

Laurie + Amy

LAURIE. *[Quietly]* Good afternoon, Amy...

AMY. Laurie! You surprised me. How is your grandfather today?

LAURIE. Much better. I think Rome agrees with him. We even toured the Vatican library this morning. You know grandfather and old books...

AMY. I'm glad to hear he is well. I think the Italian climate agrees with Aunt March also. She has been in an unusually cheerful mood these past few days.

LAURIE. That's good. Looking at more old churches?

AMY. Yes.

LAURIE. No shortage of old churches in Rome.

AMY. According to this book the Capuccini Chapel should be right down this street, but I don't see it.

LAURIE. Let me look. *[She hands him the guide book]*

AMY. Perhaps it is too hot anyway. Do you notice how quiet the streets get at this time of day?

LAURIE. Siesta time. I can't make head or tails of this map.

AMY. Siesta time. What a quaint idea. Though I can't see folks back in New England taking to it.

LAURIE. Perhaps you are just a little bit homesick, Amy.

AMY. Perhaps I am. I was thinking of Beth again this morning. And how strange it will be to go home and she won't be there. And I thought to myself how wise she was. In her childlike way she was so wise. And here I am traveling all over Europe with Aunt March and taking it all in... But I don't feel as if I've grown at all.

LAURIE. Oh, but you have! I mean... you are not the same little Amy March I remember back home.

AMY. I don't feel the same. But am I anything or anyone better than I was? That's what I wonder. *[A pause]*

LAURIE. I know you don't think much of me, Amy... and you've said so on certain occasions. But in my opinion you are... quite a remarkable person. And what you think of me means more than I ever thought another person could matter. So if you could only forgive me and—What I mean to say is—Oh! I can't read maps in Italian! *[Gives her the book back]*

Sorry. Good day, Miss March. *[He starts to leave, flustered and embarrassed]*

AMY. Laurie...?

*[He stops and turns. They look at each other as the LIGHTS fade out]*

Scene Nine

JOSEPHINE. It was Meg who first told me of their engagement. Amy had written and asked her to break the news to "poor dear Jo." I took it well, as they say, but more for Meg's sake than from any sense of good-natured behavior.

*[LIGHTS up on the March house. MEG and JO are in the sitting room]*

JO. But it's perfect, of course! Amy loves fine things and elegant places so much and Laurie can provide them. I would have been a perpetual embarrassment to the dear boy. But Amy will be a credit to him. And to herself.

MEG. I think our Amy has changed, Jo. In her letters she seems much different, less flighty and self-absorbed. And her genuine concern for you and how you might react to her news... well, it was rather touching in its sincerity.

JO. Perhaps Laurie is responsible for the change in her. He could make the March girls do just about anything—except get me to marry him.

MEG. Jo, do you mind awfully?

JO. Regrets? Not many.

MEG. We do worry about you, you know. Our Jo—always the boldest and bravest of the bunch. But now you seem so... fragile.

JO. Oh, I'll be all right! There's no reason for anyone to make a fuss.

MEG. How is your writing going?

JO. Pretty fair. I sent off a little novella to Professor Bhaer the other day. If he thinks it's as good as I feel it is, I'll be overjoyed.

MEG. You and the Professor write each other often?

JO. I scabble off pages to him every time genius burns. And he, dear man that he is, answers every letter with patience and care... though I'm sure he's got much better things to do with his time. But that is the sort he is, Meg: so kind and caring.

MEG. Your Professor sounds like he's touched Jo's heart.

JO. My heart? Yes. But he's a gentleman, Meg, and a scholar too. He sees right through me and my silly stories and is not afraid to tell me so. So you'd better give up any romantic notions you might have about us.

MEG. I will. As long as you promise you won't.