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Little Women: A Screenplay Analysis

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Chloe Ford

Abstract

Little Women, written by Louisa May Alcott, details the lives of the four March sisters - Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy. The story has been adapted into a major feature film twice, once in 1994 written by Robin Swicord and directed by Gillian Armstrong, and in 2019 written by Greta Gerwig and Sarah Polley, and directed by Greta Gerwig. Each of these films was nominated for multiple Academy Awards. This study will compare and contrast the structure of both films, as well as the characters and their individual arcs. With 25 years between the adaptations, the characters and storylines were given a refresh. Gerwig and Armstrong tell the story of the March sisters in very individual ways, and Gerwig even chooses to “reshuffle” the story rather than keeping things chronological. The focus of this analysis will be on plot structure and character development, as well as the arc of Jo March, the leading sister.