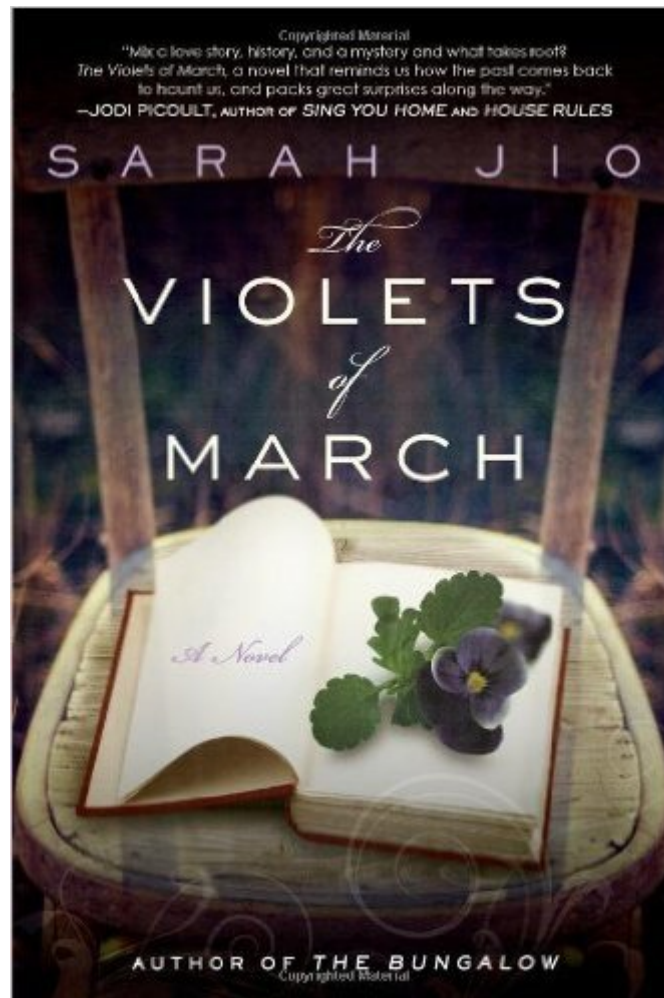


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The Violets Of March: A Novel



Synopsis

A Library Journal Best Books of 2011 Award Recipient A heartbroken woman stumbled upon a diary and steps into the life of its anonymous author. In her twenties, Emily Wilson was on top of the world: she had a bestselling novel, a husband plucked from the pages of GQ, and a one-way ticket to happily ever after. Ten years later, the tide has turned on Emily's good fortune. So when her great-aunt Bee invites her to spend the month of March on Bainbridge Island in Washington State, Emily accepts, longing to be healed by the sea. Researching her next book, Emily discovers a red velvet diary, dated 1943, whose contents reveal startling connections to her own life. A mesmerizing debut with an idyllic setting and intriguing dual story line, *The Violets of March* announces Sarah Jio as a writer to watch.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The *Violets of March* is the type of book that had me at hello. Truly, I was about twenty pages in when I realized how much I enjoyed Emily and I gobbled up her story as quickly as I possibly could. There are so many things to love about this novel that I don't know where to start!! I truly enjoyed Emily as a character. I really felt for her - she was completely surprised by her husband's actions and she had to do something drastic with her life in order to get some perspective. I liked all the characters in the book, actually - Aunt Bee is a fabulously fun older lady as is her friend Evelyn, and Emily meets two guys her first week at the island, both of whom add fabulous details to the story. I always like a little romance in my fiction, you know! Emily is truly the star of the novel as she tries to put her life back together while spending time on the island, but I enjoyed getting to know each and

every one of the characters. The island itself is a character in a sense. Sarah Jio did such a great job depicting what life on Bainbridge Island is like - I could smell the salty air, could see the ferry as it pulled in to the island, and I could feel the sand between my toes as Emily walked along the beach. When I visited Seattle several years back I absolutely fell in love with it, and Sarah Jio has made me want to visit some of the surrounding islands. She definitely brought Bainbridge Island to life. I have to admit that I enjoyed reading the story in the red diary almost as much as the book itself! This technique of a "story within a story" is one that I'm not always a fan of, but in this case it worked beautifully. I was just as compelled with Esther's story (the woman in the diary) as I was with Emily's, if not more so!

During all the craziness last week, *The Violets of March* by Sarah Jio was my escape. Instead of laying in the hotel bed worrying about all the mess and stress, I just opened the pages of this book and lost myself in the story. I must admit that I went to great lengths to get a copy of this book. For some reason when I read an early review and heard that it would be released in May, I just knew I wanted to read it. Perhaps it was because my dear, dear college friend grew up on Bainbridge Island, WA and the island is the setting for this story. Or maybe I was just drawn in by the promise of a buried secret discovered in a long-forgotten diary. I'm a sucker for those kinds of stories. Emily, the protagonist, is a gorgeous and best-selling author who is suffering from writer's block and her husband just left her for another woman. Hoping to heal, she escapes to her great aunt's home on Bainbridge Island. On this beautiful island, Emily discovers the old diary containing a mystery that inspires her to write. And of course, she just might find love again. Ultimately, it is a story of forgiveness. There's nothing especially new or earth shattering in *The Violets of March*. It's a typical healing-from-life story with some romance and ancestral mystery on the side. It could have been a little longer. The story would have benefited from more character development. But also, I didn't want it to end because I liked it. I like it a lot. Jio writes well. It is easy to get wrapped up in Emily's story and the story in the journal. I could barely put the book down until I finished the last sentence. Jio uses the setting to her advantage in building the plot.

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