

Freaks of Genius: Unknown Thrillers of Louisa May Alcott (Contributions in Military Studies)



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Famous for her classic novel *Little Women*, and regarded as America's best-loved author of juvenile fiction, Louisa May Alcott is not readily identified with page-turning thrillers and sensational tales. Freaks of Genius, however, presents a collection of previously unknown sensational narratives by Alcott, originally published in the weekly storypapers of the 1860s and never before reprinted. The stories are startling examples of an atypical Alcott, delving into such subjects as violence and insanity, revenge and murder, and narcotics addiction and evil.

Included in the collection are six of Alcott's tales of the sensational: A Nurse's Story, The Freak of a Genius, La Jeune, A Laugh and a Look, The Romance of a Bouquet, and Mrs. Vane's Charade. Their themes include the blight of inherited insanity, the power struggle between man and man, the sexual power struggle between man and woman, a Faustian/Mephistophelian pact (later used in A Modern Mephistopheles), the passions of actors and actresses, and feminist triumphs and failures. These skillfully plotted stories are sure to interest the general reader with their narrative excitement, and to fascinate the scholar trying to reconcile their darkness with the sweetness and light tone that has always been associated with Alcott's work. In addition, the book includes the first complete bibliography of Alcott's known thrillers, both anonymous and pseudonymous. For libraries, general readers, and courses such as American literature and feminist studies, Freaks of Genius will be an essential publication.



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