

## APPENDICES

### Synopsis of Little Women

The upcoming Christmas looked like it would be a bleak affair to the four March girls with their father at the Civil War battlefield. The girls resolved to face life as Pilgrims, to overcome their weaknesses, and be "good little women" by the time their father returned. The oldest, Meg, determined to enjoy her work more and fret less about her looks. The tomboy, Jo, pledged to better control her temper, upgrade her writing abilities and develop feminine qualities. Amy desired to be less selfish. Everyone believed Beth to be perfect, but she earnestly prayed to overcome her shy manner. The girls labored for the next year to acquire these qualities, with much success and occasional failure.

Through that year, the girls learned to be happy in their work. Meg, by spending two weeks at the estate of a wealthy girl friend, discovered how wonderful her own home life was, although her family was poor. Jo detected that she was not the only one struggling with outbursts of anger. Much to her amazement, her mother also possessed a hidden temper. This knowledge helped Jo believe she could, with effort, control hers. After all, her great wish was to become a famous romance writer, but reaching that goal would require discipline.

According to the information on the Internet ([About Novel](#), no date), after Amy's being embarrassingly reprimanded before the whole school, she began to understand that "conceit spoils the finest genius". Meanwhile, Beth remained extremely shy, but was still the heart and joy of her family.

As the second Christmas arrived, the girls anticipated their father's homecoming. During the family reunion, Mr. March admired his family, reflecting on how the girls had changed over the years. Meg had defeated much of her vanity, and had cultivated industry and the womanly skills to create a happy home. Jo had become a gentle young lady, who dressed properly and no longer used slang. He noticed that Amy now took the poorer cut of meat, waited on everyone with patience and humor, and seldom gazed at herself in the mirror. As for Beth, her father simply held her near, grateful she was still alive. They all agreed Mr. March's absence had been a productive period, and that the girls were becoming little women of great talent, beauty and grace.

### **Biography of Louisa M. Alcott**

Louisa M. Alcott was born in Germantown, Pennsylvania on November 29, 1832. She was the second daughter of Amos Bronson Alcott and Abigail "Abba" May. Alcott had three sisters namely Anna, Lizzie and May. At an early age, she and her family moved to Boston, Massachusetts. In 1843 the Alcott family took part in experimental communal village known as the Fruitland. Here Bronson Alcott wished to further his beliefs in transcendentalism and brought his daughters a greater understanding nature. Unfortunately, the project failed and they returned to Concord in 1845. Alcott began to feel more responsible for her family's financial needs and started taking on as many jobs. In 1852 her first

poem, "Sunlight" was published in Peterson's magazine under the pseudonym, Flora Fairfield. Three years later, in 1855, her first book, Flower Fables was published. She headed for Washington, DC. in 1862 to serve as a Civil War nurse. Her stay in Washington prompted Louisa to write Hospital Sketches, which was published in 1863. It was followed by Moods in 1864. At this point her publisher, Thomas Niles, told her that he wanted "a girl's story" from her. Having spent her life with three of the most interesting girls, Louisa wrote furiously for two and a half months and produced Little Women, which is based on her own experiences growing up as a young woman with three other sisters. The novel, published on September 30, 1868, was an instant success. Louisa followed up her success with Old Fashioned Girl in 1870. Little Men was published in 1871, and it was followed by Work in 1873, Eight Cousins in 1874, and Rose in Bloom in 1876. During this time, Alcott became active in the women's suffrage movement, writing for "The Woman's Journal" and canvassing door to door trying to encourage women to register to vote. In 1879 Alcott became the first woman in Concord to register to vote in the village's school committee election. She published Jo's Boys in 1886. She had published over 30 books and collections of stories. She died on March 6, 1888, only two days after her father's death, and was buried in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery in Concord.