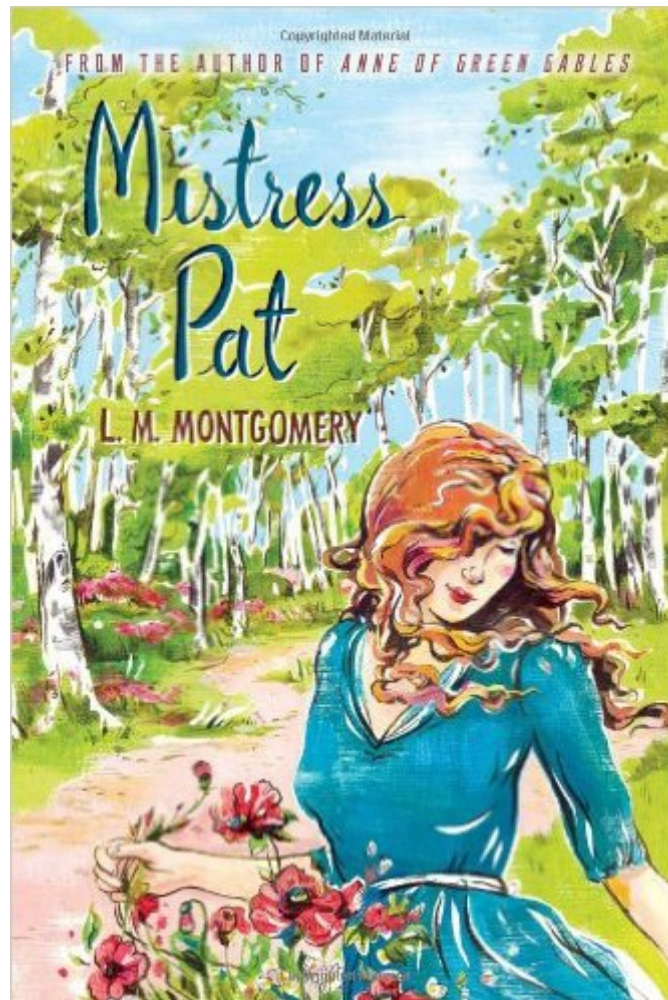


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Mistress Pat



Synopsis

Home is where the heart is At twenty years old, Pat Gardiner has never regretted staying at her beloved home of Silver Bush. She has the wild stories of housekeeper Judy Plum to amuse her, a countess to entertain, a cat named Bold-and-Bad to keep out of trouble, and her younger sister Rae to care for. But she does miss her friend "Jingle" Gordon, who's away at college. He's the only boy who ever truly understood her, and their little spot called "Happiness" is much lonelier without him. Eventually, though, Pat will have to choose: the house she's loved her entire life...or falling in love and starting a home of her own. What Readers are Saying: "I loved this...better than the Anne of Green Gables books." "Pat is my favorite L.M. heroine and these are my new favorite L.M. books." "This book is a must-read for any L.M. Montgomery loverâ if you liked Anne of Green Gables, you'd love Pat of Silver Bush and Mistress Pat." "The romance, the laughter, and the tears make it a story that just captivates you."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have loved and enjoyed many of L.M. Montgomery's books through the years--especially the Emily series, which I have read over and over again--but I had never read this book before. I read it without reading "Pat of Silver Bush" first. This was probably a mistake."Mistress Pat" contained many of the elements that I have loved in Montgomery's other books--the magical sense of place, the humor, the vividly described characters. The portentous "CHANGE IS COMING" theme seemed to overshadow all of those elements throughout the book; nevertheless, I enjoyed reading the novel... until the very end.Until "The Eleventh Year", I had believed that Pat would someday realize

what everyone around her and every reader had realized since page one: Hilary is the love of her life. Yes, she does realize this at the end, but only after almost everything else that matters to her has been swept away. For several days after finishing the book, I wondered why it bothered me so much. I don't like to see beautiful places destroyed, even fictional beautiful places, but it was more than that. I think it was the disturbing thought that this horrendous Deus ex machina transformed Hilary into Pat's last resort. One is quite sure at the end that Hilary and Pat will live happily ever after. But one wonders if Hilary will ever speculate, in his darker moments: "Would she still have loved and chosen me, if she HADN'T lost everything?"

This is a book that I hate to have end because the plot is about a woman clinging to a way of life that's slipping away from her and I don't want to see it go. One of the most successful elements of the books is the characters and the sense of place. Judy, who we meet again from Pat of Silverbush, and Tillytuck, a new addition to the cast, are two of her most realistic and interesting characters. Silverbush itself is a character - I feel like I have tromped through the flower beds and maybe overnighted in the Poet's room. Despite this developed sense of place and person, some of Montgomery's formulas are still evident: I found Pat's sister Cuddles to be remarkably similar to Philippa Gordon from the Anne series. Pat has a streak of Murray pride and an older love interest a la Emily. Also, May Binnie, Pat's nemesis is a rather one dimensional character and we never understand what's motivating her. Some people complained that there isn't enough of the male love interest in this book but I think they miss the point. This isn't a love story about a man and woman, it's a love story about a woman and her home. Besides, in most of Montgomery's other books the love interests are featured for only a few pages here and there. Anne and Gilbert didn't get together every weekend and neither did Emily and Teddy. Another aspect of the story that I liked is that we see Pat get a little older before she figures who she loves and how she will spend her life. I'm only speculating but it felt more autobiographical. After all, Montgomery herself was in her thirties when Anne of Green Gables was published and wasn't married until she was in her late thirties. I just finished rereading this book last night. I'll have to hold off a couple of years before rereading it again and I'm a little homesick right now for Silverbush and Pat and the Gardiner family.

I found that Pat was interesting surfacely, but lacked depth somewhat. She has a lot of room for developement through the approximate decade of the novel's span, yet does not seem to transform. She is somewhat predictable. Since the previous novel portrays Pat's charming childhood, I was hoping to read and find a real woman full of Valancy Stirling-like passion and Anne-like spirit, and

Emily-like intellect---I found Pat was wanton of the emotions and qualities that separate Montgomery's characters from so many others. Also, I disliked the lack of Jingle in the book. When he is present in the few scenes he appears in he has a dominating effect. LM should have taken better advantage of this strength. David is a wonderful character with an eccentric Dean Priestish air to him. Try it--- but if you want a complicated read with a little more substance and something to think and devour over-- stick to the Blue Castle.

Pat Gardiner's dogged devotion to her home was natural and sort of cute in the first book, when she was a child. In this sequel it's a little bizarre; her hypersensitivity to even the slightest negative remark aimed at Silver Bush is just plain irrational. She seems to have no real goals in life other than to keep things unchanged as much as possible, which is not a terribly exciting or admirable ambition. There is a limit to how much landscape-gazing and nature appreciation one can find charming. Again, this was fine in the first book, where Pat aged from about seven to eighteen, but in this book she ages from twenty to thirty. Why the author decided on such a long time span is beyond me, because nothing much happens in between. The most interesting complication is the marriage of Pat's brother to her arch-enemy May Binnie near the story's end, but it falls flat because May is portrayed as a static, one-dimensional villainess who can't do anything good, right down to her accidentally setting the house on fire. Fortunately Pat's housekeeper Judy gets a lot of space, and provides some much-needed entertainment. Jingle is almost completely absent, and you'll need to have read the previous book to understand why they'd have any interest in each other now. The final scene between him and Pat is sweet, although a little anticlimactic; eleven years is a long wait. This book also illustrates one of the risks of setting a story even a few years in the future. It was published in 1935, and calculating by dates mentioned in the first book, the story ends around 1944--with, obviously, not a single comment about World War II. I suppose even Montgomery, who had been so caught up in the first World War, couldn't be expected to predict the second, but it does give an interesting twist to Jingle's comment about the honeymoon they'll spend in the Austrian Tyrol. Now THAT would have made an interesting book!

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