

纯爱英文馆·美国少女成长系列

· 中文导读英文版 ·



Aunt Tano's Nieces

横跨美国

〔美〕莱曼·弗兰克·鲍姆 著

中国国际广播出版社

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Aunt Jane's Nieces and Uncle John

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图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

横跨美国: 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 978-7-5078-3752-0

I. ①横… 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221585号

横跨美国

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责任编辑	周千红 易晓燕 张娟平
版式设计	国广设计室
责任校对	徐秀英
出版发行 社 址	中国国际广播出版社 (83139469 83139489[传真]) 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	250千字
印 张	7.25
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 978-7-5078-3752-0 / H·436
定 价	20.00 元



中国国际广播出版社

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序 言

《横跨美国》是“纯爱英文馆·美国少女成长”系列的第六本，主要讲述了约翰、道尔、帕齐和贝丝从纽约到加利福尼亚州旅行时，在路途上的种种见闻和历险。

本书主要人物中，约翰是纽约的百万富翁，是个秃顶的精明老头，他在美国西北部发了财，刚放下生意来到纽约；帕齐精力充沛，聪明活泼，幽默可爱，她有一头红色的头发，眼睛永远泛着快乐、甜美的光；贝丝是公认的美女，一头栗褐色的头发，肤若凝脂，活力四射，比姐姐帕齐要沉着、安静。

次要人物中，桃金娘是个孤儿，在车祸中双腿受伤，差点致残，后被姑妈无情地抛弃，打发她投奔素未谋面的舅舅。她饱受生活的艰辛，尝尽世间的世态炎凉，不幸的遭遇造成她胆小、自卑的性格缺陷，但她在如此境遇中依然保持了一颗坚强、乐观、感恩的心，这是她最让人感动的优秀品质。她有幸得到帕齐和贝丝的帮助，跟随她们踏上去加州的旅行；沃姆珀斯是约翰雇佣的司机，他自视清高，刚开始时行事鲁莽，后来在约翰的教导下变得沉着稳重，以精湛的驾驶技术和丰

富的社会经验受到约翰的器重，并且在摆脱西部牛仔和抵御强盗骚扰的关键时刻发挥了自已的作用。

驱车从纽约到加利福尼亚州横跨北美大陆，路途漫漫，危险重重，充满各种未知。但其中也会有各种冒险、意想不到的惊喜、沿途绝美的风光，约翰等人也是在这样的期待中上路的，事实也未让他们失望，他们一路走得惊险，麻烦不断。旅行从阿尔布开克正式开始，那里雄伟的山脉和清新的空气让生活在都市的三个女孩异常兴奋，她们兴致勃勃地等待着下面的行程。离开莫基印第安保留地后，他们到达亚利桑那州的科罗拉多大峡谷，在壮观的峡谷欣赏了美丽的日出。科罗拉多大峡谷是大自然的杰作，上帝创造的奇迹，三个女孩被它的美和壮丽深深地震撼了。作者鲍姆用自己的文字阐述了它的美，让人读来仿佛身临其境。之后他们遇到“remittance man”，他们是一群被流放到美国来的英国人，约翰等人与之的斗争是故事的高潮部分，也是整个旅程中最揪心、最艰难的部分，他们用智慧成功逃出魔掌，在这场斗争中帕齐和贝丝表现出来的机智和镇定最让人称赞。后来他们还遇到了土狼，不小心住进了一家黑店，沿着崎岖、陡峭的山路前行……整个旅程惊险又刺激，状况百出，时不时会陷入非常危险的境地，但约翰等人在困难面前从未退缩，他们互相鼓励，勇敢、坚定地继续这场旅行，最后他们终于到达气候温暖、开满鲜花的加州。这种锲而不舍、勇往直前的精神有时就是我们成功的法宝，也验证了“坚持就是胜利”这句老话。

本书不仅介绍了美国的自然景观，还介绍了美国的人文和习俗。如在莫基印第安保留地欣赏到的蛇舞表演，是印第

安人的一种宗教仪式，观众必须等表演结束以后才能离去，若中途离开会被认为是对神大不敬，可能引起不必要的麻烦，甚至造成流血和冲突。再比如，文中讲到的“remittance man”，他们是一群寄居国外靠国内汇款生活的英国人，因各种原因被流放到美国大陆，过着慵懒、颓废的生活，这也反映了美国和英国的历史渊源……读到这些，我们也感受到了美国丰富的文化习俗。美国是个年轻的移民国家，有着丰富多元的文化，它就像一个大熔炉，吸收了世界不同种族的文化成果，这些使它更有活力。

从深层意义上说，本书表达了“爱与感恩”这个主题。帕齐和贝丝收养无依无靠的孤儿桃金娘，并且一路上帮助她，带她到阳光灿烂和开满鲜花的加州疗养，显示出了无私的爱。桃金娘在旅程中慢慢有了变化，身体渐好，性格也活泼开朗了许多；之后桃金娘怀着一颗感恩的心，帮助忧郁男子走出阴影，显示了她的善良和友爱。“赠人玫瑰，手有余香”，在别人困难时伸出友谊的双手，人与人之间互帮互助，互相关爱，这个世界会更加美好。这也是鲍姆想告诉孩子们的。

从某种意义上说，本书像一本游记，展示了美国的自然和人文景观，书中的一场场冒险也让本书更具吸引力。途中一个个感人至深的情节让人感动于书中人物的美好品质和散发出来的人格魅力，仿佛受了一次心灵的洗礼。那还等什么，就请跟随作者一起，踏上这场惊险的旅程吧！

在场人物

约翰·梅里克（百万富翁）*John Merrick*

帕齐（约翰的侄女）*Patsy*

贝丝（约翰的侄女）*Beth*

道尔（帕齐父亲）*Doyle*

桃金娘（孤儿）*Myrtle Dean*

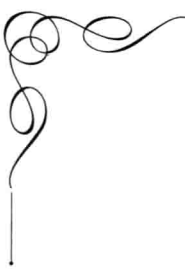
沃姆珀斯（司机）*Wampus*

丹尼尔（小提琴家）*Dan'l*

安森·琼斯（桃金娘的舅舅）*Anson Jones*

玛莎（桃金娘的姑妈）*Martha*

托比（西部牛仔）*Tobey*



A List of Chapters

<i>Chapter 1</i>	<i>INTRODUCING "MUMBLES"</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Chapter 2</i>	<i>UNCLE JOHN'S IDEA</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Chapter 3</i>	<i>MYRTLE DEAN</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Chapter 4</i>	<i>AN INTERESTING PROTÉGÉ</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>Chapter 5</i>	<i>A WONDER ON WHEELS</i>	<i>50</i>
<i>Chapter 6</i>	<i>WAMPUS SPEEDS</i>	<i>58</i>
<i>Chapter 7</i>	<i>THE CHAUFFEUR IMPROVES</i>	<i>70</i>
<i>Chapter 8</i>	<i>AMONG THE INDIANS</i>	<i>77</i>
<i>Chapter 9</i>	<i>NATURE'S MASTERPIECE</i>	<i>86</i>
<i>Chapter 10</i>	<i>A COYOTE SERENADE</i>	<i>95</i>
<i>Chapter 11</i>	<i>A REAL ADVENTURE AT LAST</i>	<i>106</i>
<i>Chapter 12</i>	<i>CAPTURED</i>	<i>116</i>
<i>Chapter 13</i>	<i>THE FIDDLER</i>	<i>130</i>
<i>Chapter 14</i>	<i>THE ESCAPE</i>	<i>142</i>

<i>Chapter 15</i>	<i>THE ROMANCE OF DAN'L</i>	<i>153</i>
<i>Chapter 16</i>	<i>THE LODGING AT SPOTVILLE</i>	<i>160</i>
<i>Chapter 17</i>	<i>YELLOW POPPIES</i>	<i>169</i>
<i>Chapter 18</i>	<i>THE SILENT MAN</i>	<i>176</i>
<i>Chapter 19</i>	<i>"THREE TIMES"</i>	<i>186</i>
<i>Chapter 20</i>	<i>ON POINT LOMA</i>	<i>195</i>
<i>Chapter 21</i>	<i>A TALE OF WOE</i>	<i>206</i>
<i>Chapter 22</i>	<i>THE CONFESSION</i>	<i>214</i>



Chapter 1

INTRODUCING "MUMBLES"

道尔和约翰在等待帕齐回家，她却迟迟未见踪影，而她回到家时带回了一只小狗，告诉约翰和父亲收养小狗的经过，而道尔对小狗的到来并不欢迎……

Major Gregory Doyle paced nervously up and down the floor of the cozy sitting room.

"Something's surely happened to our Patsy!" he exclaimed.

A little man with a calm face and a bald head, who was seated near the fire, continued to read his newspaper and paid no attention to the outburst.

"Something has happened to Patsy!" repeated the Major, "Patsy" meaning his own and only daughter Patricia.

"Something is always happening to everyone," said the little man, turning his paper indifferently. "Something is happening to me, for I can't find the rest of this article. Something is happening to you, for you're losing your temper."

"I'm not, sir! I deny it."

"As for Patsy, " continued the other, "she is sixteen years old and knows New York like a book. The girl is safe enough."

"Then where is she? Tell me that, sir. Here it is, seven o'clock, dark as pitch and raining hard, and Patsy is never out after six. Can you, John Merrick, sit there like a lump o' putty and do nothing, when your niece and my own darlin' Patsy is lost—or strayed or stolen?"

"What would you propose doing?" asked Uncle John, looking up with a smile.

"We ought to get out the police department. It's raining and cold, and—"

"Then we ought to get out the fire department. Call Mary to put on more coal and let's have it warm and cheerful when Patsy comes in."

"But, sir—"

"The trouble with you, Major, is that dinner is half an hour late. One can imagine all sorts of horrible things on an empty stomach. Now, then—"

He paused, for a pass-key rattled in the hall door and a moment later Patsy Doyle, rosy and animated, fresh from the cold and wet outside, smilingly greeted them.

She had an umbrella, but her cloak was dripping with moisture and in its ample folds was something huddled and bundled up like a baby, which she carefully protected.

"So, then," exclaimed the Major, coming forward for a kiss, "you're back at last, safe and sound. Whatever kept ye out 'til this time o' night, Patsy darlin' ? " he added, letting the brogue^① creep into his tone, as he did when stirred by any emotion.

Uncle John started to take off her wet cloak.

"Look out! " cried Patsy; "you'll disturb Mumbles."

The two men looked at her bundle curiously.

"Who's Mumbles? " asked one.

"What on earth is Mumbles? " inquired the other.

The bundle squirmed^② and wriggled^③. Patsy sat down

① brogue: 半筒工作靴

② squirm: (因不舒适、羞愧或紧张而) 蠕动

③ wriggle: 蠕动

on the floor and carefully unwound the folds of the cloak. A tiny dog, black and shaggy, put his head out, blinked sleepily at the lights, pulled his fat, shapeless body away from the bandages and trotted solemnly over to the fireplace. He didn't travel straight ahead, as dogs ought to walk, but "cornerwise," as Patsy described it; and when he got to the hearth he rolled himself into a ball, lay down and went to sleep.

During this performance a tense silence had pervaded the room. The Major looked at the dog rather gloomily; Uncle John with critical eyes that held a smile in them; Patsy with ecstatic^① delight.

"Isn't he a dear!" she exclaimed.

"It occurs to me," said the Major stiffly, "that this needs an explanation. Do you mean to say, Patsy Doyle, that you've worried the hearts out of us this past hour, and kept the dinner waiting, all because of a scurvy^② bit of an animal?"

"Pshaw!" said Uncle John. "Speak for yourself, Major. I wasn't worried a bit."

"You see," explained Patsy, rising to take off her things and put them away, "I was coming home early when I first met Mumbles. A little boy had him, with a string tied around his neck, and when Mumbles tried to run up to me the boy jerked^③ him back cruelly—and afterward kicked him. That

① ecstatic: 狂喜的

② scurvy: 卑鄙的, 下流的

③ jerk: 猛拉

made me mad."

"Of course, " said Uncle John, nodding wisely.

"I cuffed the boy, and he said he'd take it out on Mumbles, as soon as I'd gone away. I didn't like that. I offered to buy the dog, but the boy didn't dare sell him. He said it belonged to his father, who'd kill him and kick up a row besides if he didn't bring Mumbles home. So I found out where they lived and as it wasn't far away I went home with him."

"Crazy Patsy!" smiled Uncle John.

"And the dinner waiting!" groaned the Major, reproachfully.

"Well, I had a time, you can believe!" continued Patsy, with animation. "The man was a big brute, and half drunk. He grabbed up the little doggie and threw it into a box, and then told me to go home and mind my business."

"Which of course you refused to do."

"Of course. I'd made up my mind to have that dog."

"Dogs," said the Major, "invariably are nuisances^①."

"Not invariably, " declared Patsy. "Mumbles is different. Mumbles is a good doggie, and wise and knowing, although he's only a baby dog yet. And I just couldn't leave him to be cuffed and kicked and thrown around by those brutes. When the man found I was determined to have Mumbles he demanded twenty-five dollars."

"Twenty-five dollars! " It startled Uncle John.

"For that bit of rags and meat? " asked the Major, looking

① nuisance: 讨厌的东西

at the puppy with disfavor. "Twenty-five cents would be exorbitant^①."

"The man misjudged me, " observed Patsy, with a merry laugh that matched her twinkling blue eyes. "In the end he got just two dollars for Mumbles, and when I came away he bade me good-bye very respectfully. The boy howled. He hasn't any dog to kick and is broken-hearted. As for Mumbles, he's going to lead a respectable life and be treated like a dog."

"Do you mean to keep him?" inquired the Major.

"Why not?" said Patsy. "Don't you like him, Daddy?"

Her father turned Mumbles over with his toe. The puppy lay upon its back, lazily, with all four paws in the air, and cast a comical glance from one beady bright eye at the man who had disturbed him.

The Major sighed.

"He can't hunt, Patsy; he's not even a mouser."

"We haven't a mouse in the house."

"He's neither useful nor ornamental. From the looks o' the beast he's only good to sleep and eat."

"What's the odds?" laughed Patsy, coddling Mumbles up in her arms. "We don't expect use or ornamentation from Mumbles. All we ask is his companionship."

Mary called them to dinner just then, and the girl hurried to her room to make a hasty toilet while the men sat down at the table and eyed their soup reflectively.

① exorbitant: (要价等) 过高的

"This addition to the family," remarked Uncle John, "need not make you at all unhappy, my dear Major. Don't get jealous of Mumbles, for heaven's sake, for the little brute may add a bit to Patsy's bliss^①."

"It's the first time I've ever allowed a dog in the house."

"You are not running this present establishment. It belongs exclusively to Patsy."

"I've always hated the sight of a woman coddling a dog," added the Major, frowning.

"I know. I feel the same way myself. But it isn't the dog's fault. It's the woman's. And Patsy won't make a fool of herself over that frowsy puppy, I assure you. On the contrary, she's likely to get a lot of joy out of her new plaything, and if you really want to make her happy, Major, don't discourage this new whim, absurd as it seems. Let Patsy alone. And let Mumbles alone."

The girl came in just then, bringing sunshine with her. Patsy Doyle was not very big for her years, and some people unkindly described her form as "chubby." She had glorious red hair—really-truly red—and her blue eyes were the merriest, sweetest eyes any girl could possess. You seldom noticed her freckles^②, her saucy^③ chin or her turned-up nose; you only saw the laughing eyes and crown of golden red, and seeing them you liked Patsy Doyle at once and imagined she was very

① bliss: 极乐, 天赐的福

② freckle: 雀斑

③ saucy: 俏丽的, 漂亮的

good to look at, if not strictly beautiful. No one had friends more loyal, and these two old men—the stately Major and round little Uncle John—fairly worshiped Patsy.

No one might suspect, from the simple life of this household, which occupied the second corner flat at 3708 Willing Square, that Miss Doyle was an heiress. Not only that, but perhaps one of the very richest girls in New York. And the reason is readily explained when I state the fact that Patsy's Uncle John Merrick, the round little bald-headed man who sat contentedly eating his soup, was a man of many millions, and this girl his favorite niece. An old bachelor who had acquired an immense fortune in the far Northwest, Mr. Merrick had lately retired from active business and come East to seek any relatives that might remain to him after forty years' absence. His sister Jane had gathered around her three nieces—Louise Merrick, Elizabeth De Graf and Patricia Doyle—and when Aunt Jane died Uncle John adopted these three girls and made their happiness the one care of his jolly, unselfish life. At that time Major Doyle, Patsy's only surviving parent, was a poor bookkeeper; but Uncle John gave him charge of his vast property interests, and loving Patsy almost as devotedly as did her father, made his home with the Doyles and began to enjoy himself for the first time in his life.

At the period when this story opens the eldest niece, Louise Merrick, had just been married to Arthur Weldon, a prosperous young business man, and the remaining two