

**Chapter 1 : My First Books – Idaho Commission for Libraries**

*My First Book of Marches [Dolly Moon] on calendriredelascience.com \*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers. Includes Dixie, Semper fidelis, American patrol, and When the saints go marching in.*

Development history[ edit ] In , Thomas Niles, the publisher of Louisa May Alcott, recommended that she write a book about girls that would have widespread appeal. Alcott wrote, "they are the best critics, so I should definitely be satisfied. Each of the March sister heroines had a harrowing experience that alerted her and the reader that "childhood innocence" was of the past, and that "the inescapable woman problem" was all that remained. Having lost all his money, their father is acting as a pastor , miles from home, involved in the American Civil War. The women face their first Christmas without him. Meg and Jo March, the elder two, have to work in order to support the family: Meg teaches a nearby family of four children; Jo assists her aged great-aunt March, a wealthy widow living in a mansion , Plumfield. Beth, too timid for school is content to stay at home and help with housework; Amy is still at school. Meg is beautiful and traditional, Jo is a tomboy who writes; Beth is a peacemaker and a pianist; Amy is an artist who longs for elegance and fine society. Jo is impulsive and quick to anger. One of her challenges is trying to control her anger, a challenge that her mother experiences. She advises Jo to speak with forethought before leaving to travel to Washington , where her husband has pneumonia. Their neighbour, Mr Laurence, who is charmed by Beth, gives her a piano. Beth contracts scarlet fever after spending time with a poor family where three children die. Jo tends Beth in her illness. Beth recovers, but never fully. As a precaution, Amy is sent to live with Aunt March, replacing Jo, while Beth was ill and still infectious. Jo has success earning money with her writing. Meg spends two weeks with friends, where there are parties for the girls to dance with boys and improve social skills. Brooke goes to Washington to help Mr. While with the March parents, Brooke confesses his love for Meg. They are pleased but consider Meg too young to be married. Brooke agrees to wait but enlists and serves a year or so in the war. After he is wounded, he returns to find work so he can buy a house ready for when he marries Meg. Laurie goes off to college, having become smitten by Jo. When they have twins, Meg is a devoted mother but John begins to feel left out. He realises that he has fallen in love with Jo. Sensing his feelings, Jo confides in Marmee, telling her that she loves Laurie but as she would love a brother and that she could not love him romantically. Laurie proposes marriage to her and she turns him down. Jo decides she needs a break, and spends six months with a friend of her mother in New York City, serving as governess for her two children. The family runs a boarding house. She takes German lessons with Professor Bhaer, who lives in the house. He has come to America from Berlin to care for the orphaned sons of his sister. For extra money, Jo writes stories without a moral, which disappoints Bhaer. Amy goes on a European tour with her aunt. Laurie and his grandfather also go to Europe. Jo devotes her time to the care of her dying sister. Laurie encounters Amy in Europe. On his last day, he proposes to Jo. Aunt March dies, leaving Plumfield to Jo. She and Bhaer turn the house into a school for boys. They have two sons of their own, and Amy and Laurie have a daughter. At apple-picking time, Marmee celebrates her 60th birthday at Plumfield, with her husband, her three surviving daughters, their husbands, and her six grandchildren. Characters[ edit ] Margaret "Meg" March[ edit ] Meg, the eldest sister, is 16 when the story starts. She is referred to as a beauty, and manages the household when her mother is absent. Meg fulfills expectations for women of the time; from the start, she is already a nearly perfect "little woman" in the eyes of the world. Meg is based in the domestic household; she does not have significant employment or activities outside it. Meg marries John Brooke, the tutor of Laurie. The sequel, Little Men, mentions a baby daughter, Josephine "Josy" Brooke, [15] who is 14 at the beginning of the final book. According to Sarah Elbert, "democratic domesticity requires maturity, strength, and above all a secure identity that Meg lacks". Jo has a "hot" temper that often leads her into trouble. With the help of her own misguided sense of humor, her sister Beth, and her mother, she works on controlling it. It has been said that a lot of Louisa May Alcott shows through in these characteristics of Jo. She composes plays for her sisters to perform and writes short stories. She initially rejects the idea of marriage and romance, feeling that it would break up her family and separate her from the sisters whom she adores. Jo also writes the first part of Little

Women during the second portion of the novel. According to Elbert, "her narration signals a successfully completed adolescence". She is the shyest March sister. She is especially close to Jo: Beth recovers from the acute disease but her health is permanently weakened. As she grows, Beth begins to realize that her time with her loved ones is coming to an end. Finally, the family accepts that Beth will not live much longer. They make a special room for her, filled with all the things she loves best: She is never idle; she knits and sews things for the children who pass by on their way to and from school. But eventually she puts down her sewing needle, saying it grew "heavy. The main loss during *Little Women* is the death of beloved Beth. Her "self-sacrifice" is ultimately the greatest in the novel. She gives up her life knowing that it has had only private, domestic meaning. Interested in art, she is described as a "regular snow-maiden" with curly golden hair and blue eyes, "pale and slender" and "always carrying herself" like a proper young lady. She is the artist of the family. She encounters "Laurie" Laurence and his grandfather during the extended visit. Amy is the least inclined of the sisters to sacrifice and self-denial. She behaves well in good society, at ease with herself. Ultimately, Amy is shown to work very hard to gain what she wants in life, and to make the most of her success while she has it.: A scholar and a minister, he serves as a chaplain in the Union Army during the Civil War and is wounded in December After the war he becomes minister to a small congregation. Professor Friedrich Bhaer " A middle-aged, "philosophically inclined", and penniless German immigrant in New York City who was a noted professor in Berlin, also known as Fritz. He initially lives in Mrs. He encourages her to become a serious writer instead of writing "sensation" stories for weekly tabloids. John Brooke " During his employment as a tutor to Laurie, he falls in love with Meg. March to Washington D. When Laurie leaves for college, Brooke continues his employment with Mr. Laurence as a bookkeeper. Eventually Meg admits her feelings to Brooke, they defy Aunt March who ends up accepting the marriage , and they are engaged. Brooke serves in the Union Army for a year and is sent home as an invalid when he is wounded. Brooke marries Meg a few years later when the war has ended and she has turned twenty. She develops a passion for acting as she grows up. Uncle and Aunt Carrol " Sister and brother-in-law of Mr. They take Amy to Europe with them, where Uncle Carrol frequently tries to be like an English gentleman. Chester " A well-to-do family with whom the Marches are acquainted. Miss Crocker " An old and poor spinster who likes to gossip and who has few friends. Dashwood " Publisher and editor of the *Weekly Volcano*. He punishes Amy for bringing pickled limes to school by striking her palm and making her stand on a platform in front of the class. She is withdrawn from the school by her mother. The Hummels " A poor German family consisting of a widowed mother and six children. Marmee and the girls help them by bringing food, firewood, blankets and other comforts. They help with minor repairs to their small dwelling. Three of the children die of scarlet fever and Beth contracts the disease while caring for them. The Kirkes " Mrs.

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