

What 4 Girls Learned

In *Little Women*, a novel published in 1868 by American author Louisa May Alcott, Margaret March tells this story to her daughters:

Once upon a time, there were four girls who had enough to eat and drink and wear, a good many comforts and pleasures, kind friends and parents – and yet, they were not content, always wishing for something more.

Finally, they asked an old woman for advice. “When you feel discontented,” she told them, “think over your blessings, and be grateful.”

They decided to try her advice and were surprised to see how well off they were. One girl discovered money couldn't keep shame and sorrow out of rich people's houses. Another learned she was a great deal happier with her youth, health and good spirits than a certain fretful, feeble old lady who couldn't enjoy her comforts. The third found that, disagreeable as it was to help get dinner, it was harder still to have to go begging for it. The fourth girl learned that even carnelian rings were not so valuable as good behavior. So they agreed to stop complaining and to enjoy the blessings they already possessed.

Doesn't that story strike a familiar chord in our lives, or within our circle of family and friends? Wanting something does not mean it's best for us.

If you want to be content, learn to be grateful for what you have.

--Beecher Hunter