Buenas hermanas
Author:
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Buenas hermanas (Good Sisers)

This book certainly has a unique selling point. It takes the characters from Louisa May Alcott's classic novel Little Women and retells their story in a completely new setting – a dictatorship set in a time that combines aspects of modern technology with attitudes and standards from the nineteenth century. Written by co-authors Georgia Costa and Fernando Alcalà, who wrote the fantasy trilogy The Second Revolution, this seemingly random idea results in a book that is commonly described as a mix of Little Women and 1984. The idea, though, is not so arbitrary as it may appear, using the original March family and some parallels with Alcott's storyline to create an intriguing scenario in which to address issues that prove to be as relevant now as they were in the 1860s.

The sisters live in the city of Concordia, in a society where everything is strictly controlled and regulated; where its people are (apparently) happy, as long as they obey the rules of the community and continue to believe its ideology. The etiquette and social norms by which the family must live are straight out of the original novel, but their lives are constantly monitored by cameras and controlled by propaganda and ritual that is more reminiscent of Gilead in The Handmaid's Tale. The story develops mostly through the two younger sisters, Jo and Amy, who begin as content and conditioned subjects of society, but who each on her own path begins to become aware of the realities of their world, and to rebel against it. The story does indeed combine two opposing approaches: the familiarity of a loving family, sympathetic characters, and a traditional romantic reading encouraged by the nineteenth-century style of the language (and possibly the associations with Little Women, preconceived even by those who have not read it) with some shocking content and scenes of violence and injustice that repel the reader with the horror of 1984 or the Handmaid's Tale…

By its link to the original English-language Little Women, this book already has a natural gateway into the English-speaking market. Its style replicates the traditional nineteenth-century novel and many aspects of the language almost feel like they would be a back translation…

This book is categorised for young adults, but its appeal stretches to adult readers, and the language and style is complex enough for both. Its unique concept of recreating a classic favourite into a shocking modern dystopia will catch the attention of many readers across genres and generations, and should prove to make this book very popular in English, in both the UK and the US markets.

From the reader´s report by .