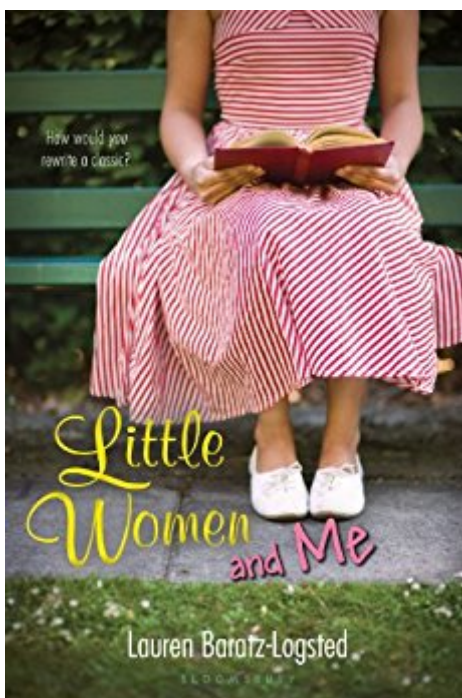


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Little Women And Me



Synopsis

Emily is sick and tired of being a middle sister. So when she gets an assignment to describe what she'd change about a classic novel, Emily pounces on *Little Women*. After all, if she can't change things in her own family, maybe she can bring a little justice to the March sisters. (Kill off Beth? Have cute Laurie wind up with Amy instead of Jo? What was Louisa May Alcott thinking?!) But when Emily gets mysteriously transported into the 1860s world of the book, she discovers that righting fictional wrongs won't be easy. And after being immersed in a time and place so different from her own, it may be Emily-not the four March sisters-who undergoes the most surprising change of all. Lauren Baratz-Logsted's winning confection will appeal to fans of *Little Women* as well as anyone who enjoys a modern twist on an old favorite.

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Customer Reviews

I went into this book with great expectations. *Little Women* is the one book I reread every single year, never quite getting tired of the adventures of the four March sisters. The synopses, about a

modern-day girl falling into the story sounded like a dream come true. How many times had I wished I could be in the story as well? Unfortunately, Baratz-Logsted wrote a heroine I couldn't root for. Emily was incredibly self-centered, and not in the funny way Amy March is self-centered, mean-spirited, judgmental (calling Meg "prim," Marmee "pompous", etc.) and all around nasty. The writing was good at points but the decision to show pretty much every single thing that happened in the original Little Women meant that we got paragraphs and paragraphs of Emily just recounting events that if you have read Little Women, as I suspect most people who read this book will have done, make for a very boring read. Then, of course there's the plot twist that, really, wasn't as surprising since Baratz-Logsted had been committing character murder from the beginning, forcing the relationships portrayed in the book into something that wasn't there in the beginning to fit what she, the author, would have liked Louisa May Alcott to write. According to Emily, Jo likes Laurie, as a guy not as a friend, from the start. This is just character assassination. Jo is oblivious of Laurie's feelings for her much of the book because her character, the way she is, just never let her think of romance, it's simply not who she is to vie for his attention in the way she does in this book. It isn't until much later in the original story, that she realizes and starts avoiding him/pushing him away. She never, ever, returns his feelings. But clearly, Baratz-Logsted was one of those readers that read signs where there weren't any and were convinced Laurie and Jo, a romantic match made in hell, belonged together. So, of course, that part of the twist was quite terrible. Laurie and Jo, as Jo says in the original, would kill each other if they got married. Even worse than that was the part of the twist that made Amy an interloper. Amy March may be a difficult character due to her many flaws, her vanity and selfishness chiefly. However, she is an integral part of the story. She is based on one of Alcott's real life siblings. I can't imagine the book without Amy and Alcott would have never written the book without Amy so Baratz-Logsted's choice of making Amy another time traveler, not an original part of the story, rubbed me the wrong way. Not to mention that she also screws up her character by making her calculating and vindictive. If there's one thing that saves Amy's character in the original is that, despite the airs she puts on and the opportunities life throws her way just because she's pretty and good mannered, she is, deep down, a genuinely caring person. I wish I could un-read this book. I should have read the reviews before buying it but I didn't want to spoil it for myself. Wish I had.

I loved the idea of this book. As many readers, I've fantasized about being literally transported into the pages of my favorite books and living out the story as one of the characters. Like many devoted fans of "Little Women," I've also fantasized about changing two main plot points -- Beth's death and

the Jo/Laurie/Amy relationship. Baratz-Logsted's original character Emily March gets this opportunity. Dropped into the story of "Little Women" as the middle March sister, Emily experiences a different side of her favorite novel, one that one could liken to Baratz-Logsted's experience rewriting one of her childhood favorites (see her afterword). Emily also comes to a new understanding of herself and her place in both the novel and her real life, reassessing her own personal relationships. This novel is not without its insights and charms, yet on the whole I found the writing style to be immature. This perhaps a testament to the author entering into the lexicon and perspective of a modern teen, but it made for an annoying reading experience. Additionally, I was bothered by obvious misunderstandings, in several places, of the historical contexts and references in the original "Little Women" text, and often blatant disrespect for the original text, and in the end for its publication history and the choices made by the original author, Louisa May Alcott. I'm all for literary license and creativity, but feel that the author could have playfully resolved the story with doing disservice to the original. I'm certain that research could have easily alleviated many of the discontinuities. I was put-off that Baratz-Logsted tried to excuse the weaknesses of her book by blaming the episodic nature of the original "Little Women." The randomness in this novel had little to do with an episodic narrative, and had everything to do with careless treatment of the text -- both the original story and the new creation. I don't regret reading this and I have some positive take-aways, but overall I was disappointed.

I was hoping for more of a lighthearted visit into a familiar realm, and for a great story to share with my daughters. The book spends too much time showing Emily's negative sides, also focusing too much emphasis on the negative of the other characters, often past the point of where the line is, I feel, for the appropriateness of how their true characters were originally portrayed. I don't care for the crass language, especially the casual use of profanity, or the obvious lack of morals that Emily shows. The uplifting ending is so brief, that it can't begin to make up for all that was lacking.

I love the idea of going into your favorite book & becoming part of the story, but this girl was so selfish & mean spirited in her real life that you expected the experience to humble her. But instead she continued to be obnoxious. The Pickwick paper scene was the worst! She barges in & tells them how stupid it is & takes over with her own paper. It was just mean! And the whole thing with Jo & Laurie! If I could jump into my fave book, *Pride & Prejudice*, I'd be excited to meet them & join the story. I wouldn't act bored with everything & start a war with Elizabeth, trying to get Mr Darcy to fall for me instead! I loved the ending, that's why it got 3 stars, but it was so annoying I couldn't wait to

finish it.

A fun read for anyone who likes OR dislikes Louisa May Alcott's writing... with a laugh-out-loud twist at the end. The author manages to pay homage to Alcott's characters while at the same time gently poking fun, and letting her main character grow and change for the better. I bought the book with little or no expectation and was very pleasantly surprised. Overall, the book is well written and thought-provoking, as well as entertaining.

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