

DADDY-LONG-LEGS

THE MAIN IDEA OF THE BOOK

SHORT SUMMARY

Jerusha Abbott was brought up at the John Grier Home, an old-fashioned orphanage. The children were wholly dependent on charity and had to wear other people's cast-off clothes. At the age of 16, she has finished her education and is at loose ends, still working in the dormitories at the institution where she was brought up. Jerusha was informed that one of the trustees has offered to pay her way through college. He has spoken to her former teachers and thinks she has potential to become an excellent writer. He will pay her tuition and also give her a generous monthly allowance. Jerusha must write him a monthly letter. However, she will never know his identity; she must address the letters to Mr. John Smith, and he will never reply. The book chronicles Jerusha's educational, personal, and social growth. While she is at college, she becomes acquainted with Jervis Pendleton, the rich uncle of one of her classmates, and they become more attached to each other, but her shame and embarrassment at her simple origins lead her to reject his marriage proposal despite her love for him. Unhappy and depressed, she turns to "Daddy Long-Legs" for advice. At the end of the book, the identity of "Daddy Long-Legs" is detected, he is Jervis Pendleton.

The main idea of the book

I think, the main idea of the book is to show social problem. This book reflects upon Webster's interests in social work and women's suffrage. People have argued that Judy shows growing independence, including increasing disobedience to her benefactor (Daddy-long-legs) and his wishes, and indeed succeeds in educating Daddy-Long-Legs that he cannot control her.

1-st example

In letter 42, we can see that Judy was really disappointed about Daddy's decision. She wants to visit McBrides' camp, but Daddy didn't allow her to do it and sent her to the Lock Willow.

Quotation: “ I couldn't see any reason. It was so distinctly the best thing that could happened to me... it hurts my feelings”.

2-nd example

In letter 58 Judy and master Jervie almost quarrelled about Judy's trip to Europe. Jervie said that it is a necessary part of Judy's education and she mustn't think of refusing. But Judy refused. Quotation: "if he hadn't been so dictatorial maybe I should have entirely weakened. I can be enticed step by step, but I won't be forced." He said about her some abusive adjectives and then added: "you didn't know what was good for you... let older people judge."

Interesting and main fact about Judy

Letter 64.

Quotation: “ Haven’t you any sense? Don’t you know that you mustn’t give one girl 17 Christmas presents? I’m a Socialist, please remember; do you wish to turn me into a Plutocrat?”

Socialism - the set of beliefs which states that all people are equal and should share equally in a country's money, or the political systems based on these beliefs.

CONCLUSION

Today this book is often classified as young adult literature or even children's literature, but at the time it was part of a trend of "girl" or "college girl" books which featured young female protagonists dealing with post-high-school concerns such as college, career, and marriage. These books predated the contemporary view of adolescence.