



Louisa May Alcott: The Woman Behind Little Women (John MacRae Books)

Harriet Reisen

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A vivid, energetic account of the life of Louisa May Alcott, whose work has delighted millions of readers

Louisa May Alcott portrays a writer as worthy of interest in her own right as her most famous character, Jo March, and addresses all aspects of Alcott's life: the effect of her father's self-indulgent utopian schemes; her family's chronic economic difficulties and frequent uprootings; her experience as a nurse in the Civil War; the loss of her health and frequent recourse to opiates in search of relief from migraines, insomnia, and symptomatic pain. Stories and details culled from Alcott's journals; her equally rich letters to family, friends, publishers, and admiring readers; and the correspondence, journals, and recollections of her family, friends, and famous contemporaries provide the basis for this lively account of the author's classic rags-to-riches tale.

Alcott would become the equivalent of a multimillionaire in her lifetime based on the astounding sales of her books, leaving contemporaries like Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, and Henry James in the dust. This biography explores Alcott's life in the context of her works, all of which are to some extent autobiographical. A fresh, modern take on this remarkable and prolific writer, who secretly authored pulp fiction, harbored radical abolitionist views, and completed heroic service as a Civil War nurse, *Louisa May Alcott* is in the end also the story of how the all-time beloved American classic *Little Women* came to be. This revelatory portrait will present the popular author as she was and as she has never been seen before.

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