

BOOK CLUB KIT



FINDING  
MARGARET  
FULLER

*a novel*

ALLISON  
PATAKI

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF  
THE MAGNIFICENT LIVES OF MARJORIE POST

# LETTER FROM THE AUTHOR

Dear Reader,

I am thrilled to share *Finding Margaret Fuller* with you, and so very thankful to you for taking the time to read my latest book, which has been three years in the making.

Edgar Allan Poe once declared that “Humanity is divided into men, women, and Margaret Fuller.” Then why do so few people know the extent of her legacy? Or even her name? That was the question that prompted my initial search to learn more of the dramatic details of Margaret Fuller’s life, and then spurred me on to write this work of historical fiction, my tenth book. I was hooked. I hope you soon will be, as well.

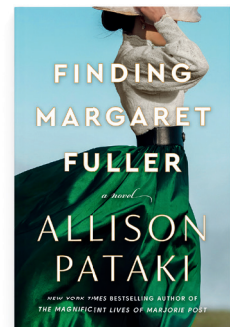
The life story of Margaret Fuller gripped me from the moment I first encountered her name in the pages of a nonfiction book about the lives of the great Transcendentalists—Ralph Waldo Emerson, Louisa May Alcott, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry David Thoreau, Herman Melville, and others. I knew all of their names, and had read much of their work, so then I could not help but think to myself: *how come I’ve never heard of Margaret Fuller and her fascinating life?*

As both a reader and a writer, I love digging into the stories of women who made a meaningful mark in history, only to find their legacies and lives largely overshadowed. It’s time we pull these women from the sidelines of history and put them center stage as the leading ladies they are. This is my offering to show that it’s not only Margaret Fuller’s trailblazing work and legacy that are most worthy and compelling, but so too is the story *behind* her stories: namely, the inspiring and incredible tale of her brave, bold, and colorful life.

As a lifelong lover of books and a great appreciator of book clubs, I know very well the power a well-placed story has to transport, educate, entertain, and even change the world. I hope this book will move you as the story of Margaret Fuller has moved me, in ways both inspiring and surprising. I’m humbled and so very thankful that my book has the opportunity to be a part of your reading journey.

With gratitude and warm wishes for happy reading,

ALLISON



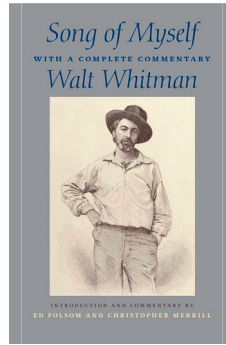
# QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Had you heard of Margaret Fuller before? What did you learn about her historical significance? Why do you think she is lesser known compared to her contemporaries?
2. What was your first impression of Margaret? How did it evolve throughout the course of the story? How did Margaret herself change throughout her lifetime?
3. There are many historical cameos throughout the novel. Who was your favorite historical figure to meet on the page?
4. Margaret had many roles in her life: women's rights activist, war correspondent, writer, and Transcendentalist, as well as being a daughter, wife, mother, muse, and friend. Which did you find the most fascinating? Which do you think meant the most to her?
5. In the novel, Margaret declares, "I am a woman who is too unapologetic in my desire to write, to think, to work. I am a woman who is unafraid to speak with men and support my own work. I want too much." What is Pataki trying to say about women in Margaret's time?
6. Feminism and love: both of these themes played a strong role in Margaret's life. Discuss their impact on her choices. Are there any other themes you found while reading?
7. Margaret often likens herself to a plant in need of new soil in order to keep growing, and this prompted her to move around a lot. Which location of Margaret's did you enjoy visiting the most? Why? Which location do you think Margaret loved the most?
8. Margaret played a key role in the women's rights movement and was a trailblazer for women in several ways. What are some ways her legacy has shaped modern society?
9. Margaret was unique in her day because of her ambivalence toward the institution of marriage. Discuss the different men with whom Margaret had intense relationships. How was she different in each relationship? What did you make of her eventual decision to marry Count Ossoli?
10. What do you think Margaret might have done had she lived past the age of forty?

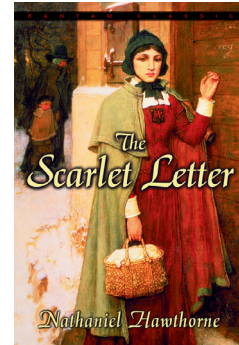
# FOR FURTHER READING



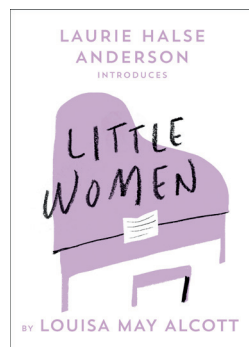
*Walden*  
Henry David Thoreau



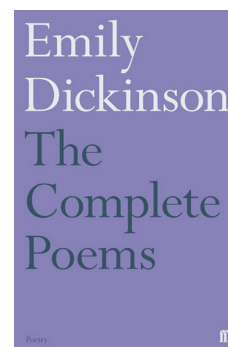
*"Song of Myself"*  
Walt Whitman



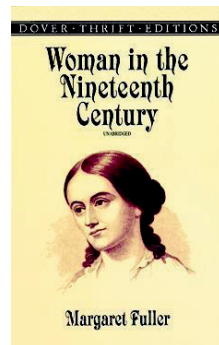
*The Scarlet Letter*  
Nathaniel Hawthorne



*Little Women*  
Louisa May Alcott



*The Complete Poems*  
Emily Dickinson



*Women in the  
Nineteenth Century*  
Margaret Fuller



*"Self-Reliance"*  
Ralph Waldo Emerson