

Book Report

Daddy-Long-Legs

Jean Webster

Fiction, 223 pages; a little difficult

Main Characters:

Jerusha Abbott (Judy), John Smith, Sallie McBride, Julia Rutledge Pendleton, Jervis Pendleton, Jimmie McBride

Setting:

U.S.A, 1910's

Plot

Jerusha Abbott was brought up at the John Grier Home. One day Mrs. Lippett tells her that she can go on to the college. According to her, one of their richest Trustees, Mr. John Smith, offered it. While she doesn't have to repay her tuition fees, she must write a letter a month to him. She gets so happy to hear that she can leave the John Grier Home and go to the college because she hates there. It is amazing to her.

It is uncertain whether the name, John Smith, is his real name. She doesn't know his real name, so she decides to call him Daddy-Long-Legs. She sends him some long letters a month. On it, she writes many things about her daily life in the college. They are not only good things but also bad things.

She always tells him her honest feelings and opinions.

In the first year in her college, she is ashamed that she was brought up at the John Grier Home because she doesn't know what everyone knows. So she begins to read some books a day. She also begins to write novels. Before summer vacation, she becomes acquaintance with Julia's uncle, Jervis Pendleton. Though his niece, Julia, is arrogant, he is not arrogant but he is calm and gentle. So she finds that he is a very nice person. During summer vacation, she stays with Mr. and Mrs. Semple in Lock Willow. She finds that Jervis spent the summer there once after he had been ill, when he was about eleven years old. She becomes glad to know it.

In the second year, she stays with Sallie during winter vacation. Sallie's family gives a dance at their own house for her. She is so excited because it is the first really true ball she ever attended. A few weeks later, she meets Jervis and they talk about Lock Willow. She has wonderful time at the McBrides'. So she wants to spend summer vacation at the McBrides', but Mr. Smith doesn't allow her to do. After all, she has to spend summer vacation in Lock Willow. However Jervis visits there and she enjoys her stay. During her stay there, her novel is sold and she becomes a woman writer.

In the third year, she can have a scholarship for two years because she got special excellence in English with general excellence in other lines. She is very happy to know it, but Mr. Smith tells her to turn it down. She gets so angry to hear it and she accepts the scholarship against his order.

In forth year, she becomes an editor of the *Monthly*. Her hatred of the John Grier Home begins to disappear. She says that she regards her childhood there as a very unusual adventure in her letter and then she begins to write novels about it.

After graduation from the college, she begins to write novels in earnest in Lock Willow. In summer she has proposal of marriage from Jervis, but she turns it down without telling him the reason, because she doesn't want him to know that she was brought up at the John Grier Home. She feels depressed and doesn't know what to do, so she asks Mr. Smith whether they meet and talk about it. She visits him and she is greatly shocked. Mr. Smith is the very man, Jervis Pendleton! She is not only amazed but also happy to know it.

My Opinion

This book told me many important things. Jerusha is a cheerful kind of person. She doesn't feel unhappy because she was brought up at the John Grier Home. She has a sense of humor and a strong will. I'm envious of her character because I have completely different character from her. I tend to think something badly and often feel depressed. I found that I have to think something more positively like her. In addition, I'm lack of decision, so I also have to have a strong will like her.

She always enjoys studying and her college life. She is so happy because she can learn and experience a lot of new things. I often say, "I'm too busy to have enough refreshing time, so I don't want to go to university. I want to sleep well!" but I became ashamed of having such a thought . I thought I also have to enjoy studying and my campus life.

She always says whatever she thought without being afraid of being scolded. She has her own opinions. I don't always tell my opinions so strongly like her, so I want to follow the example of her.

Best Parts

The following phrase impressed me;

I know lots of girls who never know that they are happy. They are so accustomed to the feeling that their senses are deadened to it, but as for me — I am perfectly sure every moment of my life that I am happy. And I'm going to regard them (even sickness) as interesting experiences, and be glad to know what they feel like.

If I didn't encounter this phrase, I would not have find that I had been so happy and I might have bewailed my misfortunes, even if they are very small. I take it for granted that I have family and they always care about me. Jerusha can notice that she is happy. I think it is difficult to notice my own happiness, so I really respect her. Everyone should realize that they were brought up in a good environment.

Worst Parts

I don't like Julia Rutledge Pendleton so much because she is very arrogant. There are many good people even though they are not rich. We should not judge someone by whether he or she is rich or poor. We should judge someone by his or her personality.

Also I don't like Mr. Smith's stubborn character. When Jerusha was going to accept a scholarship, he obstinately told her to turn it down. I was not convinced of his opinion. I thought he should spend the money which he planned to use to pay Jerusha's tuition fees on other children in the John Grier Home.

Book Rating:

A very good book!