

## **I Am an Amy March, and No, I Won't Apologize.**

If you have read Louisa May Alcott's classic novel *Little Women*, or watched any of the on-screen adaptations, there is a good chance that you formed a particular attachment to one of the four March sisters. One of my friends sees herself in Meg; another swears she and Beth "would be best friends." But me? From the moment I first picked up *Little Women* at my elementary school library, I felt a deep-rooted connection to the youngest of the sisters, Amy March.

Six years after I first read *Little Women*, I sat in my local movie theater and watched Greta Gerwig's 2019 retelling of the same story, still feeling the same connection to Amy that I did as a gangly fourth grader. My best friend, a Jo March sympathizer, leaned over and whispered, "God, Amy is such a brat!" rolling her eyes. I, predictably, took great offense to that. Amy March made me feel seen in a way that was unmatched by any other person, fictional or not, but I came to realize that she was gravely misunderstood.

While Florence Pugh's portrayal of Amy brings a humor and lightness to the character that was lacking in previous film adaptations, she continues to be perceived as a villainess to readers and movie watchers alike. Sure, she probably shouldn't have burned Jo's novel, but doesn't jealousy make us all do heinous things? Yes, she ended up with Laurie, who many believe belonged with Jo, but how can you blame her when she loved him for so long? If asked to justify Amy's actions, to produce a reason for why she is so often looked down upon, I would quote Amy herself: "I'm not a poet, I'm just a woman."

Just a woman. Those three words, though so simple, stuck with me—catchy and persistent, like that one TikTok sound about corn that everyone is always singing. Amy March is just a woman. A woman who was once a young girl, who wanted to be her own person without living in the shadows of her older sisters. A woman who dreamed of being an artist, of being great, but had the misfortune of not being born rich or a man. A woman who loved so strongly that she screamed to stop a carriage in the middle of France for a man who had yet to return her feelings. A woman who wanted, for once in her life, to be someone's first choice. That doesn't seem very villainess to me.

Regardless of the mean tweets written by Jo stans or the snarky comments my friends may make, I am proud to be an Amy. Because after all, she is only just a woman.