

Before They Were Famous

Louisa May Alcott



Written by Stephen Krensky

Illustrated by Bobbie Houser



Table of Contents

Wishing for More	4
Growing Up	8
On the Move	12
Next Steps	18
Publishing Progress	24
Glossary	30
Index	31
Comprehension Questions	31

Wishing for More

Louisa Alcott was tired. How could she not be? She might feel all grown up at eighteen, but even so she was worn out from having one job after another. Already, she had worked as a **governess**, a **seamstress**, and a teacher. She could make floors shine and make dirty clothes clean and fresh.

But none of that was enough for her.



“I will do something, by and by,” the young Louisa had declared. “Don’t care what, teach, sew, act, write, anything to help the family; and I’ll be rich and famous and happy before I die, see if I won’t.”



mom
knows
Best

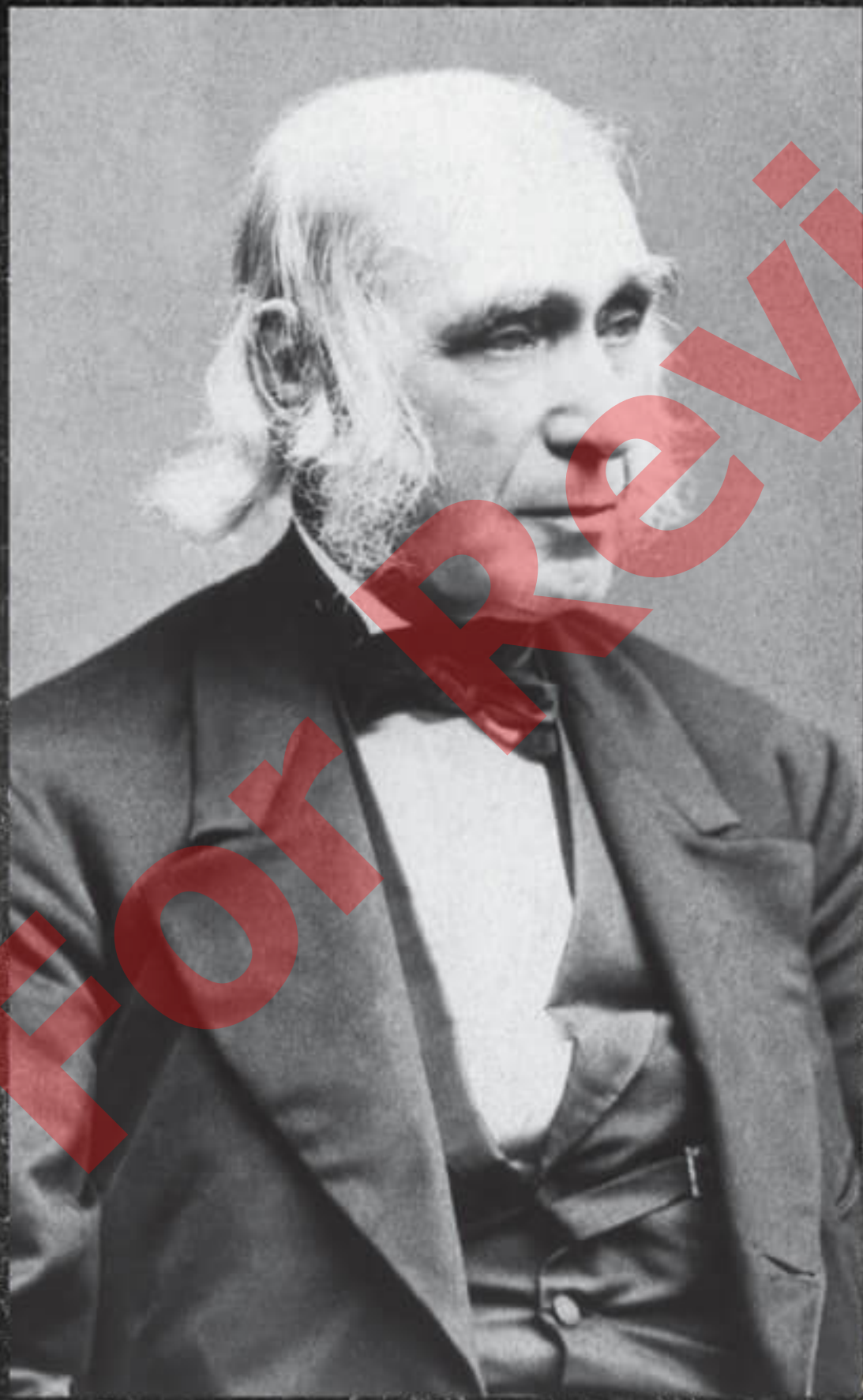
Fun Facts

Louisa’s mother insisted that all her daughters have skills that would allow them to earn their own livings if necessary.



Louisa’s mom

Money was often on Louisa's mind. Why? Because for as long as she could remember, her family had never had enough of it. Her father, Bronson Alcott, was a big thinker. He had complicated ideas on how to look at and appreciate nature.



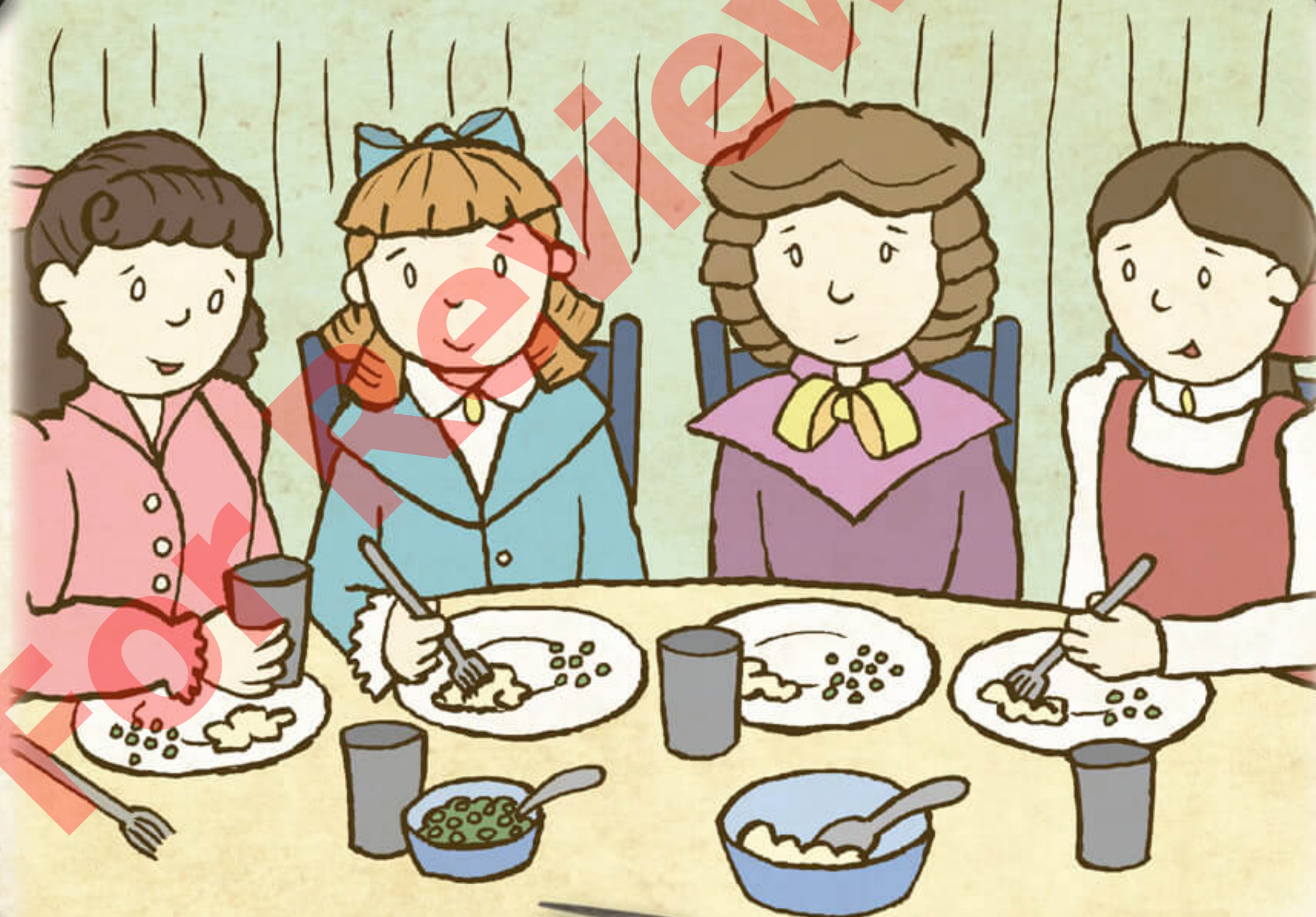
Bronson Alcott



Fun Facts

Bronson Alcott changed his last name from Alcox and dropped his first name, Amos, entirely when he was a young man.

But these ideas did not help put food on his family's table. The Alcotts were poor, and Bronson's wife Abigail and their four daughters — Anna, Louisa, Elizabeth, and May — often went hungry.



Growing Up

To make matters worse, Louisa and her father were very different. Throughout her childhood, Louisa was an **unbridled** force. She saw herself as **spirited**, but her father saw her as troubled. Bronson liked nothing better than to sit for hours reading, writing, and thinking deep thoughts.



Fun Facts

Despite his very strong ideas about education, Bronson Alcott had spent very little time in school himself.

Not Louisa. She was always on the move.
She liked to run and jump and dance
whenever possible.

