

纯爱英文馆·美国少女成长系列

·中文导读英文版·



*Aunt Tane's Nieces*

# 珍珠谜案

〔美〕莱曼·弗兰克·鲍姆 著

中国国际广播出版社

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## 图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

珍珠谜案: 英文/ (美) 莱曼·弗兰克·鲍姆著. —北京:  
中国国际广播出版社, 2015.1

(纯爱英文馆·美国少女成长系列)

ISBN 978-7-5078-3748-3

I. ①珍… II. ①莱… III. ①英语—语言读物②长篇  
小说—美国—近代 IV. ①H319.4:I

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字 (2014) 第221577号

## 珍珠谜案

著 者	[美] 莱曼·弗兰克·鲍姆
责任编辑	尹 航 张娟平
版式设计	国广设计室
责任校对	徐秀英
出版发行	中国国际广播出版社 (83139469 83139489[传真])
社 址	北京复兴门外大街2号 (国家广电总局内)
	邮编: 100866
网 址	www.chirp.com.cn
经 销	新华书店
印 刷	北京艺堂印刷有限公司
开 本	850×1168 1/32
字 数	300千字
印 张	9
版 次	2015年1月 北京第一版
印 次	2015年1月 第一次印刷
书 号	ISBN 978-7-5078-3748-3 / H·431
定 价	24.00 元

CRI

中国国际广播出版社

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## 序 言

《珍珠谜案》是“纯爱英文馆·美国少女成长”系列的第九本。

随着时间的推移，简姨妈的三位侄女——贝丝、帕齐和露易丝都在成长的道路上收获着属于各自的快乐与淡淡的烦恼。在这本书中，贝丝、帕齐与约翰叔叔共同来到了加利福尼亚的南部，享受着那里晴朗而舒适的天气。年纪最大的侄女露易丝和丈夫亚瑟·威尔登搬来与大家共同生活。在聚会上，亚瑟遇见了在纽约的旧识蒙特罗斯太太。这位太太带来了她的两位侄女——莫德·斯坦顿和弗洛·斯坦顿。性格直爽、坦率的帕齐惊异于莫德的美貌。初识大家，两个女孩显得十分腼腆。不过随着交往的加深，她们和大家渐渐地成为了好朋友。原来，莫德今年18岁，弗洛今年15岁，她们都在大陆电影公司做演员。在圣塔莫尼卡海滩，勇敢的莫德救起了几乎被海浪吞噬的陌生男孩。从此，大家的生活就与这位名叫A·琼斯的年轻男孩产生了千丝万缕的联系。

“言念君子，温其如玉”，虚弱、清瘦、单纯而又敏感

的琼斯先生有着王子般的面庞，精致细腻却略显青涩。他性情温和、自然，丝毫不见雕琢的痕迹，浑身上下散发出一股迷人的气息。接连发生的一件件事情令大家惊异不已，琼斯竟然来自南太平洋中一个遥远的名为桑荷阿的岛屿，并且有着谜一般的身世和数不清的家产。最令人不解的是大陆电影公司的戈尔茨坦经理都对他无比尊重。这一切都无法与平素羞涩而温柔的他联系起来。他是那样谦逊而真挚，当得知女孩们希望开办一家剧院后，就竭尽全力地支持她们，甚至希望帮助她们建造 20 家剧院。他不仅积极帮助她们分析、策划、完善方案，还迅速请来相关的专业人员预备将计划付诸实际，并包揽这个计划所需的所有开销。琼斯先生如同童话中一位来自遥远岛屿的王子，富有、知性、善良而又温柔。我们应该感谢鲍姆塑造了这样一个充满梦幻感的人物，他遥远得令人感到不真实，却又实实在在地存在于每一个女孩的心底。

为了感谢大家对他真诚的帮助，琼斯送给每人一颗绝世珍珠作为礼物。珍珠散发着迷人的光泽，如同琼斯的心一样纯净。然而，这些珍珠却被一名神秘男子认定为琼斯所盗。就这样，琼斯被卷入了一桩奇特的珍珠谜案之中。事情的真相究竟是怎样的呢？

从营救琼斯的那一刻起，美丽的莫德就显露出坚强、勇敢又不失机智的性格。看到海浪中有人绝望地挥动着手臂，她就奋力朝那遇险的人游了过去，并吩咐亚瑟和帕齐

划船营救。在案件的进展过程中，她积极分析案件，并试图协助律师想出好办法，还主动提出要到监狱里看望被囚禁的琼斯。

帕齐的性格则十分爽朗明快，如同加利福尼亚南部的阳光一样。琼斯被救出后，脸色十分苍白，还被胃部的不适折磨着，他的厌世情绪令大家忍不住开导他。在屡次劝说无效的情况下，直率的帕齐做出了一件出人意料之事。她果断地说自己才是医生，并要求琼斯扔掉那些药片，她无法眼睁睁地看着他饿死。她干脆利落地要求服务员送来热巧克力、煮鸡蛋和一些吐司，并命令他把这些都吃下去。出人意料的是，琼斯先生并没有反抗，而是狼吞虎咽地把这些食物全部吃了进去。虽然有些鲁莽冲动，但她对的一片热心，她愿意尽自己所能帮助别人的那份略显不近人情的热情，都令人感受到典型的美国女孩的可爱、单纯、直爽与善良。

在得知琼斯卷入案件时，约翰和亚瑟就此事共同商讨，并决定对女孩们暂时隐瞒此事，以免引起她们内心的混乱。在琼斯被捕之后，约翰叔叔立即决定替琼斯去找最好的律师，并依照琼斯的吩咐找到戈尔茨坦经理。在得知戈尔茨坦不愿给予琼斯任何帮助后，约翰显得极为愤怒。亚瑟·威尔登陪同琼斯一起来到监狱，并尽自己所能帮助琼斯。二人的正义感、热心肠及勇于担当的性格都给人留下了深刻的印象。

莫德与琼斯并没有像古典芭蕾舞剧中的男女主角那样坠入爱河、翩翩起舞，即使大家曾经猜测琼斯醒来见到莫德之后会发生怎样浪漫的故事。淡淡的、朦胧的情愫弥漫在二人之间，就像琼斯醒来那么渴望见到那位救起自己的女孩，就像琼斯为了帮助莫德而不惜与戈尔茨坦发生冲突并埋下了对自己不利的伏笔，就像莫德于琼斯被捕之后度过的那个久久难眠之夜。那个夜晚，夜凉如水，四周一片寂静。莫德在自己的房间里辗转反侧，难以入眠。她在反复回忆关于琼斯的种种，他的样貌，他的举止，他的话语，他的背景，他的一切。无论如何她都要帮助琼斯，她仔细回想每一个细节，把关于这个案件的每一个疑点都写在自己的备忘录上，写好之后她终于进入了梦乡。情缘深浅有时并不自知，即使遗憾，也只能化作淡淡的问候与心底深深的思念。

一行人对琼斯的帮助，以及琼斯对大家的回报都令人感到无比温暖，仿佛在小说中重温了人与人之间久违的单纯而真挚的情感。这样的情感如同绝世珍珠一般珍贵而又历久弥新，这样的情感不掺杂一丁点儿功利的色彩，直接沁入人的心底，轻轻打动了心底最柔软的那个角落，令人忍不住微笑着流泪。

鲍姆通篇采用轻松、随意又不乏幽默的文字，令读者沉浸在美国文学特有的轻快、明朗的氛围之中。地道的美式英语表达，以及各种修辞手法如头韵、尾韵的运用，都令本书妙趣横生、生机盎然。情节跌宕起伏，悬念丛生，使读者随着故事的发展忽而莞尔一笑，忽而忧心忡忡，忽而又欣喜若狂。

虽则为一部小说，却于字里行间洋溢并延续着鲍姆童话的风格，在真实的场景中注入了童话般的人物和情节，使全书平添了一抹甜美的梦幻色彩。

神秘的琼斯先生究竟是谁？幽谧而美丽的桑荷阿岛以及说话粗声粗气的卡格船长真的存在吗？那些绝世珍珠究竟来自哪儿呢？现在就踏上加利福尼亚南部的迷人土地来一探究竟吧！

## 在场人物

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贝丝（简姨妈的侄女）*Beth*

帕齐（简姨妈的侄女）*Patsy*

露易丝（简姨妈的侄女）*Louise*

亚瑟·威尔登（露易丝的丈夫）*Arthur Weldon*

约翰·梅瑞克（约翰叔叔）*John Merrick (Uncle John)*

蒙特罗斯太太 *Mrs. Montrose*

莫德·斯坦顿（蒙特罗斯太太的侄女）*Maud Stanton*

弗洛伦斯·斯坦顿（简称弗洛，莫德的妹妹，同为蒙特罗斯太太的侄女）*Florence Stanton (Flo)*

A·琼斯 *A. Jones*

欧缇斯·威纳（大陆电影公司导演）*Otis Werner*

戈尔茨坦（大陆电影公司经理）*Goldstein*

依西多尔 *Isadore Le Drieux*

弗雷德·A·科尔比（律师）*Fred A. Colby*

卡格船长 *Captain Carg*



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## *Chapter 1*

### **CAUGHT BY THE CAMERA**

加利福尼亚清晨，贝丝和帕齐正在街头悠闲地散步。忽然间，一座大楼倒塌了，人们横冲直撞，纷纷从楼内涌出，恐惧弥漫在整条街道上。这突如其来的一幕令贝丝和帕齐惊呆了，她们不禁绝望地尖叫起来。然而，这惊险的一幕以及她俩那惊慌失措的神情却莫名其妙地出现在电影的镜头中，这究竟是怎么一回事呢？

"This is getting to be an amazing old world, " said a young girl, still in her "teens, " as she musingly<sup>①</sup> leaned her chin on her hand.

"It has always been an amazing old world, Beth, " said another girl who was sitting on the porch<sup>②</sup> railing<sup>③</sup> and swinging her feet in the air.

"True, Patsy, " was the reply; "but the people are doing such peculiar things nowadays."

"Yes, yes!" exclaimed a little man who occupied a reclining chair<sup>④</sup> within hearing distance; "that is the way with you young folks—always confounding the world with its people."

"Don't the people make the world, Uncle John? " asked Patricia Doyle, looking at him quizzically.

"No, indeed; the world could get along very well without its people; but the people—"

"To be sure; they need the world, " laughed Patsy, her blue eyes twinkling so that they glorified<sup>⑤</sup> her plain, freckled face.

"Nevertheless, " said Beth de Graf, soberly, "I think the people have struck a rapid pace these days and are growing bold and impudent. The law appears to allow them too much liberty. After our experience of this morning I shall not be

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① musingly: 沉思地, 冥想地

② porch: 门廊

③ railing: 栏杆

④ reclining chair: 躺椅

⑤ glorify: 赞美

surprised at anything that happens—especially in this cranky<sup>①</sup> state of California."

"To what experience do you allude<sup>②</sup>, Beth?" asked Uncle John, sitting up straight and glancing from one to another of his two nieces. He was a genial looking, round-faced man, quite bald and inclined to be a trifle stout<sup>③</sup>; yet his fifty-odd years sat lightly upon him.

"Why, we had quite an adventure this morning," said Patsy, laughing again at the recollection, and answering her uncle because Beth hesitated to. "For my part, I think it was fun, and harmless fun, at that; but Beth was scared out of a year's growth. I admit feeling a little creepy at the time, myself; but it was all a joke and really we ought not to mind it at all."

"Tell me all about it, my dear!" said Mr. Merrick, earnestly, for whatever affected his beloved nieces was of prime importance to him.

"We were taking our morning stroll along the streets," began Patsy, "when on turning a corner we came upon a crowd of people who seemed to be greatly excited. Most of them were workmen in flannel shirts, their sleeves rolled up, their hands grimy<sup>④</sup> with toil. These stood before a brick building that seemed like a factory, while from its doors other crowds of

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① cranky: 古怪的

② allude: 暗示

③ stout: 强壮的

④ grimy: 肮脏的

workmen and some shopgirls were rushing into the street and several policemen were shaking their clubs and running here and there in a sort of panic. At first Beth and I stopped and hesitated to go on, but as the sidewalk seemed open and fairly free I pulled Beth along, thinking we might discover what the row was about. Just as we got opposite the building a big workman rushed at us and shouted: 'Go back—go back! The wall is falling.' "

"Well, Uncle, you can imagine our dismay<sup>①</sup>. We both screamed, for we thought our time had come, for sure. My legs were so weak that Beth had to drag me away and her face was white as a sheet and full of terror. Somehow we managed to stagger into the street, where a dozen men caught us and hurried us away. I hardly thought we were in a safe place when the big workman cried: 'There, young ladies; that will do. Your expression was simply immense and if this doesn't turn out to be the best film of the year, I'll miss my guess! Your terror-stricken<sup>②</sup> features will make a regular hit, for the terror wasn't assumed, you know. Thank you very much for happening along just then. "

Patsy stopped her recital to laugh once more, with genuine merriment<sup>③</sup>, but her cousin Beth seemed annoyed and Uncle John was frankly bewildered.

"But—what—what—was it all about?" he inquired.

① dismay: 沮丧, 绝望

② terror-stricken: 受惊吓的, 恐怖的

③ merriment: 欢乐

"Why, they were taking a moving picture, that was all, and the workmen and shopgirls and policemen were all actors. There must have been a hundred of them, all told, and when we recovered from our scare I could hear the machine beside me clicking away as it took the picture."

"Did the wall fall? " asked Uncle John.

"Not just then. They first got the picture of the rush-out and the panic, and then they stopped the camera and moved the people to a safe distance away. We watched them set up some dummy<sup>①</sup> figures of girls and workmen, closer in, and then in some way they toppled<sup>②</sup> over the big brick wall. It fell into the street with a thundering crash, but only the dummies were buried under the debris<sup>③</sup>."

Mr. Merrick drew a long breath.

"It's wonderful!" he exclaimed. "Why, it must have cost a lot of money to ruin such a building—and all for the sake of a picture!"

"That's what I said to the manager," replied Patsy; "but he told us the building was going to be pulled down, anyhow, and a better one built in its place; so he invented a picture story to fit the falling walls and it didn't cost him so much as one might think. So you see, Uncle, we are in that picture—big as life and scared stiff—and I'd give a lot to see how we look when we're positively terror-stricken."

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① dummy: 假人

② topple: 倒塌, 推翻

③ debris: 碎片, 残骸

"It will cost you just ten cents, " remarked Beth, with a shrug; "that is, if the picture proves good enough to be displayed at one of those horrid little theatres."

"One? " said Uncle John. "One thousand little theatres, most likely, will show the picture, and perhaps millions of spectators will see you and Patsy running from the falling wall."

"Dear me!" wailed Patsy. "That's more fame than I bargained for. Do millions go to see motion pictures, Uncle ? "

"I believe so. The making of these pictures is getting to be an enormous industry. I was introduced to Otis Werner, the other day, and he told me a good deal about it. Werner is with one of the big concerns here—the Continental, I think—and he's a very nice and gentlemanly fellow. I'll introduce you to him, some time, and he'll tell you all the wonders of the motion picture business."

"I haven't witnessed one of those atrocious<sup>①</sup> exhibitions for months, " announced Beth; "nor have I any desire to see one again."

"Not our own special picture? " asked Patsy reproachfully.

"They had no right to force us into their dreadful drama, " protested Beth. "Motion pictures are dreadfully tiresome things—comedies and tragedies alike. They are wild and weird in conception, quite unreal and wholly impossible. Of course the scenic pictures, and those recording historical

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① atrocious: 残暴的