



BY V. NABOKOV

LOLITA



英语
文学名著
注释系列

Annotated English
Literature Series

洛丽塔

【美】弗·纳博科夫 著 杨昊成 史伏荣 注释

译林出版社

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出版前言

学语言，阅读实在至关重要。广泛阅读，利于学习者存储语言信息。随着语言信息量的不断扩大，学习者自会更深地体会、感受语言，渐至运用自如的境地。

《英语文学名著注释系列》的出版，是我们酝酿已久的。列入本系列的作品均为原版注释本。这么做，目的很明确，正是想给广大英语学习者呈献原始的语言材料，以助他们丰富完善自己的语言知识。做到这一点，是我们的宗旨，更是我们的心愿。

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1993年4月

作者小传

纳博科夫(Vladimir Nabokov, 1899—1977), 俄裔美国作家, 用俄语和英语写作。生于俄国圣彼得堡一个贵族家庭, 从小受到文学的熏陶, 少年时期就开始写诗。十月革命后, 他于1919年随父母流亡西欧, 在英国剑桥大学攻读法国和俄国语言文学。1922年获学士学位后, 曾先后住在柏林和巴黎, 创作了大量诗歌、小说和剧本, 并将一些欧洲作家的作品译成俄文, 将他自己的小说译成英文。1940年纳粹入侵法国前夕, 纳博科夫移居美国, 在韦尔斯里学院和康奈尔大学执教, 1945年加入美国国籍。1960年移居瑞士, 仍继续写作和翻译。

纳博科夫主要是以其长篇小说在世界文学史上留下自己的名字的。他的许多小说是直接用英文写的, 如长篇小说《洛丽塔》(1955)、《普宁》(1957)、《苍白的火》(1962)和《阿达》(1969), 还有一些短篇小说。纳博科夫的作品大多以他自己的生活经历为基础, 作品中的人物往往是他所熟悉的学者或艺术家, 他们生活飘泊不定, 常常沉溺于回忆、梦幻或潜心艺术, 藉此来摆脱现实生活的痛苦。在形式上他不拘泥于传统, 对六七十年代美国后现代作家影响很大。

内 容 介 绍

长篇小说《洛丽塔》是纳博科夫的成名作，1955年先在巴黎、1958年又在美国出版。小说写一个从欧洲去美国的中年男子对一个美国少女的热恋故事。30岁的亨伯特出生在巴黎，在大学教授俄国和欧美文学。1939年他在美国的叔叔去世，留给他几千美元的年金，并要他去美国，继承企业。亨伯特的妻子因另有所欢，不愿随他去美国，于是两人离了婚。亨伯特到美国后因精神方面的原因，在疗养院住了一年多。出院后，经人介绍他住在中年寡妇黑兹夫人家里。黑兹夫人有个12岁的女儿，长得性感、迷人。亨伯特对这位早熟的姑娘着了迷，想尽一切办法去亲近她。稍后，黑兹夫人把女儿送往夏令营，随即向亨伯特表示了爱慕之情，并要他答应同她结婚，否则就要他立即离开。这样，亨伯特同黑兹夫人结了婚。一天，黑兹夫人偷看了他的日记，得知丈夫心爱的不是她，而是她的女儿。亨伯特夫人大发雷霆，后来出去寄信时被汽车撞死。亨伯特去夏令营接洛丽塔，晚上在旅馆里疯狂地同她发生了性关系，而洛丽塔也很主动。此后，在汽车旅馆、公寓、旷野，到处留下了他俩做爱的痕迹。这种不正常的关系持续了两年多。在此期间洛丽塔的心情常常捉摸不定，变幻莫测，同时还同别的男人幽会。一天，洛丽塔突然失踪了，亨伯特虽设法多方寻找，但始终没有得知她的下落。三年以后他突然

收到她的一封信。信中说，她已和狄克结婚，快生孩子了，目前经济上遇到困难，需要他的经济帮助。亨伯特找到了洛丽塔，并知道了三年前她是被戏剧家奎尔蒂诱拐走的。奎尔蒂这个人下流透顶，要洛丽塔和一群裸体男女在一起胡搞，洛丽塔不同意，于是被他抛弃了。她到处流浪，后来遇到机器工狄克，两人结了婚，并怀了孩子。亨伯特给洛丽塔留下4000美元，是她所要求的10倍。亨伯特离开洛丽塔后，找到了奎尔蒂，并开枪把他打死，随即被捕。在监狱里亨伯特用50多天的时间写了这部《白人鳏夫的自白》。开庭前几天，他因脑血栓死于狱中。

Foreword

"*Lolita*, or the Confession of a White Widowed Male," such were the two titles under which the writer of the present note received the strange pages it preambulates. "Humbert Humbert," their author, had died in legal captivity, of coronary thrombosis, on November 16, 1952, a few days before his trial was scheduled to start. His lawyer, my good friend and relation, Clarence Choate Clark, Esq., now of the District of Columbia bar, in asking me to edit the manuscript, based his request on a clause in his client's will which empowered my eminent cousin to use his discretion in all matters pertaining to the preparation of "*Lolita*" for print. Mr. Clark's decision may have been influenced by the fact that the editor of his choice had just been awarded the Poling Prize for a modest work ("*Do the Senses make Sense?*") wherein certain morbid states and perversions had been discussed.

My task proved simpler than either of us had anticipated. Save for the correction of obvious solecisms and a careful suppression of a few tenacious details that despite "H.H."s own efforts still subsisted in his text as signposts and tombstones (indicative of places or persons that taste would conceal and compassion spare), this remarkable memoir is presented intact. Its author's bizarre cognomen is his own invention; and, of course, this mask—through which two hypnotic eyes seem to glow—had to remain unlifted in accordance with its wearer's wish. While "Haze" only rhymes with the heroine's real surname, her first name is too closely interwound with the inmost fiber of the book to allow one to alter it; nor (as the reader will perceive for himself) is there any practical necessity to do so. References to "H.H."s crime may be looked up by the inquisitive in the daily papers for September-October 1952; its cause and purpose would have continued to remain a complete mystery, had not this memoir been permitted to come under my reading lamp.

For the benefit of old-fashioned readers who wish to follow the destinies of the "real" people beyond the "true" story, a few details

may be given as received from Mr. "Windmuller," of "Ramsdale," who desires his identity suppressed so that "the long shadow of this sorry and sordid business" should not reach the community to which he is proud to belong. His daughter, "Louise," is by now a college sophomore. "Mona Dahl" is a student in Paris. "Rita" has recently married the proprietor of a hotel in Florida. Mrs. "Richard F. Schiller" died in childbed, giving birth to a stillborn girl, on Christmas Day 1952, in Gray Star, a settlement in the remotest Northwest. "Vivian Darkbloom" has written a biography, "My Cue," to be published shortly, and critics who have perused the manuscript call it her best book. The caretakers of the various cemeteries involved report that no ghosts walk.

Viewed simply as a novel, "Lolita" deals with situations and emotions that would remain exasperatingly vague to the reader had their expression been etiolated by means of platitudinous evasions. True, not a single obscene term is to be found in the whole work; indeed, the robust philistine who is conditioned by modern conventions into accepting without qualms a lavish array of four-letter words in a banal novel, will be quite shocked by their absence here. If, however, for this paradoxical prude's comfort, an editor attempted to dilute or omit scenes that a certain type of mind might call "aphrodisiac" (see in this respect the monumental decision rendered December 6, 1933, by Hon. John M. Woolsey in regard to another, considerably more outspoken, book), one would have to forego the publication of "Lolita" altogether, since those very scenes that one might ineptly accuse of a sensuous existence of their own, are the most strictly functional ones in the development of a tragic tale tending unswervingly to nothing less than a moral apotheosis. The cynic may say that commercial pornography makes the same claim; the learned may counter by asserting that "H.H."s impassioned confession is a tempest in a test tube; that at least 12% of American adult males—a "conservative" estimate according to Dr. Blanche Schwarzmänn (verbal communication)—enjoy yearly, in one way or another, the special experience "H.H." describes with such despair; that had our demented diarist gone, in the fatal summer of 1947, to a competent psychopathologist, there would have been no disaster; but then, neither would there have been this book.

This commentator may be excused for repeating what he has stressed in his own books and lectures, namely that "offensive" is fre-

quently but a synonym for "unusual"; and a great work of art is of course always original, and thus by its very nature should come as a more or less shocking surprise. I have no intention to glorify "H.H." No doubt, he is horrible, he is abject, he is a shining example of moral leprosy, a mixture of ferocity and jocularity that betrays supreme misery perhaps, but is not conducive to attractiveness. He is ponderously capricious. Many of his casual opinions on the people and scenery of this country are ludicrous. A desperate honesty that throbs through his confession does not absolve him from sins of diabolical cunning. He is abnormal. He is not a gentleman. But how magically his singing violin can conjure up a tendresse, a compassion for Lolita that makes us entranced with the book while abhorring its author!

As a case history, "Lolita" will become, no doubt, a classic in psychiatric circles. As a work of art, it transcends its expiatory aspects; and still more important to us than scientific significance and literary worth, is the ethical impact the book should have on the serious reader; for in this poignant personal study there lurks a general lesson; the wayward child, the egotistic mother, the panting maniac — these are not only vivid characters in a unique story: they warn us of dangerous trends; they point out potent evils. "Lolita" should make all of us—parents, social workers, educators—apply ourselves with still greater vigilance and vision to the task of bringing up a better generation in a safer world.

Widworth, Mass.
August 5, 1955

John Ray, Jr., Ph.D.

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Part One

1

Lolita, light of my life, fire of my loins. My sin, my soul. Lo-lee-tä: the tip of the tongue taking a trip of three steps down the palate to tap, at three, on the teeth. Lo. Lee. Ta.

She was Lo; plain Lo, in the morning, standing four feet ten in one sock. She was Lola in slacks. She was Dolly at school. She was Dolores on the dotted line. But in my arms she was always Lolita.

Did she have a precursor? She did, indeed she did. In point of fact, there might have been no Lolita at all had I not loved, one summer, a certain initial girl-child. In a principedom by the sea. Oh when? About as many years before Lolita was born as my age was that summer. You can always count on a murderer for a fancy prose style.

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, exhibit number one is what the seraphs, the misinformed, simple, noble-winged seraphs, envied. Look at this tangle of thorns.

2

I was born in 1910, in Paris. My father was a gentle, easy-going person, a salad of racial genes: a Swiss citizen, of mixed French and Austrian descent, with a dash of the Danube in his veins. I am going to pass around in a minute some lovely, glossy-blue picture-postcards. He owned a luxurious hotel on the Riviera. His father and two grandfathers had sold wine, jewels and silk, respectively. At thirty he married an English girl, daughter of Jerome Dunn, the alpinist, and granddaughter of two Dorset parsons, experts in obscure subjects — paleopedology and Aeolian harps, respectively. My very photogenic mother died in a freak accident (picnic, lightning) when I was three; and, save for a pocket of warmth in the darkest past, nothing of her subsists within the hollows and dells of memory, over which, if you can still stand my style (I am writing under observation), the sun of my infancy had set: surely, you all know those redolent remnants of day suspended, with the midges, about some hedge in bloom or suddenly entered and traversed by the rambler, at the bottom of a hill, in

the summer dusk; a furry warmth, golden midges.

My mother's elder sister, Sybil, whom a cousin of my father's had married and then neglected, served in my immediate family as a kind of unpaid governess and housekeeper. Somebody told me later that she had been in love with my father, and that he had lightly-heartededly taken advantage of it one rainy day and forgotten it by the time the weather cleared. I was extremely fond of her, despite the rigidity—the fatal rigidity—of some of her rules. Perhaps she wanted to make of me, in the fullness of time, a better widower than my father. Aunt Sybil had pink-rimmed azure eyes and a waxen complexion. She wrote poetry. She was poetically superstitious. She said she knew she would die soon after my sixteenth birthday, and did. Her husband, a great traveler in perfumes, spent most of his time in America, where eventually he founded a firm and acquired a bit of real estate.

I grew, a happy, healthy child in a bright world of illustrated books, clean sand, orange trees, friendly dogs, sea vistas and smiling faces. Around me the splendid Hotel Mirana revolved as a kind of private universe, a whitewashed cosmos within the blue greater one that blazed outside. From the aproned pot-scrubber to the flanneled potentate, everybody liked me, everybody petted me. Elderly American ladies leaning on their canes listed toward me like towers of Pisa. Ruined Russian princesses who could not pay my father, bought me expensive bonbons. He, *mon cher petit papa*, took me out boating and biking, taught me to swim and dive and water-ski, read to me *Don Quixote* and *Les Misérables*, and I adored and respected him and felt glad for him whenever I overheard the servants discuss his various lady-friends, beautiful and kind beings who made much of me and cooed and shed precious tears over my cheerful motherlessness.

I attended an English day school a few miles from home, and there I played rackets and fives, and got excellent marks, and, was on perfect terms with schoolmates and teachers alike. The only definite sexual events that I can remember as having occurred before my thirteenth birthday (that is, before I first saw my little Annabel) were: a solemn, decorous and purely theoretical talk about pubertal surprises in the rose garden of the school with an American kid, the son of a then celebrated motion-picture actress whom he seldom saw in the three-dimensional world; and some interesting reactions on the part of

my organism to certain photographs, pearl and umbra, with infinitely soft partings, in Pichon's sumptuous *La Beauté Humaine* that I had filched from under a mountain of marble-bound *Graphics* in the hotel library. Later, in his delightful debonair manner, my father gave me all the information he thought I needed about sex; this was just before sending me, in the autumn of 1923, to a *lycée* in Lyon (where we were to spend three winters); but alas, in the summer of that year, he was touring Italy with Mme de R. and her daughter, and I had nobody to complain to, nobody to consult.

3

Annabel was, like the writer, of mixed parentage: half-English, half-Dutch, in her case. I remember her features far less distinctly today than I did a few years ago, before I knew Lolita. There are two kinds of visual memory: one when you skillfully recreate an image in the laboratory of your mind, with your eyes open (and then I see Annabel in such general terms as: "honey-colored skin," "thin arms," "brown bobbed hair;" "long lashes," "big bright mouth"); and the other when you instantly evoke, with shut eyes, on the dark innerside of your eyelids, the objective, absolutely optical replica of a beloved face, a little ghost in natural colors (and this is how I see Lolita).

Let me therefore primly limit myself, in describing Annabel, to saying she was a lovely child a few months my junior. Her parents were old friends of my aunt's, and as stuffy as she. They had rented a villa not far from Hotel Mirana. Bald brown Mr. Leigh and fat, powdered Mrs. Leigh (born Vanessa van Ness). How I loathed them! At first, Annabel and I talked of peripheral affairs. She kept lifting handfuls of fine sand and letting it pour through her fingers. Our brains were turned the way those of intelligent European preadolescents were in our day and set, and I doubt if much individual genius should be assigned to our interest in the plurality of inhabited worlds, competitive tennis, infinity, solipsism and so on. The softness and fragility of baby animals caused us the same intense pain. She wanted to be a nurse, in some famished Asiatic country; I wanted to be a famous spy.

All at once we were madly, clumsily, shamelessly, agonizingly in love with each other; hopelessly, I should add, because that frenzy of

mutual possession might have been assuaged only by our actually imbibing and assimilating every particle of each other's soul and flesh; but there we were, unable even to mate as slum children would have so easily found an opportunity to do. After one wild attempt we made to meet at night in her garden (of which more later), the only privacy we were allowed was to be out of earshot but not out of sight on the populous part of the *plage*. There, on the soft sand, a few feet away from our elders, we would sprawl all morning, in a petrified paroxysm of desire, and take advantage of every blessed quirk in space and time to touch each other: her hand, half-hidden in the sand, would creep toward me, its slender brown fingers sleepwalking nearer and nearer; then, her opalescent knee would start on a long cautious journey; sometimes a chance rampart built by younger children granted us sufficient concealment to graze each other's salty lips; these incomplete contacts drove our healthy and inexperienced young bodies to such a state of exasperation that not even the cold blue water, under which we still clawed at each other, could bring relief.

Among some treasures I lost during the wanderings of my adult years, there was a snapshot taken by my aunt which showed Annabel, her parents and the staid, elderly, lame gentleman, a Dr. Cooper, who that same summer courted my aunt, grouped around a table in a sidewalk café. Annabel did not come out well, caught as she was in the act of bending over her *chocolat glacé*, and her thin bare shoulders and the parting in her hair were about all that could be identified (as I remember that picture) amid the sunny blur into which her lost loveliness graded; but I, sitting somewhat apart from the rest, came out with a kind of dramatic conspicuousness: a moody, beetle-browed boy in a dark sport shirt and well-tailored white shorts, his legs crossed, sitting in profile, looking away. That photograph was taken on the last day of our fatal summer and just a few minutes before we made our second and final attempt to thwart fate. Under the flimsiest of pretexts (this was our very last chance, and nothing really mattered) we escaped from the café to the beach, and found a desolate stretch of sand, and there, in the violet shadow of some red rocks forming a kind of cave, had a brief session of avid caresses, with somebody's lost pair of sun-glasses for only witness. I was on my knees, and on the point of possessing my darling, when two bearded bathers, the old man of the sea and his brother, came out of the sea with exclamations