天。这一天,每一处地板都必须保证没有污渍,每一把椅子都必须纤尘不染,每一张床单都必须没有丝毫褶皱。还要给九十七个好动贪玩的小孤儿梳洗干净,给他们穿上浆洗过的花格布衬衫;并且还要提醒他们注意礼貌,只要有领事提出问题,就要回答"是的,先生","不,先生"。

这真是一个令人沮丧的日子;可怜的乔若莎·艾伯特是他们中最年长的孤儿, 当然也就更倒霉了。不过,这个特殊的星期三总算像以前一样画上了圆满的句号。 乔若莎逃出了那个她刚刚还在为孤儿院的客人们做三明治的厨房,转而上楼去完 成她每天的例行工作。她负责F号房,那儿有十一个四岁到七岁不等的小家伙,以 及十一张排成一列的小床。乔若莎把他们都叫来,帮他们把弄皱的衣服拉直,把鼻

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涕抹净后,就让他们排成整齐的一排到餐室去,在那里他们可以度过半个小时的幸福时光,享用牛奶、面包和梅子布丁。

然后,她就跌坐在窗前的椅子上,把涨得发痛的太阳穴抵在冰冷的玻璃上。从早晨五点钟开始,她就一直忙碌个不停,听从每个人的命令,还要不时地受到一个神经质的女监事的责骂和催促。私下里,李皮太太可不像她在面对理事们和来访的女士时表现得那样冷静和端庄。乔若莎的目光掠过孤儿院那高高的铁栅栏,望向一片开阔的上了冻的枯草地,在这片草地的延伸处是几座波浪般起伏的山峦,山上散落着村舍,在光秃的树干间露出房舍的尖顶。

这一天就这样结束了——就她所知,事情做得还算圆满。理事们和到访的委员已经巡视完毕,并且听取了报告,也喝了茶,现在正匆忙地要赶回家中温暖的火炉旁,至少要到下个月才会再想起他们照管的这些麻烦的小家伙。乔若莎好奇地向前探过身去——还带着那么一丝渴望——注视着窗外成串的马车和汽车驶出孤儿院的大门。想象中,她跟随着一辆辆马车来到了那些沿着山坡星罗棋布的大房子前。她幻想着自己穿着皮大衣,戴着插有羽毛的天鹅绒帽子,靠在车座上,漫不经心地对车夫说:"回家!"然而她的想象却在房子门口打住了,至于房子里面的模样她无论如何也想象不出来。

乔若莎有一个幻想——李皮太太说,如果她不小心点儿,这个幻想就会给她招惹麻烦——但是无论她的想像多么丰富,也不能带她进入那些大房子的内部,而仅限于房外的门廊。可怜的、满怀渴望的、喜欢冒险的小乔若莎,在她十七年的生命里,还从未踏入任何一个普通的家庭;她无法想象出那些没有孤儿打扰的人每天的生活是怎样的。

乔……若……莎……艾……伯……特

去办公室……报到

我认为……你最好

能够快点儿到!

刚加入唱诗班的汤米·狄龙边唱边上了楼,从走廊走向F房间,声音越来越近, 也越来越响。乔若莎将自己的思绪从窗外拉回,重新面对生活里的麻烦事。

"是谁找我?"她打断了汤米的说唱,急切地问道。

李皮太太在办公室,

我想她一定气疯了。

阿-----门!

汤米仍虔诚地吟唱着,他的音调里并不完全是幸灾乐祸的成分。即使是心肠 最硬的小孤儿,对于一个做了错事的姐姐被叫到办公室去面对一个讨厌的女监事 这件事,也会表示相当的同情的;况且,汤米很喜欢乔若莎,尽管她有时会猛拉他 的胳膊,洗脸时几乎把他的鼻子擦下来。

乔若莎没说什么就走开了,但是她的额头上却多了两道皱纹。她猜测着又出了什么差错。是三明治切得不够薄?还是有果壳掉进了杏仁蛋糕里?还是来访的女士看到了苏茜·豪森袜子上的漏洞?还是一哦,糟糕!——是不是她负责的F房的哪个可爱的小家伙对理事无礼了?

又长又矮的走廊里的灯已经熄了,当她下楼时,看到最后一位理事正站在供车辆出入的通道口处,准备离开。对这个人,乔若莎仅有一个短暂的印象——这种印象完全由高度组成。他正向停在弯形车道上的一辆汽车挥动着手臂。当汽车发动后朝他迎面驶来的瞬间,耀眼的车前灯将他的身影投射到他背对着的墙上。影子的形状非常奇怪,腿和手臂都被拉长了,从地板一直延伸到走廊的墙壁上。无论怎么看,它都像一只摇摇晃晃的大蜘蛛——通常,人们称之为"长腿叔叔"。



乔若莎原本紧蹙的眉头立刻舒展了,取而代之的是一阵欢快的笑声。她生性 开朗乐观,一点儿小事就能让她高兴起来。事实上,从一个令人感到压抑的理事身 上发现笑料,的确是一件意外的好事。这段小插曲让她在去往办公室的路上始终 很愉快,以至于在见到李皮太太时,脸上还挂着微笑。让她感到惊讶的是这位女监 事的脸上也同样挂着微笑,即使这种微笑看起来很假,但至少还有那么一点儿和 蔼可亲;她的表情几乎像对待来访的客人一样令人感到舒适。

"坐下来,乔若莎,我有件事情要告诉你。"

乔若莎坐在了一把离她最近的椅子上,有点儿紧张地等待着。一辆汽车从窗前一闪而过;李皮太太的目光紧随着它。

"你注意到刚刚离开的那位先生了吗?"

"我看见了他的背影。"

"他是我们最有势力的理事之一,还捐了一大笔钱给孤儿院。他特别要求过不要透露他的姓名,所以我不能冒昧地提及他的名字。"

乔若莎的眼睛微微睁大了些;她不太习惯被召到办公室与女监事评论某个理 事的古怪脾气。

"这位先生曾对我们这里的几个男孩儿特别关心。你还记得查尔斯·本顿和亨利·弗雷兹吗?他们都是被这位——呃……这位理事先生送去上大学的,他们两个

DADDY-LONG-LEGS 长腿叔叔

人学习都很用功,并用优秀的成绩来报答他慷慨的资助。但这位先生不想要任何 回报。到目前为止,他所资助的对象都是男孩儿;我从未能使他对任何女孩儿稍加 注意,不论她多么优秀。我可以告诉你,他一点儿也不关心女孩子。"

"是的,夫人。"乔若莎低声地说,因为此刻似乎需要她对此作一些回答。

"在今天的例会上,有人提到了你的前途问题。"

李皮太太停顿了片刻,然后又缓慢地继续说了下去,这使得她的听众神经突然紧绷,难受至极。

"通常,你知道的,孩子们过了十六岁以后就不能留下来了,不过你是一个例外。你十四岁就完成了我们孤儿院的课程,而且表现良好——我必须说,你的操行也并非一直都很好——由于你的表现,我们才决定让你继续就读村里的高中。现在你的高中学业也完成了,孤儿院也没有责任再负担你的生活费了。事实上,你已经比其他人多享受了两年教育。"

李皮太太全然不顾乔若莎在这两年的时间里,为了她的生活费努力工作的事实,更何况孤儿院的工作始终被摆在第一位,而学业则排第二;像今天的这种情况,她就得留下来做清洁工作。

"我刚才说了,有人在会上提出了你的前途问题,并且对你的表现作了讨论——彻底的讨论。"

李皮太太用一种责难的眼光盯着她的犯人,而这个犯人也表现出一副有罪的样子——这并不是因为她记得自己曾经做过什么坏事,而是因为她觉得李皮太太似乎就想让她有这种表现。

"当然,通常情况下,给你安排一个合适的工作就可以了,但是你的某些学科的成绩非常好,尤其是在英文写作方面有着过人的才气。普里查德小姐也在我们的参访团里,而且她还是你们学校理事会的成员;她曾和你的作文老师谈过你,在会上也为你说了不少好话。她还读了你写的一篇作文,题目是《沮丧的星期三》。"

这下乔若莎的心虚不再是假装的了。

"我认为,对于这个将你养大的孤儿院,你只是一心取笑,根本没存有丝毫的感激之情。我不知道你是不是有意嘲弄,也不确定你是否会被宽恕。但是你很幸运,那位先生——就是刚才离去的那位先生——表现出了很大度的幽默感。就因为你那篇无礼的作文,他表示愿意资助你去上大学。"

"去上大学?"乔若莎瞪大了眼睛。

李皮太太点了点头。

"他留下来和我讨论了条件,很不寻常的条件。让我说,这位先生真的很古怪。他认为你很有天分,想把你培养成一个作家。"

"一个作家?"乔若莎的大脑一下子变得麻木了。她只重复着李皮太太的话。

"那是他的愿望。至于是否能实现,将来自然会知道。他会给你一大笔补助金,对一个从来没有过理财经验的女孩儿来说,那数目太庞大了。但是他计划得很周全,我也不好再提什么建议了。这个夏天你要继续待在这儿,普里查德小姐爽快地答应要为你准备所有的行李。你的生活费和学费会被直接付给校方,并且,在大学四年里,你每个月都会收到三十五美元的额外补助。这将使你能够享有和其他同学平等地生活。每个月这笔钱都会由他的私人秘书邮寄给你,同样,作为回报,你每个月都要写一封感谢信。更确切地说——不是让你感谢他为你支付一切费用;他对那些根本不屑一顾,而是把你的学习进展和日常生活详细地写信告知他。就像写给你的父母一样,如果他们还在世的话。

"这些信将指名给约翰·史密斯先生,由他的秘书转交。这位先生的名字当然不是约翰·史密斯,只不过他更喜欢隐姓埋名。对你来说,他永远都是约翰·史密斯。他要你写信的理由是,他认为没有什么比写信更能培养写作技巧了。因为你没有家人可以联络,他才要求你以这种方式写信给他;同时,他也希望能随时了解你的学习进展。他不会给你回信,也不会特别关注你的信。他讨厌写信,也不希望写信成为你的一种负担。如果有什么紧急的事情发生,需要他回复——比如说你被学校开除,我相信这种情况不会出现——你可以写信给他的秘书格里格兹先生。这些每月的书信是你绝对要遵守的义务;这也是史密斯先生唯一的要求,因此你一定要认认真真地写信,就把它当成是你将要支付的账单一样。我希望这些信件的语气能始终保持谦恭,展现你所受到的良好教育。你要牢记,你的信是写给约翰·格利尔孤儿院的一位理事先生的。"

乔若莎的眼睛渴望地望向门口。她的脑子兴奋得乱作了一团,她只希望快点 儿从冗长说教的李皮太太身边逃开,然后好好地想一想。她站起身来,试探地向后 退了一步。李皮太太却做了个要她留下的手势;这可是个不容错过的训话的大好 机会。

"我相信你一定会为这个降临在你身上的好运心存感激。在这个世上,没有几个像你这种出身的女孩子能遇到这种好运。你一定要记得——"

"我——会的,夫人。谢谢您。我想如果没别的事的话,我得回去给弗雷迪·柏金的裤子补上补丁了。"

乔若莎带上房门离开了,李皮太太目瞪口呆地盯着门板,她的长篇大论正说 到兴头上呢。



乔若莎·艾伯特小姐给长腿叔叔史密斯先生的信

THE LETTERS OF MISS JERUSHA ABBOTT TO MR. DADDY-LONG-LEGS-SMITH



215 Fergussen Hall, 24th September

Dear Kind-Trustee-Who-Sends-Orphans-to-College,

Here I am! I travelled yesterday for four hours in a train. It's a funny sensation, isn't it? I never rode in one before.

College is the biggest, most bewildering place — I get lost whenever I leave my room. I will write you a description later when I'm feeling less muddled; also I will tell you about my lessons. Classes don't begin until Monday morning, and this is Saturday night. But I wanted to write a letter first just to get acquainted.

It seems queer to be writing letters to somebody you don't know. It seems queer for me to be writing letters at all — I've never written more than three or four in my life, so please overlook it if these are not a model kind.

Before leaving yesterday morning, I had a very serious talk with Mrs. Lippett. She told me how to behave all the rest of my life, and especially how to behave towards the kind gentleman who is doing so much for me. I must take care to be Very Respectful.

But how can one be very respectful to a person who wishes to be called John Smith? Why couldn't you have picked out a name with a little personality? I might as well write letters to Dear Hitching-Post or Dear Clothes-Prop.

I have been thinking about you a great deal this summer; having somebody take an interest in me after all these years makes me feel as though I had found a sort of family. It seems as though I belonged to somebody now, and it's a very comfortable sensation. I must say, however, that when I think about you, my imagination has very little to work upon. There are just three things that I know:

I. You are tall.

II. You are rich.

III. You hate girls.

I suppose I might call you Dear Mr. Girl-Hater. Only that's sort of insulting to me. Or Dear Mr. Rich-Man, but that's insulting to you, as though money were the only important thing about you. Besides, being rich is such a very external quality. Maybe you won't stay rich all your life; lots of very clever men get smashed up in Wall Street. But at least you will stay tall all your life! So I've decided to call you Dear Daddy-Long-Legs. I hope you won't mind. It's just a private pet name, we won't tell Mrs. Lippett.

The ten o'clock bell is going to ring in two minutes. Our day is divided into sections by bells. We eat and sleep and study by bells. It's very enlivening; I feel like a fire horse all of the time. There it goes! Lights out. Good night.

Observe with what precision I obey rules — due to my training in the John Grier Home.

Yours most respectfully, Jerusha Abbott



弗高森楼215室 9月24日

亲爱的送孤儿上大学的善良的理事先生:

我终于到学校了! 昨天,我坐了四个小时的火车。这里的一切都让我感到那么新奇,不是吗? 我以前还从没坐过火车呢!

校园太大了,大得常令我感到困惑——只要我一离开我的房间,就会迷失方向。等我对这里的情况熟悉了些后,再向您详细地描述一下;同时,我也会把我的课程安排汇报给您。现在是星期六的晚上,星期一上午才开始上课。但不管怎样,我还是想先写一封信,好让我们能彼此认识一下。

您不知道,给一个陌生人写信总有些怪怪的。对我来说,写信本身就是一件很 奇怪的事——我这辈子到现在写的信决不超过三四封,所以,如果我写得不够规 范,还请您谅解。

就在昨天早晨离开之前,李皮太太和我作了一次严肃的谈话。她告诫我在以后的生活中应该如何为人处世,尤其是如何对待那位为我做了那么多的仁慈的先生。我必须要"特别尊敬"他。

可是,对一个希望被称作约翰·史密斯的人,我要怎样才能表示我的"特别尊敬"呢?您为什么不挑选一个稍有个性的名字呢?我看我最好还是给"亲爱的系马