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APPENDIX

Biography of Louisa May Alcott



Based on the journal of the Institute for Massachusetts Studies, Westfield State University (2017: 21), Louisa May Alcott is the second of four children. She was born on 29th November 1832. Her father, Amos Bronson Alcott, was a self-taught teacher, writer, philosopher, and lecturer, while her mother, Abigail May Alcott, came from a respectable family in Boston. Growing up in a family with radical views, the Alcotts were involved in the abolitionist and transcendentalist movements. They had close friendships with notable figures such as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, who taught Alcott literature and natural science, respectively. Emerson also provided financial support to the Alcott family. Alcott's upbringing shaped her progressive values, and she actively fought for the abolition of slavery, even volunteering as a nurse during the Civil War. Inspired by her mother's

advocacy for women's rights, Alcott also championed women's suffrage. In 1880, she proudly became the first woman to vote in Concord's school board election. Despite being raised in an intellectually stimulating environment, Alcott experienced childhood deprivation due to her family's near poverty.

In her famous work, *Little Women*, the March family is depicted as living in genteel poverty with a backdrop of the Civil War (Institute for Massachusetts Studies, Westfield State University, 2017: 22). Although portrayed as not particularly wealthy, the reality was that the Alcott family struggled financially. Louisa's father, Bronson Alcott, had a hard time making enough money to support the family, often leaving them with only bread and water. They moved frequently and even founded a failed utopian community called Fruitlands. Alcott's determination to become rich and famous developed from a young age, and she pursued various jobs to support her family, including writing romances for the local newspaper.

Alcott's talent as a writer was soon recognized, and she began publishing her work anonymously to maintain a respectable reputation. At the age of 35, she published "Little Women", which was immensely successful. This marked the beginning of her career as a writer, focusing on producing what she called moral books for young people, as they were financially rewarding (Institute for Massachusetts Studies, Westfield State University, 2017: 22). In her journey, Louisa May Alcott's life was shaped by her upbringing in a progressive family, her commitment to social causes, her struggles with poverty, and her eventual success as

a writer. Her experiences and values greatly influenced her literary work, making her a prominent and influential figure in American literature.

Synopsis of *Good Wives*

Good Wives by Louisa May Alcott is a sequel to *Little Women* that continues the story of the March sisters: Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy. Set in the mid-19th century, three years after the American Civil War, the novel follows their journey into adulthood, navigating the challenges and journeys they experience. The story begins with the March sisters who have grown into young women.

Meg is preparing to marry John Brooke, a kind-hearted man despite their financial limitations. They begin their married life in a small house, learning to nourish and learn the realities of marriage and financial constraints. Meg accepts her role as a loving wife and mother, finding fulfillment in her domestic responsibilities. Jo, known as independent and ambitious, goes on a journey to New York City to pursue her writing career and rediscover herself. Jo faces challenges in the writing world as well as challenges in her desires and relationships with others.

As for Beth, her health is weaker day by day. She spends most of her time at home, focusing on her love of music and providing comfort for her family. Despite her illness, Beth remains steadfast and hopeful, trying to bring a sense of calm to those around her. Amy, who is the graceful youngest sister and an aspiring artist, goes on to study art in Europe under the guidance of the wealthy Mrs. Chester. She learns about European culture and improves her artistic skills and manners. After Jo returned

to Concord, she met Laurie again. Their friendship deepens and Jo realises Laurie's true feelings for her. However, Jo rejects Laurie and Laurie ends up travelling to Europe where he meets Amy. Amy is reunited with Laurie, and their friendship slowly turns into a romantic relationship. On the other hand, Meg turns out to have given birth to twins, Daisy and Demi, expanding her family and responsibilities. She finds happiness in her role as a mother, with her simple home life.

As the March sisters grow and mature, they face various challenges and learn important life lessons. They experienced love, marriage, friendship, and personal growth while staying connected with a mother's guidance and strong sisterly bond. Jo formed a close friendship with Professor Friedrich Bhaer, a kind and intellectual German professor. They shared a love for literature and engaged in intellectual discussions. Bhaer became Jo's mentor, guiding her in her writing and encouraging her to write from the heart. Jo finds herself torn between her independence and the possibility of a romantic relationship with Bhaer. Amy and Laurie get married and face challenges but learn to appreciate the true essence of love and commitment. On the other hand, Beth's health is getting worse, and the family comes together to support her during her last days. Beth's death deeply affects each of her siblings, reminding them of the fragility of life and the importance of cherishing every moment.

The novel ends with them reuniting to celebrate Marmee's 60th birthday. They reflect on their journeys, dreams, and the challenges they have faced. They

celebrate their enduring bond of sisterhood and gratitude for all of Marmee's guidance to them. *Good Wives* explores the themes of family, self-exploration, love, and the pursuit of dreams. The novel depicts the struggles and challenges of fighting for their dreams and discovering their potential with the guidance of a mother in a loving family bond.