

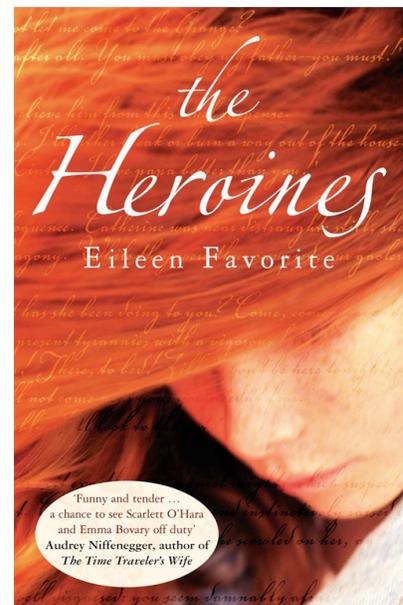


## 'The Heroines' by Eileen Favorite

9th March, in [Book Reviews](#)

This is hands down the biggest surprise must-read book of the year so far, but it requires a big, beautiful leap of faith from the reader.

Penny is a moody teenager living with her single mum at Prairie Bluff, a boarding house in rural Illinois. Frankly, she has every reason to be moody because pesky literary heroines keep turning up on the doorstep interrupting TV's Watergate coverage and taking away her mother Anne-oarie's attention.



No snarky 13-year-old can get a look in when Scarlett o'Hara's weeping and wailing upstairs, nor chime in regarding Emma Bovary's distress. And as for *The Great Gatsby's* Daisy Buchanan what a pain! What's more, Penny, her mum and their housekeeper Gretta have a heck of a time working out where in their stories the heroines are, so they can deal with them appropriately. Because there's only one rule at Prairie Bluff boarding house: never meddle in the heroines' lives.

Fed up to the back teeth with beautiful girls sobbing inconsolably in their rooms, Penny strides across the prairie one night and into the forbidden woods nearby, where she meets a heart-throb literary villain who has come to claim the maiden currently blubbing back at the boarding house. And there fact and fiction which until now, have been getting along quite nicely really start to horribly collide. Will Penny's mother sacrifice the safety of her heroines for the sanity of her daughter? or will she derail the destiny of her latest blubbing maiden and come to Penny's rescue?

I couldn't put this book down because it simply struck such a chord in my imagination. The characters are beautifully portrayed and often funny, and it doesn't matter if you haven't read the books the heroines come from but you might want to afterwards. Part fairytale, part *Girl, Interrupted*, part coming-of-age story, this book is a delight from cover to cover and I urge anyone in the mood for something charming and clever and completely different to read it.