

MARCH

A Novel

Geraldine Brooks

“Set against the agonies of the Civil War, **MARCH** is a richly imagined novel about the father in Louisa May Alcott’s *Little Women*. **Geraldine Brooks tantalizes the reader** with familiar flashes of the March family, while brilliantly weaving **an entirely new story that is filled with the ache of love** and marriage and with the power of war upon the mind and heart of one unforgettable man.”

—**Sue Monk Kidd**, *The Secret Life of Bees*

“*March* is a **beautifully wrought story** about how war dashes ideals, unhinges moral certainties and drives a wedge of bitter experience and unspeakable memories between husband and wife.”

—*Los Angeles Times*

“It is harder, sometimes, to review a **glorious book**—to convey its power and influence without relying on suspicious adjectives. Good books can be slotted, characterized, explained; great books often cannot. **I believe Geraldine Brooks’ new novel, *March*, is a very great book. I believe it breathes new life into the historical fiction genre**, the borrowing-a-character-from-the-deep-past phenomenon, the old I-shall-tell-you-a-story-through-letters tradition. I believe it honors the best of the imagination. I give it a hero’s welcome.”

—*Chicago Tribune*

When Viking published Geraldine Brooks’s **YEAR OF WONDERS**, in the fall of 2001, critics unanimously praised her debut novel as a superb work of historical fiction. In her eagerly awaited second novel, **MARCH** (Penguin/**On-sale date: January 31, 2006**/\$14.00/304 pp.), Brooks has written a richly imagined tale that is just as compelling, transporting, elegant, and rousing as her lauded first novel, set this time in Civil War-era America.

In **MARCH**, Brooks brilliantly recreates two completely different worlds: that of cool, urbane, abolitionist New England and of the genteel, sweltering antebellum south. Yet beneath the surface of Brooks’s vividly and beautifully drawn story, **MARCH** confronts many daunting issues with which so many people today are grappling: religious conflict, war, politics, and racism.

As she did in her first novel, Geraldine Brooks casts her imagination into a world of catastrophic events where intelligent, vibrant characters dwell, and while each one feels straight out of the pages of history, at the same time, they feel utterly of the moment. At the story's center is Mr. March, a character readers of Louisa May Alcott's classic novel, *Little Women*, will recall as the father away at war serving as a chaplain for the Union cause. Informed by biographical details from the life of A. Bronson Alcott—Louisa May's father—and by his close friendships with Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, March is brilliant, energetic, and flawed—his idealistic nature threatens his marriage and pushes him nearly beyond endurance. His is a character readers will champion as he struggles to reconcile his hopes, not only for his family, but for the divided United States, with the harsh and brutal reality of the environment that surrounds him.

Like her bestselling *Year of Wonders*, **MARCH** is also a love story set in a time of catastrophe. It explores the passions between a man and a woman, the tenderness of parent and child and the life-changing power of an ardently held belief. While there have been many books about the Civil War, **MARCH** stands apart. With its vivid scenes of the barbarism of war, the meticulously rendered intellectual world of New England, its depiction of a complicated marriage long rooted in literary mythology, and an illicit and life-threatening temptation, Brooks adds to brilliant effect a mature perspective to the much-loved family classic. Ultimately, **MARCH** is an inspired inversion of perspective and a totally original tale.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Geraldine Brooks' first novel, *Year of Wonders: A Novel of the Plague*, was published in 10 countries and was a 2001 Notable Book of the Year for the *New York Times*, *Washington Post* and the *Chicago Tribune*. Brooks is also the author of two acclaimed works of nonfiction, *Nine Parts of Desire: The Hidden World of Islamic Women*, and *Foreign Correspondence: A Penpal's Journey from Down Under to All Over*. During eleven years as a correspondent for *The Wall Street Journal*, her beats included some of the world's most troubled areas, including Bosnia, Somalia and the Middle East. Born and raised in Australia, Brooks lives with her husband, Tony Horwitz and their son in rural Virginia, and will be a fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Studies at Harvard University in fall 2005.

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