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Literacy Relates to Me

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Literacy Relates to Me

Lei Hou

When I was little, my parents were teachers. They both enjoyed reading very much and spent most of their income on books. Their interests directly influenced me; reading became my favorite form of relaxation. Books enlarged my world. When I was 22 I was in a car accident. After the accident, I was confined not only to a wheelchair, but also to my home. Chinese society considered disabled people as inept, so as a middle school teacher I suddenly became a hopeless and jobless person. Being eager to understand why I am in the wheelchair and learn how to deal with my new lifestyle, I started to read more books, day after day, year after year. At the time, everybody thought that it was the end of the world for me. Friends, relatives, neighbors, even strangers all showed pity to me when they saw me in a wheelchair. However, their attitudes did not disturb me, because I have built a stronger belief system from the stories I read. No matter *Scarlett O'Hara* or *The Count of Monte Cristo*, none of the characters in books have an easy life. Actually the hardship they experienced became their treasures and eventually built them beautiful personalities and good stories.

Step by step, I accomplished some of my dreams. Every time I've heard people exclaim, "How could you do it? As an able person, I had never thought to do it." "You must be lucky. I wish I had your luck." When I heard what they said, I usually answered with an old Chinese proverb, "Reading can take you anywhere." From reading, I learned that there are some places which are wheelchair accessible, so I decided to come to the U.S. to try. So far I am happy to see this is a different world where people look at disabled people the same as themselves.

Reflection

At first I didn't believe that I could do the prompt writings, because in my mind writing should be a serious activity with many preparations. However, when I did as instructed, "Keep writing without stopping." I found that I could do it and I like to do it. While writing, I felt that some of my memories woke up little by little. They are the stories and feelings that I had forgotten for a long time. Sometimes the topics or prompts asked us to think and write about reminded me of spoons, which can dig inside the soul to help me understand things I have never thought about before.

Eventually I found that I like writing.