

LIBRETTO VOCAL BOOK

LITTLE WOMEN

the
broadway
musical

Book by **Allan Knee**
Lyrics by **Mindi Dickstein**
Music by **Jason Howland**



MUSIC THEATRE INTERNATIONAL

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C H A R A C T E R S

JO MARCH

PROFESSOR BHAER

AMY MARCH

MEG MARCH

BETH MARCH

MARMEE MARCH

MR. LAURENCE

LAURIE LAURENCE

AUNT MARCH

MR. JOHN BROOKE

MRS. KIRK

CLARISSA

BRAXTON

RODRIGO

KNIGHT

HAG

TROLL

RODRIGO 2

OPTIONAL: MONKS, CHORUS OF HAGS, CHORUS OF TROLLS

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JO

1. *An Operatic Tragedy*2
2. *Better*5
3. *Our Finest Dreams*6
5. *Could You*20
6. *Delighted*25
10. *Better – Reprise*42
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PROFESSOR BHAER

18. *The Weekly Volcano Press*70
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MARMEE

4. *Here Alone*17
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AMY

3. *Our Finest Dreams*6
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22. *The Most Amazing Thing*96

MEG

3. *Our Finest Dreams*6
6. *Delighted*25
12. *Five Forever*50
14. *More Than I Am*59
19. *Off To Massachusetts Reprise* .84

BETH

3. *Our Finest Dreams*6
6. *Delighted*25
11. *Off To Massachusetts*46
12. *Five Forever*50
19. *Off To Massachusetts Reprise* .84
21. *Some Things Are
 Meant To Be*88

MR. LAURENCE

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LAURIE

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22. *The Most Amazing Thing*96

AUNT MARCH

5. *Could You*20

CLARISSA, BRAXTON, RODRIGO

1. *An Operatic Tragedy*2
18. *The Weekly Volcano Press*70

MRS. KIRK

18. *The Weekly Volcano Press*70

MR. BROOKE

14. *More Than I Am*59
19. *Off To Massachusetts Reprise* .84

HAG, TROLL, KNIGHT, RODRIGO 2

18. *The Weekly Volcano Press*70

CHARACTERS BY SONG

ACT 1

1. An Operatic TragedyJO, CLARISSA, BRAXTON, RODRIGO
2. BetterJO
3. Our Finest DreamsJO, MEG, BETH, AMY
4. Here AloneMARMEE
5. Could YouAUNT MARCH, JO
6. DelightedMARMEE, MEG, JO, BETH
8. Take A Chance On MeLAURIE
9. Take A Chance – TransitionLAURIE
10. Better – RepriseJO
11. Off To MassachusettsBETH, MR. LAURENCE
12. Five ForeverJO, LAURIE, AMY, MEG, BETH
14. More Than I AmMR. BROOKE, MEG
15. Take A Chance – RepriseLAURIE
16. AstonishingJO

ACT 2

18. The Weekly Volcano PressJO, BRAXTON, CLARISSA, RODRIGO, HAG, TROLL,
.....KNIGHT, RODRIGO 2, MRS. KIRK, PROFESSOR BHAER,
.....OPTIONAL: MONKS, CHORUS OF HAGS, CHORUS OF TROLLS
19. Off To Massachusetts – RepriseMR. LAURENCE, BETH, MARMEE, MEG, MR. BROOKE
20. How I AmPROFESSOR BHAER
21. Some Things Are Meant To BeJO, BETH
22. The Most Amazing ThingAMY, LAURIE
23. Days Of PlentyMARMEE
24. The Fire Within MeJO
25. Small Umbrella In The RainPROFESSOR BHAER, JO
26. Volcano – RepriseJO

AUTHOR'S NOTES

Doubling. When "Little Women" was produced on Broadway, it was performed with a cast of 6 women and 4 men who played 18 individual roles. The doubling was as follows:

Women:

- 1 - Jo
- 2 - Marmie, Hag
- 3 - Meg, Clarissa
- 4 - Amy, Troll
- 5 - Beth, Rodrigo 2
- 6 - Aunt March, Mrs. Kirk

Men:

- 1 - Professor Bhaer
- 2 - Laurie, Rodrigo
- 3 - Mr. Brooke, Braxton
- 4 - Mr. Laurence, Knight

Undoubling is encouraged where cast size is not a financial issue. The 18 roles enumerated above can be played by 18 different actors, or the roles may be played by a cast ranging in size from 10 to 18 actors.

Chorus. In addition to the above casting options, this script also contains notations (both in the text and in the score) for the addition of a chorus. The size of the chorus is variable and can be as small as 12 (6 women and 6 men) or as large as 24 (12 women and 12 men). These include:

- Dancers at the Ball (12 - 24)
- Ice Skater/Dancers (12 - 24)
- Hags (up to 8 girls)
- Trolls (up to 4 girls, 4 boys)
- Monks (up to 8 boys)
- Beachcombers (up to 10)

ACT ONE**SCENE 1****#00 – Overture**

(MRS. KIRK'S NYC BOARDING HOUSE: #1 - January 1865.

Lights come up on PROFESSOR BHAER, a German professor in his mid to late 30's.
HE is quite proper. HE calls with authority.)

PROFESSOR BHAER

Miss March! Another letter has arrived for you! Miss March!

(JO MARCH, an impassioned girl of 19, shouts loudly from off stage. The
PROFESSOR reacts)

JO

(Offstage)

Mrs. Kirk, the mutton you ordered is on the kitchen table!

(SHE rushes into the parlor)

Thank you, Professor!

(SHE grabs the letter)

Christopher Columbus! Another publisher.

(SHE looks at the Professor)

Another rejection?

PROFESSOR BHAER

I have no idea. I do not read your letters. But they keep arriving and I keep
bringing them to you.

JO

And I keep hoping -

PROFESSOR BHAER

We all keep hoping for your success, Miss March. The entire boarding house keeps
hoping. You have us all on edge.

JO

(SHE reads)

'My dear Miss March. I read your story.' Well, he's read it. 'Unfortunately...
unfortunately I found your tale tasteless and vulgar. Not at all suitable for my
readers. My advice to you-'

(SHE hands him the letter)

PROFESSOR BHAER

(HE reads)

'My advice to you is to return home and have babies. This is what women are made for. Sincerely F. Putnam.'

JO

Twenty-two.

PROFESSOR BHAER

Twenty-two?

JO

Twenty-two rejections since I've been in New York. They all say the same thing. Go home. Give up.

PROFESSOR BHAER

F. Putnam is an idiot. His words are stupid.

JO

F. Putnam is one of the most powerful publishers in the city.

PROFESSOR BHAER

You cannot lose faith, Miss March. There will be someone who will like your story. I am certain of it...

JO

Professor Bhaer? Is it possible I could read my story to you? I would so respect your opinion.

PROFESSOR BHAER

Yes. Of course.

JO

(SHE joyfully grabs her portfolio)

Actually, it's one of my best.

(SHE settles in: Reads)

'It's a mean and stormy night. The moors are bleak and bloody. Thunder claps! Lightning strikes!

#1 – An Operatic Tragedy

The fair Clarissa, her clothes in disarray, races across the wild coastal heath –

(CLARISSA appears on A WILD HEATH)

NOW SHE STOPS!

NOW SHE RUNS!

WILL SHE ESCAPE?

(JO)

WILL SHE BE CAUGHT?

With bold determination, the villainous aristocrat Braxton Prendergast, lurches for her -

(BRAXTON appears)

THERE'S NO ESCAPE:

SHE'S BUT A CHILD.

AND YET SHE TURNS TO FIGHT WITH EYES ABLAZE!

THIS NOBLE GIRL MEETS HIS GAZE, UNAFRAID.

SHE WILL NOT BE DEFILED!

CLARISSA & JO

Keep away from me, you wretch!

BRAXTON & JO

I cannot keep away. Your beauty draws me. Your passion ignites me.

(JO continues to mouth and act out the story)

I'VE GOT TO HOLD YOU.

CLARISSA & JO

I DEFY YOU!

BRAXTON

GOT TO HAVE YOU

CLARISSA

LET ME BY YOU!

BRAXTON

COME CLOSE -

CLARISSA

DON'T COME TOO CLOSE -

BRAXTON

COME CLOSE -

CLARISSA

DON'T COME TOO CLOSE -

BRAXTON & CLARISSA

SO CLOSE, SO CLOSE TO ME

BRAXTON

(Front)

I'll have her. And the mother too.

JO

And at that moment, Rodrigo appears in magnificent splendor!

RODRIGO & JO

(HE appears, brandishing a sword)

Unhand that woman, villain!

BRAXTON, CLARISSA & JO

Who are you?

RODRIGO & JO

I AM YOUR DESTINY!

YOUR BITTEREST FOE!

RODRIGO

YOU STOLE WHAT WAS RIGHTLY MINE

TEN LONG YEARS AGO!

YOU LEFT ME COLD, ALONE AND FORGOTTEN,

NOW I'M BACK TO SETTLE THE SCORE!

PROFESSOR BHAER

(Interrupting her diplomatically)

Miss March!

(HE smiles at her)

Tell me, what is it you are writing here?

JO

Blood-and-guts stuff. It's all the rage. The magazines and periodicals are full of it.

PROFESSOR BHAER

Violence and seduction on every page?

JO

Read Shakespeare. Read history. Read the newspapers.

PROFESSOR BHAER

It is getting late. Perhaps it is best we pursue this some other time.

JO

No. I want to know what you think, Professor.

PROFESSOR BHAER

Blood and guts stuff? What you think the world wants to hear? If I have noticed nothing else about you, Miss March, I have noticed you are unique. Something you should try not to forget. I think you could do better.

JO

(taken aback)

Better? ... And who are you anyway: an aging German professor, close to 50 - ?

PROFESSOR BHAER

(taken aback)

I am 34.

JO

34, really? Well - you look a lot older.

PROFESSOR BHAER

I worry a lot.

JO

And just what do you worry about?

PROFESSOR BHAER

How to avoid a conversation such as this! Now I will go to dinner.

(HE starts away, immediately turns back)

Miss March, since you have been here - six weeks now, is it? - you shout, you rant, you upset the whole order of this boarding house. I am a serene and peaceful man.

JO

You're aloof, you're arrogant -

PROFESSOR BHAER

Arrogant? Miss March, I spoke my mind, as you spoke yours. Obviously, it was not appreciated on either side.

(HE goes)

#2 - Better

JO

Obviously!

(HE goes)

My stories were a great success in Concord.

(SHE looks at her story)

BETTER?

BETTER THAN WHAT?

BETTER THAN THIS DAZZLING PLOT?

BETTER?

THIS STORY WILL BE MY 'KING LEAR'.

(JO)

EACH PHRASE IS BETTER.
BETTER THAN HIM.
BETTER! EVEN MY SMALLEST WHIM
IS BETTER!
HOW CAN HE MISS WHAT'S SO CLEAR?
HOW CAN I DO BETTER THAN WHAT'S ALREADY HERE?

HOW CAN WHAT HE SAID TO ME BE TRUE?
IF I DON'T SUCCEED, WHAT WILL I DO?
TURN AROUND, GO BACK TO CONCORD?
LEAVE NEW YORK BEHIND UNCONQUERED? NO!
HOW DARE HE MAKE ME DOUBT THE WAY I FEEL?
DOUBT THAT EACH THRILLING PAGE IS WHO I AM?
AREN'T THESE WORDS ALIVE WITH PASSION,
VIVID AS MY ATTIC WHERE IT ALL BEGAN?

(The scene gradually changes to the past as she becomes the JO of two years earlier.)

*THE MARCH ATTIC: #1. Concord, Mass. - It is the day before Christmas, 1863.
AMY, the youngest of the March sisters, dashes in)*

AMY

Jo! Jo, the girls at school were horrible to me! Charlotte Fenton said my dress was ragged and my nose was flat!

MEG

(The oldest and most beautiful of the sisters, enters)

Jo, I hate being a governess. I should be meeting eligible young men.

AMY

It's going to be a dismal Christmas: what with Father away and no money for present

BETH

(The second youngest, rushes in)

Meg, Amy - Jo has a surprise for us.

JO

OR WAS I BETTER, BETTER WHEN I WAS HOME?

Listen, everyone: I have risen to the occasion this year and written us An Operatic Tragedy!

BETH

And we're going to perform it for Christmas!

AMY

No, I can't! Not with my flat nose.

MEG

(Coming in on Amy's 'no's)

Jo, do you really think we should? What with this awful war —

JO

When have we let anything defeat us? Years from now people will talk about us:
'One Christmas Eve four penniless and ragged sisters put on an Operatic Tragedy for
all of Concord!'

AMY

All of Concord!

BETH & MEG

Oh, Jo, no!

JO

Filled with blood and guts! Two massacres, a masked ball and several heart-wrenching
scenes!

WE'LL DIM THE LIGHTS.

THE CROWD WILL HUSH.

WE'LL START THE OVERTURE

AND BETH WILL SURELY BLUSH.

AND WHEN CLARISSA STARTS TO PLEAD,

CHRISTMAS WILL EXCEED OUR FINEST DREAMS!

MEG

Jo, do I die again in this one?

JO

(with fun)

Yes!

(Handing out pages of the script to her sisters)

MEG, YOU WILL DIE

LIKE NONE BEFORE.

THE WORLD WILL SHUDDER

WHEN YOUR BODY HITS THE FLOOR!

FOR WHEN RODRIGO MAKES YOU BLEED,

CHRISTMAS WILL EXCEED OUR FINEST DREAMS!

NOW AMY: AS CLARISSA,

(JO)

ONLY PASSION IS PERMISSABLE.
THIS TRAGEDY DEPENDS UPON
THE FIRE IN YOUR EYES.

AND BETH: WHEN YOU'RE THE MOTHER,
YOU'LL BE NOBLE, YOU'LL BE PURE.

ALL HEARTS WILL MELT THE MOMENT MOTHER CRIES!

Let us begin!

MEG

Ah hah!

BETH

Oooohhh!!

AMY

'Mother! Dear Mother, do not cry!'

JO

No, no! Expression, Amy! From the heart!

(With excessive emotion)

'Mother! Dear Mother, do not cry!'

AMY

'Mother! Dear Mother - ' Jo! I am teased and ridiculed at school and all that concerns you is your silly little tragedy!

JO

I KNOW YOU'RE TIRED,
I KNOW IT'S HARD.
BUT WE WILL TRIUMPH WHEN
RODRIGO YELLS 'EN GARDE'!

MEG & BETH

Touché!

JO

OUR SUCCESS IS GUARANTEED!
CHRISTMAS WILL BE THRILLING!
CHRISTMAS WILL BE GORY!
CHRISTMAS WILL EXCEED OUR FINEST DREAMS!

(SHE stabs herself and dies a gory death, falling in playful agony to the floor)

MEG

(amused)

Jo...

JO

(popping up)

I made an important decision today: as you all know I've been writing stories forever. With much satisfaction. And people seem to like what I write.

BETH

We love it, Jo.

JO

Absolutely. So I've decided I'm going to become a world-renowned writer. I shall write great books and earn barrels of money. And I'll give you all everything you've ever dreamed of!

AMY

Oh, Jo!

BETH

Jo can do anything!

MEG

Jo!

JO

But we have to promise to remain just as we are. Solid like a fortress. No matter whatever happens, we must promise that it'll always be the four March sisters — forever!

ALL

Forever!

JO

Come, let's rehearse!

AMY

'Mother, dear mother, do not cry!'

BETH

'Not my daughter, you wretch!'

MEG

'You will have me or no one!'

AMY

'No one!'

MEG, BETH & AMY

BEFORE WE'RE DONE,
THE CROWD WILL ROAR.
WE'LL MAKE THEIR
SPIRITS SOAR!
OUR SUCCESS IS GUARANTEED!
CHRISTMAS WILL BE THRILLING!
YES, CHRISTMAS WILL EXCEED
OUR FINEST DREAMS:
WHEN SWEET CLARISSA BEAMS,

JO

I'VE GOT MY BOOTS AND HAT,
MY MOUSTACHE IS CURLED.
I'M MAKING MY ENTRANCE NOW
WITH CURTAINS UNFURLED.
I'LL SHOW THEM ALL
I'M NO LITTLE WOMAN
IN A DRESS ALL BUTTONED
AND PEARLED.
I'M READY TO TAKE A BOW.

(MEG, BETH & AMY)

WHEN BRAVE RODRIGO SCREAMS,
WHEN THE EVIL VILLAIN'S
GLASSY EYEBALL GLEAMS!

(JO)

I'VE TAKEN A SOLEMN VOW
WITH ALL THAT I AM,
SOMEHOW:

JO

(triumphing)

My dearest Mamah, there will be Christmas after all!

AMY

CHRISTMAS

BETH

CHRISTMAS

MEG

CHRISTMAS

JO

CHRISTMAS

ALL

WILL EXCEED OUR FINEST DREAMS!

JO

Christopher Columbus, I'm bursting with energy! Someone give me a task to do!

BETH

I want you - to bring father home.

JO

I shall write President Lincoln tonight! Another!

MEG

I want you - to get Annie Moffat to invite me to her St. Valentine's Day ball!

JO

I'll wring her bloody little neck if she doesn't! Another!

AMY

I want you - to get us a Christmas tree.

JO

Rodrigo will go chop one down immediately!

AMY

Where?

JO

There! Across the road!

BETH

But that's on Mr. Laurence's property.

AMY

You'll go to prison for it!

JO

(SHE exits with an exaggerated flourish)

Prison? What care I for prison?

*(The GIRLS rush to the window to watch her as the scene segues to THE MARCH
PARLOR: #1)*

#3a – Transition To March Parlor

BETH

Jo is an incredible human being.

MEG

Look, it's Mr. Laurence. He's standing there at the window glaring out.

AMY

He looks sinister.

BETH

I think he looks sad.

AMY

I wouldn't be sad living in such a house.

BETH

Has anyone ever been inside?

AMY

He'd never let any of us in.

MEG

They say he's a very angry and bitter man. Jo's going to get us all into deathly trouble.

AMY

We'll be known as the family with the criminal sister.

(MARMEE, the girls' mother, enters. Her strength and spirit hold the family together)

MARMEE

What criminal sister?

(BETH, MEG & AMY rush to her, helping her with her things)

└

BETH & MEG

AMY

Marmee!

Marmee, you're home!

MARMEE

(Seeing them all in parts of costumes)

What's happening here?

MEG

Jo's written an Operatic Tragedy.

AMY

And she's inviting all of Concord to come see us perform it.

BETH

And I'm the mother in it.

MEG

And I die in it, but it's a beautiful death.

AMY

And I play Clarissa, who's very sweet.

MARMEE

It sounds wonderful!

BETH

Oh, Marmee, it's Jo's best.

AMY

Tell us about your day.

MARMEE

Well - we knitted socks and blankets for the Soldier's Aid Society. And a letter came from father.

AMY

(shouts)

A letter from father!

MEG

Read it to us, Marmee!

MARMEE

Where's Jo?

BETH

She's outside.

AMY

Read the letter, Marmee!

MARMEE

We'll wait for Jo.

AMY

She may be hours.

MARMEE

I want to hear all the things you did today.

(BETH, AMY & MEG quickly gather around her, speaking all at once)

BETH

I baked a dozen biscuits.
Then I practiced the
piano.

AMY

Charlotte Fenton teased me
mercilessly at school. I was so
humiliated.

MEG

I hate being a governess, Marmee.
I do try. But the children get the
best of me.

JO

(SHE enters, breathless, trailing a very large evergreen behind her)

Rodrigo has returned!

MARMEE

Jo!

JO

(surprised)

Marmee!

MARMEE

Where did you get that tree?

JO

I borrowed it from Mr. Laurence.

MARMEE

Jo! You didn't -

JO

(passionate)

I took it for us, Marmee!

MARMEE

(coming right in)

You'll take it back immediately.

JO

Take it back? That's like bringing back a chicken after you've chopped off its head.

AMY

Do let us keep it.

MEG

It's Christmas, Marmee.

MARMEE

No. Destroying someone else's property - ?

BETH

(coming right in)

Well, we could give it to the Hummels. They have so little.

MARMEE

Good. The tree goes to the Hummels then. Now what about Mr. Laurence?

(MR. LAURENCE, a very stern, solidly-built man in his early 70s, appears in the doorway. Standing behind him, almost unnoticed is his grandson, LAURIE)

MR. LAURENCE

What about him?

MEG

(surprised)

Mr. Laurence?

MR. LAURENCE

Yes, Mr. Laurence!

(To Jo)

You!

JO

Me?

MR. LAURENCE

You chopped down my perfect Douglas fir. I should have you arrested!

JO

I'll make it up to you, sir.

MR. LAURENCE

With what?

JO

I'll plant six more.

MR. LAURENCE

Twelve!

JO

And I'll chop your firewood for a few days.

MR. LAURENCE

Weeks! And I hope such an incident never happens again. You've ruined my day!

(HE goes. THEY all see LAURIE, a boy of 16, who has remained behind, reticent, but wanting to say something)

LAURIE

He loves his trees. I'm Theodore Laurence the Third. But everyone calls me Laurie. I've come to live here. In Concord. I play the piccolo. I can sleep standing up. And I won a medal at school for holding my breath nearly three minutes before passing out.

(To Jo)

I think that was terrifically daring of you chopping down Grandfather's tree. Well, goodbye.

(HE starts to leave)

JO

(calling after him)

Theodore Laurence the Third! Would you mind delivering this tree to the Hummels?

MARMEE

Jo!

LAURIE

I don't mind at all.

JO

He doesn't mind.

LAURIE

Just point me in the direction.

JO

They live half a mile down the road. The red house with the broken shingles.

LAURIE

(Taking up the tree)

Merry Christmas!

(HE goes.)

AMY

Merry Christmas!

MARMEE

↓ Jo, you must think before you act on every whim.

JO

I just want us all to have a wonderful Christmas.

MEG

(to Jo with urgency)

A letter's come from father.

JO

(explodes with excitement)

Christopher Columbus!

BETH

Do read the letter, Marmee.

#3b – Letter Underscore

MARMEE

(The GIRLS quickly gather around her)

'My dear wife: The war goes on and on. The end seems nowhere in sight. The days are difficult and long. But I am well.'

AMY

He's well.

MARMEE

Still it's very lonely away from my dear ones. Especially lonely as Christmas is approaching. Each night in my tent, I think of my precious girls.'

AMY

He thinks of us.

MARMEE

'Give them all my love. And give them a sweet kiss. Tell them to be good girls. Faithful and hard working. And to conquer that which is disagreeable in them - '

(SHE sneaks a look at Jo)

' - so that when I return, I'll be fonder and prouder than ever of my little women.'

(SHE looks at her girls, who suddenly look sad. SHE gets up)

Why are we looking so glum? Do we have an Operatic Tragedy to perform or not?

JO

(her spirits reviving)

We do!

MARMEE

Then we have work to do. There are costumes to complete. And we'll need an olio curtain for you to paint.

MEG

And will you perform something, Marmee?

BETH

Do, Marmee.

JO

I'll write something thrilling for you, with passion and daring-

MARMEE

Yes! Yes, I will. We'll make this the best Christmas ever! We March women are invincible. Come, let's get to work.

(The GIRLS begin to disperse, reciting their lines)

#4 – Here Alone

AMY

I'll get my paints -

BETH

I'll look for a costume for Marmee!

MEG

I'll design the handbill.

JO,

(to Marmee on her way out)

I still don't know why we couldn't have kept the tree.

MARMEE

'My dear husband:'

(SHE stops. SHE crumples the paper)

WRITE A LETTER, BE INVENTIVE.

TELL YOU EVERYTHING IS FINE.

BE ATTENTIVE TO THE DISTANCE.

SEND MY LOVE WITH EVERY LINE.

EVERY WORD SHOULD BRING YOU CLOSER

(MARMEE)

AND CARESS YOU WITH ITS TONE.
NOTHING SHOULD REMIND YOU
THAT I AM HERE ALONE.

I CAN'T TELL YOU WHAT I'M FEELING.
I CAN'T TALK ABOUT THE WAR.
HOW THE PEALING OF THE CHURCH BELLS
BRINGS THE BATTLE TO OUR DOOR.
I DON'T KNOW WHICH PART IS HARDER,
WHAT I KNOW OR WHAT'S UNKNOWN,
OR RAISING LITTLE WOMEN
WHEN I AM HERE ALONE.

COUNTING DAYS.
PRAYING FOR NEWS.
IS THIS THE LIFE
WE MEANT TO CHOOSE?

DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH I MISS YOU
AT THIS HOUR OF THE DAY?
HOW I WISH YOU WERE THE TWILIGHT
COME TO TAKE MY FEARS AWAY.
CAN I MANAGE FOUR YOUNG WOMEN?
I'M NOT CERTAIN I KNOW HOW.
WILL I BE THERE WHEN THEY NEED ME?
DO I FAIL THEM EVEN NOW?
I WISH THAT YOU WERE WITH ME,
WISH THAT I COULD BRING YOU HOME.
THE NIGHT SEEMS SO MUCH LONGER
NOW THAT I AM HERE ALONE.

#4a - Transition To Aunt March

SCENE 2

(AUNT MARCH'S STATELY HOUSE. January 1864. AUNT MARCH is a formidable, over-bearing matron, a lioness with a deep, throaty voice, sitting in her great chair. SHE bellows)

AUNT MARCH

↓ Josephine! Josephine, is that you? Josephine!!

JO

(Having tried to sneak past her)

Good morning, Aunt March.

AUNT MARCH

Do you know the hour?

JO

Almost ten, I believe.

AUNT MARCH

Your workday begins with me at nine! You've missed reading to me. And still haven't repaired the latch on the cellar door -

JO

I got delayed finding you this beautiful flower.

AUNT MARCH

Don't trifle with me, Josephine. You were dawdling.

JO

I wasn't dawdling. I was writing a story.

AUNT MARCH

You are what happens to a girl when she has no father.

JO

I have a father.

AUNT MARCH

(pointed)

Never here when you need him. And now my nephew has the audacity to be an army chaplain when he can't even support his own family!

(coming right in, strong)

Josephine, listen to me: You are on the verge of womanhood!

JO

Christopher Columbus!

AUNT MARCH

And just look at you! You go about writing senseless stories, constantly trying to save the world - and you can't save yourself!

JO

I don't need saving.

AUNT MARCH

There are many pitfalls a girl can fall into, and Josephine -

(AUNT MARCH)

(With deliberate emphasis, digging into her)

- you are heading towards all of them!

(With a great burst of enthusiasm)

I want to see you shine. Even if you're not rich - you can at least marry well.

JO

I'll never marry.

AUNT MARCH

You'll marry! All girls marry!

JO

I'm not all girls.

AUNT MARCH

With a good marriage, you can have power. You can take your place in society.

JO

I don't give two figs about society!

AUNT MARCH

Then there is no point in our having this conversation. It's clear to me I could never take you to Europe.

JO

(taken aback)

Take me to Europe?

AUNT MARCH

It was an idle thought of mine.

JO

Do you know how important it is for a writer to travel? It's been my dream, Aunt March.

AUNT MARCH

(coming in strong)

We earn our dreams in this world. It's foolish of me to think you could ever change your ways.

#5 - Could You

JO

I could try!

AUNT MARCH

YOU COULD NEVER BEND YOUR WILL.
YOU COULD NEVER FOLLOW THROUGH.
YOU COULD NEVER BITE YOUR TONGUE,
THOUGH YOUR TONGUE MAY SPLIT IN TWO.
IF YOU WANT TO LIVE YOUR DREAMS,
THESE ARE THINGS YOU HAVE TO DO.
HOW COULD YOU CHANGE?
YOU CAN'T! NOT YOU.

JO

I could change if I wanted to.

AUNT MARCH

COULD YOU PRACTICE SELF-CONTROL?
COULD YOU POSSIBLY BE SHY?
COULD YOU WEAR A CORSET TIGHT
IN THE HEAT OF MID-JULY?
THESE ARE RULES YOU MUST OBEY,
EVERY ONE WHICH YOU DEFY.
YOU'LL NEVER CHANGE.
YOU WON'T! THAT'S WHY!

YET SOMEWHERE, DEEP WITHIN MY HEART I DO BELIEVE
YOU COULD CAPTIVATE THE WORLD.
IF YOU COULD CHANGE THERE IS SO MUCH YOU COULD ACHIEVE.
IN TIME YOU COULD SUCCEED AND TRAVEL VERY FAR INDEED.

YOU COULD BE BEGUILING.

JO

CHARMING? ME?

AUNT MARCH

SOMEONE WELL-MANNERED,
A MODEL OF GRACE.
LEARN THE ART OF SMILING.

JO

THAT COULD BE HARD.

AUNT MARCH

IT ISN'T VERY HARD
FOR SOMEONE FULL OF DREAMS LIKE YOU.

(AUNT MARCH)

IF YOU WORK YOU'LL FIND THERE'S
NOTHING YOU CAN'T DO.

JO

SO, IF I CHANGE WE'LL GO TO PARIS?

AUNT MARCH

CHANGE COMPLETELY OR DON'T WASTE MY TIME.

JO

IF I CHANGE WE'LL STOP IN ANTWERP?

AUNT MARCH

GRACIOUS LIVING WILL MAKE YOU SUBLIME.

JO

IF I CHANGE YOU'LL TAKE ME TO ZURICH?

AUNT MARCH

EVERY CITY FROM DUBLIN TO CANNES.

JO

SURELY, WITH YOUR GUIDANCE,
I COULD LEARN TO USE FEMININE WILES WITH ÈLAN!
I COULD BE BEGUILING.

AUNT MARCH

AH-AH-AH!

JO

AH-AH-AH!

AUNT MARCH

AH-AH-AH-AH!

JO

I COULD LEARN TO CHARM
A DONKEY FOR A CHANCE
TO SEE THE WORLD.
LEARN THE ART OF SMILING.
AH-AH-AH!

AUNT MARCH

AH-AH-AH!

JO & AUNT MARCH

AH-AH-AH-AH!

JO

I COULD BUTTON UP MY MIND
AND KEEP MY THOUGHTS
PERFUMED AND PEARLED.
YES, I SURELY THINK I COULD!

AUNT MARCH

IF YOU COULD THAT WOULD BE GOOD.

JO

THERE'S NOTHING THAT I WOULDN'T SUFFER TO SEE THE WORLD!
I CAN DO IT IF I TRY.
I CAN DO IT BY SHEER WILL.

AUNT MARCH

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS WORK
TO ACQUIRE ANY SKILL.

JO & AUNT MARCH

THESE ARE THINGS A GIRL MUST DO
WHEN SHE HAS DREAMS SHE MUST FULFILL.

AUNT MARCH

CHANGE HOW YOU WALK
AND HOW YOU TALK.
CHANGE HOW YOU THINK AND HOW YOU ARE.

JO

I'LL HOLD MY BREATH
AND HOLD MY TONGUE.
DO WHAT IT TAKES
TO TRAVEL FAR!

AUNT MARCH

COULD YOU?

COULD YOU?

COULD YOU?

JO

AH-AH-AH-AH!

AH-AH-AH!- AH-AH-AH!

AH-AH-AH-AH-AH!

JO

YES, I COULD!

AUNT MARCH

GOOD!

#5a – Could You – Playoff/Transition

SCENE 3

(THE MARCH PARLOR: #2. February 14, 1864)

MARMEE

(SHE calls up the stairs)

Girls! It's getting quite late!

BETH

(Coming down the stairs)

Wait till you see them, Marmee.

MARMEE

To think my two oldest girls are attending their first ball. Next year, it'll be you, Beth.

BETH

Me? You think so?

MARMEE

Meg?

(MEG rushes down the stairs in a beautiful gown with bare shoulders. SHE stops)

MEG

I can't go!

BETH

Meg, why not?

MEG

Look at me! Every girl in Concord my age has been to a ball. And this is the very first time I've even worn a dress like this. Anything like this.

MARMEE

I wore that very same dress to my first ball. And it didn't look half so good on me. Margaret March, you've been dreaming about Annie Moffat's St. Valentine's Day Ball for months. You can't walk away from it now.

JO

(SHE enters, uncertain of her look)

I'm not built for gowns.

MARMEE

You look very alluring.

JO

I think the word is alarming, Marmee. Meg's the beauty. Look at her. She'll be the most sought after girl at the ball.

BETH

She doesn't want to go.

JO

Meg?

MEG

What will I do when someone asks me to dance?

MARMEE

Just smile and say -

#6 - *Delighted*

I'D BE DELIGHTED.

MEG

DELIGHTED?

MARMEE

THEN OFFER HIM YOUR HAND.

(MEG gives Marmee her hand)

MEG

DELIGHTED?

MARMEE

DELIGHTED.

NOW LET HIM TAKE COMMAND.

MEG

I'M HARDLY DELIGHTED.

MARMEE

YOU'RE DANCING LIKE A CANDLE!

MEG

NO I CANNOT DANCE TONIGHT!

JO

I'D BE DELIGHTED!

MEG

THEN YOU GO.

BETH

THE MUSIC IS ENTRANCING.

JO

EXOTIC.

BETH

HYPNOTIC.

MARMEE

THE SOUND OF MEN ROMANCING.

MEG

DELIGHTED?

MARMEE, BETH & JO

DELIGHTED!

BETH

AND SOME OF THEM ARE GLANCING!

JO

PEOPLE EVERYWHERE.

MARMEE & BETH

ELEGANCE TO SPARE.

MEG

HOW CAN I BE SURE THEY'LL LIKE ME WHEN I'M THERE?

MARMEE, BETH & JO

I CAN SEE YOU DANCING ALL NIGHT.

(Dance Break)

ALL

I'D BE DELIGHTED.

DELIGHTED!

(The girls race around, getting ready to leave. Marmee and Beth help them)

MEG

SO GLAD WE WERE INVITED!

ALL

COMPLETELY DELIGHTED!

JO

WHO PAID THE COACHMAN?

MEG

I DID!

ALL

DELIGHTED, PROVIDED
SUCCESS HAS BEEN DECIDED!

JO

MARMEE & BETH

THE GLOVES

MEG

DELIGHTED!

THE SHOES

JO

WHICH ONES?

MEG

DELIGHTED!

YOU CHOOSE!

JO

NO HAT.

MEG

DELIGHTED!

NO TIME.

MEG & JO

DELIGHTED!

YOU LOOK SUBLIME!

ALL

DELIGHTED!

(The singing stops with the appearance of AMY at the top of the stairs dressed for the ball in a gown much too big for her)

AMY

I'm ready!

MARMEE

Amy, what are you doing?

AMY

I'm going to the ball.

JO

MARMEE

You're what?

Amy, no -

AMY

I found this old dress and it almost fits.

JO

It was mine.

AMY

I know. All it needs is a pretty sash. Besides, why shouldn't I go?

JO

Because you weren't invited.

AMY

I can go in your place.

MARMEE

JO

Amy!

In my place?

AMY

You don't care about good society and I do.

JO

I don't care about snobs. People who think they're better than you just because they have grander houses –

AMY

Well, they do have grander houses.

MARMEE

That's enough, Amy!

AMY

But I want elegance and fine things, Marmee!

JO

And I want passion! I want to be noticed because I'm unique. Not because of some silly sash.

AMY

Sashes aren't silly. Aunt March says the right accessories could be the key to a girl's success. Besides, I'd never go to a ball with scorch marks on the back of my dress.

JO

What?

AMY

(Going behind her)

As big as your –

MARMEE

Amy, stop it! Beth, get my sewing basket.

AMY

Jo hates balls. She should stay in her musty old attic and write her dreadful little stories -

MEG

Amy!

JO

My stories aren't dreadful!

AMY

Nobody reads them and nobody likes them!

MARMEE

(Fixing Jo's patch)

Girls!

JO

Well, I like them! I'm sending this one off to a very prominent New York publisher

AMY

And he'll hate it!

MARMEE

Enough, Amy! There, Jo, it's barely noticeable.

MEG

We've got to go.

JO

Yes.

(To Amy)

And I'll tell everyone how sweet you were to give me your beautiful fan!

(SHE pulls Amy's Oriental fan from her)

Goodnight, Marmee - Beth. If anyone calls for us, we're at the ball!

(SHE rushes out followed by Meg)

MEG

Goodnight, everyone!

MARMEE

(SHE rushes to the door, calls)

Girls, have a wonderful evening.

(SHE turns back to Amy)

Amy, think about what you said. And when Jo comes home, you can apologize.
Now come girls, get ready for bed.

(SHE and BETH go, leaving AMY alone. MARMEE calls from off-stage)

(MARMEE)

Amy!

AMY

Coming!

#7 – Delighted Reprise

(SHE picks up Jo's portfolio and tosses the pages into the fire. SHE dances as scene segues to A GLORIOUS ATRIUM in Annie Moffat's House. JO rushes in, pulling MEG behind her)

To include a chorus of 12 – 24 dancers, introduce pairs of dancers at the scene change, just before JO and MEG enter. Chorus enters dancing to the transitional music (see SCORE #7, measure 18) as follows: at first one pair of dancers appear, then two more pairs, etc, until all have danced into the scene (by measure 30). They continue dancing until music ends at measure 81, at which point the pairs of dancers stop dancing but remain on stage, milling about the Atrium, as dialogue continues.

JO

It was an accident!

MEG

Jo - !

JO

I swear, Meg. Mrs. Parrot kept moving in on me - like a mountain lion. She had this gigantic ear trumpet. And she kept shouting at me, 'What's that you say, my dear?'

MEG

She's deaf.

JO

She got so close I ended up spilling the entire glass of punch on her.

MEG

Oh, Jo.

(SHE laughs at the ridiculousness of it)

JO

And then Annie Moffat said to me, 'Can I be of help, Sally?' Sally? Who is Sally?

MEG

I think it's her dog.

JO

I ought to box her ears.

(SHE starts back)

MEG

(stopping her)

Jo - don't! We'll take a few minutes - then we'll go back in as if nothing had happened. Our heads held high.

JO

(quickly recovering)

Yes. You're right. For a young lady who is soon to go abroad and do amazing things: I shall return poised and elegant, brimming with confidence. I shall sit grandly -

(SHE sits. Quickly jumps up as SHE has sat on someone)

Christopher Columbus!

(It is LAURIE, Mr. Laurence's grandson)

LAURIE

Excuse me!

JO

(surprised)

You?

LAURIE

Me!

JO

What are you doing here?

LAURIE

I passed out. Too much dancing, I guess.

JO

Too much punch, I'd say.

A MAN'S VOICE

(calls)

Laurie! Laurie!

(MR. JOHN BROOKE, Laurie's tutor, rushes in. HE is in his late 20s, good looking, with strong features)

Laurie? Where have you been? - I've been looking everywhere for you.

LAURIE

Mr. Brooke, I want you -

MR. BROOKE

Your grandfather will be furious. He wants you to meet some important people -
(HE starts to pull Laurie away)

LAURIE

I have. These are the March girls I've been telling you about, the ones from across the way.

(HE pulls apart from Mr. Brooke)

This is Meg - right?

MEG

Yes.

LAURIE

And that's Jo. She cuts our firewood on occasion. This is Mr. John Brooke. He's a scholar from Boston.

MR. BROOKE

I'm Laurie's tutor. Come, Laurie.

(HE quickly picks up Laurie's things, including, accidentally, Meg's dance card and starts away)

MEG

(calls)

Sir! You've taken my dance card!

MR. BROOKE

Your dance card?

(HE looks at what he is holding)

Oh? Is this yours? Sorry.

(HE returns the card. Suddenly notices how striking looking Meg is)

So - you're Margaret March?

MEG

Yes, I am.

MR. BROOKE

It's - a splendid party, isn't it?

MEG

Yes, it is. Quite - 'lovely.' So you're from Boston?

MR. BROOKE

Actually Maine.

MEG

I've never been to Maine.

MR. BROOKE

You should go. It's beautiful country. Very primitive.

MEG

I like primitive.

MR. BROOKE

Really?

LAURIE

Mr. Brooke is a romantic.

MEG

Is that true?

MR. BROOKE

Well, no, no. I read Sheats and Kelley. I mean - Keats and Shelley.

MEG

So do I.

#7a – Moffat Underscore

If using a chorus, when the MUSIC resumes (SCORE #7a, measure 1) the pairs of dancers begin to exit, and all are off stage by measure 18.

MR. BROOKE

You read Keats and Shelley?

MEG

All the time.

JO

(amazed at the exchange)

Christopher Columbus!

MR. BROOKE

(suddenly inspired)

Would you like to dance, Miss March?

JO

Meg, we were about to join the ladies in the salon -

MEG

I'd be delighted, Mr. Brooke. Excuse us, Jo.

(SHE goes off with Mr. Brooke)

JO

Did you see that? He just -

(SHE turns and sees Laurie beaming at her)

What is it with you and that smile?

LAURIE

You make me beam.

JO

Well, you look ridiculous.

LAURIE

You're looking very fetching tonight.

JO

(Mocking with her fan, as a belle)

Fetching, really!

LAURIE

So tell me, when you're not attending balls, what do you do?

JO

I write blood and guts stories. I make extraordinary plans. I'm going to Europe. I'm going to meet famous writers and revolutionaries. So what about you? What do you do? Marmee said you're all alone in the world. No mother or father. That must be awful for you.

LAURIE

It's not awful. I've got a cranky old grandfather. And I've got a cat. And I've got -

JO

What?

LAURIE

Well, I was hoping to say you.

JO

(laughs)

Me? You don't have me.

LAURIE

I KNOW I HAVE NO RIGHT
BUT SOMETIMES LATE AT NIGHT
I WATCH YOU IN THAT ATTIC,
PACING BACK AND FORTH
LIKE A MANIAC!
I'VE NEVER MET A GIRL LIKE YOU.
ANYONE AT ALL LIKE YOU...

THIS IS VERY NICE.
SUCH A LOVELY PARTY.
THE MUSIC SOUNDS SO THRILLING
IT MAKES A PERSON FEEL LIKE DANCING.

I'm very good. I won a medal for dancing at school.

JO

I don't dance. Besides I've got a patch on the back of my dress.

LAURIE

A patch? Let me see.

JO

(tying to avoid his look)

No, no -

LAURIE

(seeing the patch)

I like it! That patch could start a whole new fashion. You dance with me tonight and I guarantee by next spring every girl in Concord will be wearing a patch on her dress.

WE COULD DO A HUNDRED THINGS,
DO ANYTHING YOU PLEASE.
WE COULD FLY ON GOLDEN WINGS
ACROSS THE SEVEN SEAS.
I'LL BET WE COULD GET A CAMEL THROUGH A NEEDLE
IF YOU'LL TAKE A CHANCE ON ME.

JO

You are a lunatic!

LAURIE

WE COULD CATCH A THOUSAND STARS
AND STAND THEM ON A PIN.
WE COULD LEAP FROM HERE TO MARS
AND MAKE THE PLANETS SPIN.
IF YOU WANT TO DO ALL THE THINGS YOU'VE EVER DREAMED OF:
COME ON, TAKE A CHANCE ON ME.

WE COULD BE SUCH FRIENDS.
FRIENDS ARE NEVER LONELY.
ALL I KNOW IS BOOKS.
BOOKS ARE SOLITARY.
BUT I SEE YOU EVERY DAY,
HOW YOU LIVE IN YOUR OWN WAY,
AND YOU MAKE ME WANT TO DARE
TO TAKE A CHANCE ON YOU.

JO

All right. We could box if you like.

LAURIE

You box?

JO

(Tucking the hem of her dress into her belt)

Ready?

LAURIE

I should warn you, I won a medal for boxing at school.

(HE takes a boxing pose. THEY move about. JO feigns having broken a nail, but when HE moves to her, SHE quickly pommels him with a punch to the solar plexus and a chop on the back. HE falls)

JO

(celebrating)

So that's how you win medals?

LAURIE

You cheat!

(SHE begins to chase him)

WE COULD LIVE A MILLION DREAMS,
BUT ONLY IF WE DARE.

. You win!

WE COULD GO TO SUCH EXTREMES.

(LAURIE)

THERE'S SO MUCH WE COULD SHARE.
WE'LL CIRCLE THE WORLD
DOING ALL WE'VE EVER DREAMED OF -
AND WE'LL LIVE IN OUR OWN WAY
AND I'LL SEE YOU EVERY DAY.
WE'LL BE THE BEST OF FRIENDS
WHEN YOU TAKE A CHANCE ON ME!

So what d'you say? Try me.

JO

I challenge you to a skating race tomorrow at the pond! Come on!

(SHE rushes off)

#9 - Take A Chance Transition

LAURIE

WE'LL CIRCLE THE WORLD DOING ALL WE'VE EVER DREAMED OF -
CAUSE YOU'LL TAKE A CHANCE,
YES, YOU'LL TAKE A CHANCE,
FINALLY TAKE A CHANCE ON ME!

(The scene segues back to THE MARCH PARLOR: #3, where MR. BROOKE is assisting MEG onto the sofa)

BETH

Marmee! They're home!

MARMEE

(Rushing in)

Meg!

MR. BROOKE

Excuse me - Mrs. March. John Brooke, Laurie's tutor. We were dancing and - The ankle may be sprained.

(HE quickly looks at Meg - smiles)

Thank you.

(HE quickly looks at the others)

Goodnight!

(HE rushes off)

MEG

Goodnight!

LAURIE

The evening began very strangely, but ended - magnificently. Goodnight.

(HE rushes off)

MARMEE

Goodnight.

(SHE turns to Meg)

Can you walk on it?

MEG

It's nothing, Marmee.

BETH

Tell us about the ball?

JO

I tried to do all these ladylike things, Marmee, that went unnoticed, except by Mr. Laurence's grandson. And poor Meg, no one even asked her to dance but that pompous Mr. Brooke -

MEG

(coming in, transfixed)

He danced divinely. I had a wonderful time. Actually I had the best time of my life. I may have left here a girl - but I came home: a woman.

(SHE goes upstairs, limping off grandly)

MARMEE

A woman? What's she talking about? Meg!

JO

It's just Meg being silly, Marmee.

MARMEE

Girls, off to bed now. It's been a long day, for all of us.

JO

Beth darling, look what I brought for you: A truffle.

(SHE gives Beth a neatly wrapped truffle)

BETH

Thank you, Jo.

MARMEE

Amy?

BETH

Goodnight, Marmee.

(SHE goes)

AMY

I'm sorry for the things I said, Jo.

JO

And for you, Miss March - a petit fours. A little squashed, but still edible.

AMY

Thank you.

(SHE goes)

MARMEE

Coming, Jo?

JO

I just want to put the finishing touches to my story, Marmee.

MARMEE

Don't be too long. And see that the fire is out.

(SHE goes. JO goes to the fireplace. SHE pulls out charred pieces of paper. SHE begins to get frantic. SHE rushes about. SHE finds her portfolio. It is empty. SHE rushes up the stairs)

JO

(raging)

Amy! Amy! Amy, where are you?

BETH

(calls)

Jo, what's happened?

JO

(calls)

Amy!

MEG

(calls)

Jo!

JO

(calls)

Amy!

MARMEE

(calls)

Jo, what is it?

JO

(calls)

Amy, what did you do with my story?

AMY

(calls)

Nothing, I -

(SHE races down the stairs followed by JO)

JO

(Chasing her)

What did you do? I was working on that story day and night.

AMY

(turning to her, defiant)

I burned it!

JO

(SHE stops, appalled)

You what?

AMY

And I'm glad I did!

MARMEE

(Rushing in, followed by Beth and Meg)

Amy!

JO

(coming at Amy)

I ought to choke you!

MARMEE

Jo, no!

AMY

Go on, I bare my throat to you!

MARMEE

(stepping between them)

Girls, stop it! Back to bed now!

(MEG and BETH go off solemnly but quickly. To Jo and Amy)

What's got into you both?

JO

She burned my story!

MARMEE

(appalled)

Amy? What did you do?

AMY

She deserved it.

MARMEE

Jo! No, Amy. She did not deserve it! You did an intolerable thing.

AMY

Marmee -

MARMEE

You destroyed what meant the world to Jo.

AMY

Jo has everything.

JO

What do I have? I wear dresses with patches! I write a story that my sister burns -

AMY

You could have given me the invitation.

JO

The invitation was meant for me!

MARMEE

Your time will come, Amy.

AMY

(impassioned)

No, my time will never come! I'm always forgotten! I'm always last! I'm never invited anywhere! I have nothing special -

MARMEE

That's enough, Amy! Both of you look at me! I can't demand you two love one another - but I do demand you live together with respect.

AMY

- *(continues impassioned)*

I hate the way I look! I hate this nightgown!

JO

It was mine.

AMY

(peaks)

I want something that's mine!

(SHE rushes off - comes back again more controlled)

And I'll take back that fan.

(SHE takes the fan and rushes off)

MARMEE

I'm so sorry.

JO

It's not your fault. Though you did give birth to her.

MARMEE

Can't you see, she wants to be like you? She wants to have what you have. She's just a child, Jo.

JO

She's not just a child. She's a demon in a child's body.

MARMEE

Jo, if I could bring your story back, I would.

JO

My writing is everything to me, Marmee. It's who I am. It's my future. It's my passion.

MARMEE

That passion is still in you. Believe me, Jo - it's still there.

JO

I'll never forgive her.

MARMEE

You're not wrong, Jo, to feel anger. But if you build a wall between you and Amy, the one person you may end up hurting is yourself. And I couldn't bear that... Try and get some sleep.

(SHE goes.)

#10 - Better Reprise

JO

I can't sleep!

(SHE gets up-wends her way up to THE ATTIC: #2 - taking off her skirt and hoop as SHE goes up the stairs - talking to herself)

I won't!

(JO)

I WILL NEVER FALL ASLEEP AGAIN.
 NOT FOR DECADES - NO, NOT EVEN THEN!
 MY LIFE WAS IN THIS STORY.
 HOW COULD SHE BE SO CRUEL?
 HOW CAN SO MUCH BE LOST SO EASILY?
 I WROTE MY HEART OUT -- IT DOES NOT SEEM FAIR.
 I'LL RAGE UNTIL I'M WITHERED.
 I'LL GROW COLD AND BITTER...

(SHE stops, gets a sudden idea)

'Carlotta ...'

(SHE stops, muses)

'Carlotta the madwoman in the attic, a creature of gall -' I like this. 'A spinster - rejected by the world - changed her appearance.' Yes! 'She attached golden braids to her hair -'

(The scene segues back to Concord, THE ATTIC: #3.)

#10a - Concord Transition

If using a chorus, introduce a chorus of 12 - 24 dancers as ice skaters at measure 1 of SCORE #10A. As Laurie enters and the scene continues, the skater/dancer chorus can be seen traversing the stage, individually or in groups of twos and threes and fours; some skating, some preparing to skate, some crossing the stage to head home. While some members of this chorus may exit sooner, by measure 15 of Score #10A all remaining skater/dancer chorus members exit with Laurie

How long has it been snowing?

(It is near the end of winter)

LAURIE

(calls)

Jo! Jo, come skating with me! The pond is still frozen enough! The ice is magnificent today. Jo, come!

JO

(calls back)

Laurie. I'm finishing a story.

LAURIE

Finish it later. Come race me. I want to win one race before the winter's over.

JO

I'll give you a two minute head start –

LAURIE

Two minutes!

JO

And still beat you!

(SHE races out.

Lights up on the MARCH PARLOR: #4.

BETH is at the piano. AMY moves about the room looking forlorn)

BETH

Go with them.

AMY

Jo doesn't want me.

BETH

Go anyway.

AMY

She hasn't talked to me in three weeks. I drew a picture of her with her beautiful hair and she just ignored it. Besides my ice skates don't fit me anymore.

BETH

Take mine.

AMY

(excited)

Can I really? Thank you, Beth. I hope one day I can be sweet like you.

BETH

You are sweet.

(AMY takes down the skates and rushes out – crashing into MR. LAURENCE, Laurie's caustic grandfather)

MR. LAURENCE

(bites out)

Watch where you're going!

AMY

Sorry, Mr. Laurence!

(SHE races on)

SCENE 4

(THE MARCH PARLOR: #4.

BETH is at the piano playing. The piano has one broken note which BETH hits and hits again. MR. LAURENCE appears in the doorway)

MR. LAURENCE

That piano sounds terrible.

BETH

It needs a tuning, sir.

MR. LAURENCE

(Entering)

Where is my grandson, Laurie?

BETH

I'm sure he'll be home soon.

MR. LAURENCE

The boy's missed six lessons - fallen behind in all his work. I have strictly forbidden him to associate with this family.

BETH

Why, sir?

MR. LAURENCE

Because a man needs an iron will if he's to succeed in this world. And this family will only soften him.... Which one of the dreadful little March girls are you?

BETH

I'm dreadful Beth.

MR. LAURENCE

Oh, yes, Laurie said you're the one who wants to play my priceless piano. It's out of the question. The piano belonged to my daughter, Laurie's mother. It's been locked since she passed away, and that's how it shall stay...
Are you afraid of me?

BETH

A little.

MR. LAURENCE

Why?

BETH

It might have something to do with your face, sir. It's very hard.

MR. LAURENCE

I cannot help my hard face. Continue what you were playing.... Come now, I haven't all day.... Are you going to play or not?

#11 – Off To Massachusetts

BETH

(playing)

IF YOU SAY,
'COME WITH ME,
OFF TO MASSACHUSETTS,'
THEN TO MASSACHUSETTS
WE WILL GO.
WE WILL BUY DISHES THERE,
MAYBE EVEN TWO SETS.
BUY THE FINEST CHINA
THEN WE'LL DINE AWHILE
ON CREPE SUZETTES.

(SHE stops)

MR. LAURENCE

Well, go on!

BETH

(playing)

WE WILL BUILD MODEL BOATS
OFF IN MASSACHUSETTS.
THERE IN MASSACHUSETTS
BY THE BAY.
PUT THEM TOGETHER
AND WAIT UNTIL THE GLUE SETS.

(SHE stops again)

MR. LAURENCE

What's the matter now?

BETH

I don't remember the rest, sir.

MR. LAURENCE

While we wait we'll polka for the folk along the parapets!!

BETH

OFF

MR. LAURENCE

TO MASSACHUSETTS.

BETH

YES, WE'RE OFF

MR. LAURENCE

TO WHERE THE SHOPS ARE SWEET!

BETH & MR. LAURENCE

WE WILL PLAY MINUETS
OFF IN MASSACHUSETTS,
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS,
BEACON STREET!

BETH

IF YOU SAY
'COME WITH ME,'
THEN TO MASSACHUSETTS
WE WILL GO.
WE WILL BUY
DISHES THERE.
BUY THE FINEST CHINA
THEN WE'LL DINE AWHILE
ON CREPE SUZETTES.

OFF TO
MASSACHUSETTS,
YES, WE'RE OFF

MR. LAURENCE

IF YOU SAY, 'COME WITH ME,
OFF TO MASSACHUSETTS,'
THEN TO MASSACHUSETTS
WE WILL GO.
WE WILL BUY DISHES THERE
MAYBE EVEN TWO SETS.
BUY THE FINEST CHINA
THEN WE'LL DINE AWHILE
ON CREPE SUZETTES.

YES, WE'RE OFF TO
MASSACHUSETTS

YES, WE'RE OFF

BETH & MR. LAURENCE

TO WHERE THE SHOPS ARE SWEET!
WE WILL HAVE NO REGRETS
OFF IN MASSACHUSETTS.

MR. LAURENCE

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, WE -

BETH

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, WE -

BETH & MR. LAURENCE

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, WE REPEAT!

MR. LAURENCE

Well ... goodbye.

(HE starts out)

BETH

Goodbye, sir.

MR. LAURENCE

(HE stops suddenly and turns to her)

Come visit me tomorrow. I'll find the key to that old piano. We'll see if there's some music left in it. Will you come?

BETH

Yes.

MR. LAURENCE

And when you see Laurie, tell him I wish to see him at once.

(HE goes)

BETH

(calls, excited)

Meg!

MEG

(SHE enters, concerned)

What is it, Beth?

BETH

(SHE takes a breath - almost unable to get the words out)

Mr. Laurence was here - he invited me to come to his house and play his piano.

MEG

Oh, Beth - !

BETH

(coming right in)

He's really not as horrible as we imagined.

(SHE happily plays a few notes of the song.

Suddenly from outside the house THEY hear JO call)

JO

(calls)

Meg! Beth!

(BETH rushes to the door and opens it. LAURIE enters, carrying in Amy, followed by Jo, who stands at a distance)

BETH

MEG

What happened?

Amy?

JO

(deeply upset)

She fell through the ice.

LAURIE

(HE puts her on the couch)

She was skating by the bridge. And suddenly the ice gave way - I got to her just in time.

JO

(Pacing nervously)

She's careless - she's rash -

BETH

(SHE rushes over with a blanket)

She just wanted to be with you. Here.

(SHE and MEG get her wet clothes off)

AMY

I was skating so beautifully -

JO

You don't think. You know you're not supposed to skate by the bridge. Everyone knows the ice by the bridge is dangerous.

AMY

But you didn't want me skating near you. I love your stories, Jo. I tried to write one to make up for what I did, but I couldn't think of anything to say. So I drew that picture of you with your beautiful hair-

JO

And my big mouth.

AMY

And you just ignored it.

JO

You skate recklessly. If it wasn't for Laurie you could have been killed.

AMY

Maybe it would have been better if I had.

JO

(strong)

You must never talk like that! When the ice broke underneath you, all I could think was: I could have lost you.

LAURIE

Then go on, Jo - forgive her.

MEG

See how much she's changed-

BETH

See her sweet side

LAURIE

I think she deserves another chance.

JO

Everybody, stop it!

(To AMY)

I was devastated when you burned my story. I didn't understand how you could do such a thing. Promise me - promise you'll never think of me as an enemy. But a sister who loves you.

AMY

I promise, Jo.

BETH

The March sisters forever.

GIRLS

Forever!

LAURIE

Forever!

(THEY all look at LAURIE, who is embarrassed by his outburst)

JO

...Laurie. Laurie who saved Amy and made this day possible.

#12 - Five Forever

I want to declare before everyone - before the world - that on this day of forgiveness

(JO)

and joy - that you - Theodore Laurence the Third - who has valiantly lost all contests to me - I declare you our brother: the brother we never had.

SWEAR TO US YOUR GREATEST OATH OF LOYALTY.

AN OATH AS DAZZLING AS YOUR CHARMS.

LAURIE

I SWEAR I'LL FOLLOW YOU LIKE ROYALTY.

AMY, MEG & BETH

COME WEAR OUR ROYAL COAT OF ARMS.

JO

FROM NOW ON WE ARE JOINED

AND WE SHALL NOT BE PARTED.

FROM THIS DAY ON IT'S ALL FOR ONE

AND ONE FOR ALL FOR LIFE.

LAURIE

WE'LL LIVE LIKE MUSKETEERS.

AMY, MEG & BETH

TOGETHER WE'LL PREVAIL.

ALL

WE'LL BE FIVE FOR ALL FOREVER FROM NOW ON.

BETH

NOW EACH OF US MUST SWEAR FOR ALL ETERNITY:

OUR BOND SHALL NEVER BE UNDONE

AMY, MEG, BETH, & LAURIE

NOTHING SHALL SEVER THIS FRATERNITY.

ALL

WE'LL ALWAYS LIVE AND DIE AS ONE.

FROM NOW ON WE ARE JOINED

AND WE SHALL NOT BE PARTED.

JO

FROM THIS DAY ON IT'S ALL FOR ONE

ALL

AND ONE FOR ALL FOR LIFE.

JO

TOGETHER WE WILL FIGHT.

LAURIE

YOUR BATTLES WILL BE MINE.

ALL

WE'LL BE FIVE FOR ALL FOREVER FROM NOW ON.

Speech! Speech!

LAURIE

ON THIS WONDERFUL DAY,
ONE I'LL NEVER FORGET,
I AM HONORED TO SAY I AM YOURS.

GIRLS

IT'S WONDERFUL...
NEVER FORGET...
AH!

(Dance Break)

ALL

FROM THIS DAY ON WE SWEAR
THAT WE SHALL NOT BE PARTED.
FROM THIS DAY ON, NO MATTER WHAT,
WE'RE FIVE FOR ALL FOR LIFE.
WE'LL CONQUER EVERY FOE

JO

WITH OUR BROTHER BY OUR SIDE.

MEG

And if John Brooke were here, he'd be our brother too!

LAURIE

Meg's in love.

JO

WE'LL CONSIDER ANY FRIEND!

LAURIE

WE'LL BE LOYAL TO THE END!

GIRLS

WE'LL BE FIVE FOR ALL FOREVER—

LAURIE

WE'LL BE FIVE FOR ALL FOREVER—

ALL

WE'LL BE FIVE FOR ALL FOREVER FROM NOW ON!
AND ON
AND ON
FROM NOW ON!

#13 - Transition

SCENE 5/6

(THE SUN PORCH - outside the March House. Spring 1865)

MR. LAURENCE

(HE enters, urgent)

Mrs. March, we must be getting to the station.

MARMEE

(calls)

Amy, darling! Are you ready? Amy, Aunt March will be here soon!

MR. LAURENCE

You don't want to miss your train.

MARMEE

I'll need a few more minutes. I'm waiting for Jo. Tell me I'm doing the right thing.

MR. LAURENCE

You're doing the right thing.

MARMEE

I've never left my girls before.

MR. LAURENCE

Your husband has pneumonia and needs you with him in Washington.

MARMEE

I feel like I'm being torn in two. One part of me here, the other part -

MR. LAURENCE

I'll look in on the girls every day.

MARMEE

Thank you, Mr. Laurence.

MR. LAURENCE

I'll just take this to the carriage.

(HE takes the valise. As HE goes, HE greets BETH who has just entered)

Good morning, Beth.

BETH

Morning, sir.

(To Marmee)

I fixed you a basket of food.

MARMEE

Thank you, Beth.

LAURIE

(HE enters from inside with a small valise)

Amy's almost ready. She's packing up half the house.

(HE goes to load the valise in Aunt March's carriage)

MARMEE

Where's Jo? I sent her to Aunt March's hours ago. She should have been back by now.

BETH

I'll go find her.

(SHE goes)

MEG

(SHE rushes in)

Here's the shawl Father loves so much.

AMY

(SHE rushes in)

Marmee, please don't make me go to Aunt March's house. It scares me.

Everything's so old in it. I drew this picture of you - with apple blossoms in your hair. The Goddess of Spring. It's for Father. Is he going to die?

MARMEE

(Hugs her)

No, Amy, I'll see to it that he recovers. Go get the rest of your things.

(JO rushes in, her head covered, followed by BETH)

JO

Marmee, Marmee, I'm sorry I'm so late. I did get the money though -

MARMEE

Thank you, Jo. I know how difficult it is for you to ask Aunt March -

JO

I didn't ask her. I couldn't. So I walked to the town common and stood there all morning trying to sell my stories. And when that failed ... I sold my hair.

(SHE rips off the head covering, revealing a shorn head)

BETH

Jo!

MEG

Oh, my!

AMY

You're bald.

JO

I'm not bald.

AMY

But your hair was your best feature.

BETH

She looks beautiful.

JO

Now Marmee'll have money enough to get to Washington and stay with Father for as long as he needs her. Here: 27 dollars and 25 cents. I threw in a few coins I had stashed away.

MARMEE

You shouldn't have done this, Jo. I'm so -

JO

Disappointed?

MARMEE

Proud. It was a very courageous thing to do. Thank you, Jo.

(SHE embraces Jo)

LAURIE

(HE returns)

The carriage is ready, Mrs. March.

(HE stops)

Jo? You look - different.

MR. LAURENCE

(HE rushes in and out)

Mrs. March, we must hurry if we want to make it to the train!

LAURIE

(To Jo)

By summer I guarantee that every girl in Concord will be wearing her hair -

JO

(stopping him)

Laurie!

(HE smiles and goes)

MARMEE

Come, let me hold my girls.

(SHE embraces them.)

AMY

We've never been parted before. I feel awful-

MEG

(not wanting Marmee to worry)

Amy!

JO

I'll look after everything, Marmee. Don't worry.

AUNT MARCH

(SHE enters swiftly)

My dear Margaret, make certain your husband recovers.

MARMEE

Yes, Aunt March. Thank you for taking Amy. Amy, tell Aunt March how excited you are.

AMY

I'm so excited about living with you while Marmee's in Washington.

AUNT MARCH

Naturally.

MARMEE

(to the Girls)

No glum faces. And no tears. I'll be back as soon as possible. How did you all grow up so fast? Goodbye, Aunt March.

(SHE goes, followed by The GIRLS. AMY says)

AMY

And you'll tell Father how much I miss him- and love him.

AUNT MARCH

(bellows, shocked, sees JO's shorn hair for the first time)

Josephine, what have you done?!

JO

I sold my hair so Marmee could have a safe journey to Washington.

AUNT MARCH

(furious)

You did what? I've told you, if you need money, come to me!

JO

I was hoping to earn my own money.

AUNT MARCH

Cutting one's hair and selling it like a beggar - is not an option for a lady. You look like a shorn sheep! Have you forgotten our contract?

(The GIRLS return)

JO

I never forget it. Traveling. Seeing Europe. Paris. London -

AUNT MARCH

You don't live up to your part of the bargain - why should I live up to mine?

JO

I've tried to live up to my part of the bargain. I went to a ball. I improved my manners. I read books on etiquette - I practiced dancing with Meg - I held my tongue in several situations when I wanted to scream out. I've got a fire in me, Aunt March!

AUNT MARCH

Well, just see how far this 'fire' takes you in life. See what doors this 'fire' will open. See what society thinks of your 'fire.'

JO

To hell with society!

AUNT MARCH

Josephine!

JO

We don't live for society. We live for what we have inside of us. We live to expand our minds. Fulfill our dreams. Engage in passionate exchanges -

AUNT MARCH

That's enough! You think you know everything, and you know nothing! As for Europe, you can forget it! Europe is meant for someone with a little more understanding of its rewards!

JO

Aunt March, please -

AUNT MARCH

(bites out with absolute finality)

The subject is closed!!!

JO

(after a beat)

... The subject is not closed! And if it is, I open it up again. I'll go to Europe! I will. I'll go to Europe if I have to swim there!

(SHE races out followed by BETH AS MR. BROOKE bursts in in uniform)

Hello, John!

MR. BROOKE

I like your haircut, Jo.

JO

And my hair will grow back!

AUNT MARCH

And who is this man?

MEG

He's Laurie's tutor. And a friend.

AUNT MARCH

(firm)

Well, tell your friend, his visit should be brief! Amy, collect your things. I'll be waiting for you in the carriage. I have plans for you.

AMY

Yes, ma'am.

(SHE rushes upstairs to get her things as AUNT MARCH goes)

MEG

John what have you done?

MR. BROOKE

I've enlisted. I couldn't stand by any longer. Your own father is in the army hospital in Washington. I have friends who will never return.

MEG

... When do you leave?

MR. BROOKE

Tonight.... Meg -

(HE takes out the notes he has written down. Reads)

Margaret. I'm not a rich man. And I'm not particularly handsome -

MEG

(interrupting)

You're very handsome, John.

MR. BROOKE

(surprised)

Really? You think so?

(HE reads)

I'm not the wisest man in the world

MEG

(interrupting)

You're very wise.

#14 - More Than I Am

MR. BROOKE

Thank you.... Meg ... Margaret -

IF YOU COULD FIND IT IN YOUR HEART,
IF YOU COULD LOVE ME AS I LOVE YOU,
IF ONLY YOU'D CARE WHILE WE ARE APART -

(HE looks at Meg)

THEN I WOULD BE RICH.
I WOULD BE WISE.
I WOULD BE MORE,
MORE THAN I AM.

MEG

WAIT FOR YOUR RETURN?
WAIT WHILE YOU'RE AT WAR?

MR. BROOKE

MEG

IF YOU WILL WAIT WHILE I AM GONE,
IF YOU'LL IMAGINE ME HERE WITH YOU.
IF ONLY YOU'LL CARE IF I CARRY ON,
THEN I COULD BE STRONG.
I COULD BE BRAVE.
I COULD BE MORE,
MORE THAN I AM.

WHY MUST YOU GO?
DON'T BE TOO BRAVE.
ONLY COME HOME.

IF YOU WILL SAY YOU LOVE ME
ENOUGH TO MARRY ME,
I WILL COME HOME AND LOVE YOU
OR ALL OF MY LIFE.
AND I WILL BE MORE, MORE THAN I AM.
SAY YES, MAKE ME MORE THAN I AM.

SWEAR YOU'LL COME HOME.

MEG

I'LL MARRY YOU TOMORROW.
I'LL MARRY YOU TODAY.
COME HOME AND I WILL LOVE YOU
FOR ALL OF MY LIFE.

MEG & MR. BROOKE

I SWEAR TO YOU NOW WITH ALL MY HEART,
I SWEAR I WILL LOVE YOU AS YOU LOVE ME.
FROM THIS MOMENT ON, THOUGH WE'LL BE APART,

MEG

I WILL BE MORE,

MORE THAN I AM,

MR. BROOKE

I WILL BE MORE,

MORE THAN I AM,

MEG & MR. BROOKE

WITH YOU I AM MORE THAN I AM.

(HE kisses her)

MR. BROOKE

I'll write you - every day. Twice a day.

(HE starts to rush out. Turns to her)

Five times a day!

(HE goes.)

JO rushes back in, excited, holding books and maps. BETH and AMY follow. AMY has her small valise, two dolls and her drawing supplies)



It's settled!

JO

MEG

(dazed by what has happened)

What?

JO

We'll all go to Europe! Why shouldn't we go? Here we are young women on our own-taking care of ourselves. It's time we looked ahead. We'll save our pennies. I'll get a real job.

MEG

Jo -

JO

I've worked out our itinerary. We'll go to Spain first. Madrid. Then to Rome. Visit the Vatican. Have an audience with the Pope. It's a wonderful idea, isn't it?

MEG

Jo, I'm engaged. John proposed. And I accepted.

AMY

Meg? Meg, that's so romantic. Engaged? Meg's engaged. Have a big wedding. Aunt March says they're very fashionable-

BETH

Amy, Aunt March is waiting for you. I'll come visit you later.

AMY

(SHE grabs all her things)

Bye, everyone.

(SHE rushes off)

JO

What about our promise to remain together?

MEG

We made that a long time ago. I've changed, Jo - you've changed.

JO

I haven't changed. I'd never make a promise one day - then break it another. Our word is everything, Meg.

MEG

I love him.

JO

So you love him? I'm talking about us, Meg. We're alone now. We only have each other. Our future as a family is at stake-

MEG

Jo-

JO

You can't turn your back on us.

MEG

I'm not turning my back on you -

JO

I told you I'm going to become a famous writer.

MEG

I know.

JO

I'll give you everything you ever dreamed of -

BETH

But if she loves him, Jo -

MEG

I do! With all my heart and soul.

(SHE rushes out)

JO

I've lost Meg-

BETH

You haven't lost Meg.

JO

I've lost my trip to Europe.

BETH

You'll find your way there some day, Jo. I know you will. You can do anything. You can make the clouds disappear.

JO

It's you who makes the clouds disappear.

BETH

Come, walk with me and tell me all about your adventures today.

#14a - Transition To Attic

JO

Well, I sold my hair.

BETH

Yes

JO

And before that, I stood in the common, and when no one paid attention to me, I cried out, 'Jo March is here!' And then I recited my story: 'Carlotta, the madwoman in the attic...'

(Her voice trails off, as the scene segues to the ATTIC, several weeks later)

SCENE 7

-(THE ATTIC: #4. May 1865.)

LAURIE

(overlapping. HE is reading from her story)

' ... Carlotta the madwoman in the attic, a creature of gall, a spinster rejected by the world . . . hungry for blood, rose from the dark - '

(HE calls)

Jo! Jo March!

(HE continues reading)

' - her eyes were beady red, her hair ghastly white - '

(HE calls)

Jo, it's your best friend - Theodore Laurence the Third!

(HE continues reading)

' - and her fingers clutched with rage, as she went out into the wretched night - '

JO

(SHE bursts through the attic window, where she had been outside sorting out her thoughts, even writing. SHE is delighted to see him)

Laurie! Laurie, Laurie, Laurie! Christopher Columbus, it's so good to see you! You've not been here in weeks.

LAURIE

I was in Boston. I have dreadful news.

JO

What news?

LAURIE

With the war ended, grandfather's insisted I get on with my life. He enrolled me in school.

JO

What?

LAURIE

I'm going off to college in time for the summer session.

JO

That's wonderful news!

LAURIE

What's wonderful about it? Leaving the best friend I've ever had?

JO

Can't imagine life in Concord without you: Not seeing your silly grin every day -

LAURIE

I don't want to go.

JO

But you've got to go. This is an incredible opportunity. College - I'd go in a minute. I'd study everything.

LAURIE

What do you need of schools? You're going to be a famous writer.

JO

(laughs, doubting)

Famous?

LAURIE

I need to tell you something.

JO

Tell me something.

LAURIE

Ever since that first day I saw you - do you remember that day -

JO

Of course.

LAURIE

- the day you chopped down grandfather's cherished tree - I knew then that you and I would be magnificent together.

JO

We are magnificent together.

LAURIE

My sweet Jo - for weeks now - months even - this whole year actually - I've wanted to -

(HE kisses her)

JO

(pulling back)

What was that?

LAURIE

A kiss.

JO

I know it was a kiss.

#15 – Take A Chance Reprise

LAURIE

It was my first kiss. I've thought about it a long time -
WE COULD LIVE A MILLION DREAMS,
BUT ONLY IF WE DARE.
WE COULD GO TO SUCH EXTREMES.
THERE'S SO MUCH WE COULD SHARE.

(HE comes at her again)

JO

(Holding him off)

What's got into you?

LAURIE

Look here I took a part of my inheritance and I bought you this ring.

JO

A ring? What are you talking about?

LAURIE

I want to marry you.

JO

Marry me? Stop this, Laurie – it's not funny.

LAURIE

I practiced saying the words over and over: 'Marry me. Marry me-

JO

Have you gone mad?

LAURIE

...I love you, Jo. And I want you to be my wife.

JO

No. No. No, find someone else! Find – find some accomplished girl!

LAURIE

I don't want an accomplished girl. I want you!

JO

Well, you can't have me!

LAURIE

At least say you'll think about it.

JO

There's nothing to think about. I'll never marry.

LAURIE

You don't mean that?

JO

I do mean it!

LAURIE

You'll marry.

JO

I won't!

LAURIE

You will. Just not me. That's what you're really saying. You'll find someone -

JO

Go away! I thought you understood me.

LAURIE

You knew all along how I felt. Everybody knew!

JO

You knew all along who I am - what I want. I bared my soul to you, Laurie. Go away.

LAURIE

Jo!

JO

Please, just go!

(HE rushes off)

#16 - Astonishing

WHO IS HE, WHO IS HE WITH HIS 'MARRY ME,'
WITH HIS RING AND HIS 'MARRY ME'?
THE NERVE, THE GALL.
THIS IS NOT, NOT WHAT WAS MEANT TO BE.
HOW COULD HE RUIN IT ALL WITH THOSE TWO WORDS?

I THOUGHT I KNEW HIM, THOUGHT THAT HE KNEW ME.
WHEN DID HE CHANGE, WHAT DID I MISS?
A KISS? WHEN I THOUGHT, ALL ALONG,
THAT WE WERE MEANT TO FORGE FRONTIERS.
HOW COULD I BE SO WRONG?

(JO)

AND I NEED, HOW I NEED MY SISTERS HERE,
IF I CAN'T SHARE MY DREAMS,
WHAT WERE THEY FOR?
I THOUGHT OUR PROMISE MEANT THAT WE WOULD
NEVER CHANGE AND NEVER PART.
I THOUGHT TOGETHER WE'D AMAZE THE WORLD!
HOW CAN I LIVE MY DREAMS OR EVEN START
WHEN EVERYTHING HAS COME APART?

I THOUGHT HOME WAS ALL I'D EVER WANT.
MY ATTIC ALL I'D EVER NEED.
NOW NOTHING FEELS THE WAY IT WAS BEFORE
AND I DON'T KNOW HOW TO PROCEED.
I ONLY KNOW I'M MEANT FOR SOMETHING MORE
I'VE GOT TO KNOW IF I CAN BE
ASTONISHING.

THERE'S A LIFE THAT I AM MEANT TO LEAD,
ALIVE LIKE NOTHING I HAVE KNOWN.
I CAN FEEL IT AND IT'S FAR FROM HERE.
I'VE GOT TO FIND IT ON MY OWN.
EVEN NOW I FEEL ITS HEAT UPON MY SKIN:
A LIFE OF PASSION THAT PULLS ME FROM WITHIN.
A LIFE THAT I AM ACHING TO BEGIN.
THERE MUST BE SOMEWHERE I CAN BE
ASTONISHING.
ASTONISHING.

I'LL FIND MY WAY.
I'LL FIND IT FAR AWAY.
I'LL FIND IT IN THE UNEXPECTED AND UNKNOWN.
I'LL FIND MY LIFE IN MY OWN WAY - TODAY.

HERE I GO AND THERE'S NO TURNING BACK.
MY GREAT ADVENTURE HAS BEGUN.
I MAY BE SMALL BUT I'VE GOT GIANT PLANS
TO SHINE AS BRIGHTLY AS THE SUN.
I WILL BLAZE UNTIL I FIND MY TIME AND PLACE,
I WILL BE FEARLESS, SURRENDERING MODESTY AND GRACE.

(JO)

I WILL NOT DISAPPEAR WITHOUT A TRACE.
I'LL SHOUT AND START A RIOT,
BE ANYTHING BUT QUIET.
CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS,
I'LL BE ASTONISHING,
ASTONISHING,
ASTONISHING
AT LAST.

(End of Act One)

ACT TWO

SCENE 1

(THE PARLOR OF MRS. KIRK'S BOARDING HOUSE: June 1865.

MRS. KIRK, a middle-aged Irish woman, rushes in)

#17 – *Entr'acte*

MRS. KIRK

(excited, calling)

Miss March! Has anyone seen Miss March?

(PROFESSOR BHAER enters with a stack of books he has just purchased)

Professor? Have you seen the whereabouts of Miss March?

PROFESSOR BHAER

No, Mrs. Kirk, I have not seen the whereabouts of Miss March.

MRS. KIRK

(shouts)

Helga! - do we have enough sheets for the new boarders? Since the war ended, Professor, people are coming from everywhere. Miss March!

PROFESSOR BHAER

What is it, Mrs. Kirk?

MRS. KIRK

Miss March received a telegram. A telegram, Professor! She may have inherited a great deal of money. She could be an heiress. Then again it could be a terrible tragedy. There is no telling, is there? As her good friend, I'd think you'd be concerned for her.

PROFESSOR BHAER

We are not good friends. We are simply acquaintances.

MRS. KIRK

I see. Helga!

PROFESSOR BHAER

You and others in this house are under the impression that Miss March and I have some sort of kinship. We have simply gone places together.

MRS. KIRK

The theater.

PROFESSOR BHAER

Yes. I took her to see *Hamlet*.

MRS. KIRK

A pathetic tale it is.

PROFESSOR BHAER

Very pathetic. And I have given her three German lessons.

MRS. KIRK

Three - that many?

PROFESSOR BHAER

And I've taken her to lectures, to the park to hear speakers, but Miss March hardly seems to know I exist. She is preoccupied. She rushes past me like the wind.

(JO rushes past him, excited, having just come in from outside)

JO

Christopher Columbus! Mrs. Kirk, have you seen the Professor?

MRS. KIRK

Behind you, darlin'.

JO

(turns and stops)

Aah! Guten teg.

PROFESSOR BHAER

Guten tag, Miss March. The word is Tag. Guten tag means 'good day.'

JO

I know what it means. But when you taught it to me, you said, Guten teg.

PROFESSOR BHAER

I would never say teg.

JO

Well, I'm sure you did.

PROFESSOR BHAER

Well, I'm sure I didn't.

JO

All right then: Guten tag. And it is a very guten tag. A wonderful guten tag, Professor. And I have some amazing news!

#18 – The Weekly Volcano Press

I CAME TO NEW YORK ON A DREAM.
I KNEW IT MIGHT TAKE ME AWHILE.
BUT ALL I'VE BEEN HEARING SINCE I ARRIVED
IS 'LEAVE IT RIGHT THERE ON THE PILE.'
SO TODAY I WOKE UP AND DECIDED IT'S TIME.
TIME TO ACHIEVE, TIME TO THRIVE, TIME TO CLIMB!

PROFESSOR BHAER

Miss March, tell us what happened!

JO

SOMETIMES WHEN YOU DREAM,
YOUR DREAM IS JUST A GUESS.
SOMETIMES WHEN YOU WORK REALLY HARD,
YOU DON'T KNOW IF YOU'LL EVER FIND SUCCESS.
SO I GRABBED A STORY TO SELL
AND GOT READY TO RAISE HELL!
THEN I MARCHED OUT THE DOOR,
AND HEADED RIGHT FOR
THE WEEKLY VOLCANO PRESS.

PROFESSOR BHAER

Henry Dashwood - now he is a man of taste!

JO

DASHWOOD WAS A FIEND,
HE SNEERED AT MY DISTRESS.
TOSSED MY STORY HIGH ON A STACK.
BUT I WAS DETERMINED I WOULD PROGRESS!
I SAID: 'SIR, I'LL WAIT WHILE YOU READ.'

(JO)

BUT, ALAS, HE DISAGREED.
SO I JUMPED ON A CHAIR
AND READ IT RIGHT THERE
AT THE WEEKLY VOLCANO PRESS!

PROFESSOR BHAER

You did what?

MRS. KIRK

Oh, my!

JO

(as Clarissa)

'Keep away from me, you wretch!'

(as Braxton)

'I cannot keep away. Your beauty draws me. Your passion ignites me - '

PROFESSOR BHAER

(recognizing the story)

Ah! It's the one with all the horror in it! The blood bath!

JO

That's the one! I took to heart what you said - I embellished. I made it better.

Lightning strikes! Thunder claps!

(In JO's imagination, we see the WILD HEATH. CLARISSA enters, pursued by BRAXTON)

BRAXTON & JO

I'VE GOT TO HAVE YOU!

CLARISSA & JO

I DEFY YOU!

BRAXTON

I WILL TAKE YOU!

CLARISSA

LET ME BY YOU!

LET GO! LET GO! LET GO! LET GO! LET GO!

JO

Rodrigo appears in magnificent splendor.

RODRIGO

(HE appears in magnificent splendor, brandishing a sword)

Unhand that woman, villain!

BRAXTON & CLARISSA

Who are you?

RODRIGO & JO

I AM YOUR DESTINY.

RODRIGO

YOUR BITTEREST FOE.

I'VE COME TO AVENGE YOUR CRIMES
OF TEN YEARS AGO.

(To CLARISSA)

Run to the forest! Run!

CLARISSA

I can't! The forest is dangerous! My sister went in there and never returned.

RODRIGO

You must risk it! You must take the dark path. Your fate awaits you there.

BRAXTON

(restrained by Rodrigo)

She will never escape me!

RODRIGO

(To Clarissa)

Hurry!

BRAXTON

(drawing his sword)

En garde!

RODRIGO

(drawing his sword)

(To CLARISSA)

Go — now!

(The WILD HEATH disappears.)

JO

DASHWOOD WAS AGHAST.

BUT I COULD NOT CARE LESS!

WORDS I SPOKE IGNITED THE AIR.

I FELT LIKE A PUBLISHING LIONESS!

THAT'S WHEN DASHWOOD STARTED TO SHOUT

(JO)

AND I THOUGHT HE'D THROW ME OUT!

BUT THEN I PERSEVERED

AND A FOREST APPEARED

AT THE WEEKLY VOLCANO PRESS!

(PROFESSOR BHAER and MRS. KIRK listen, spellbound, as CLARISSA appears in a dark and frightening forest.)

The forest is dark and scary. Clarissa enters, trembling, fearful of what fate awaits her. She comes to a fork in the road and stops.

CLARISSA & JO

Which way do I go?

JO

A Hag appears.

If using a chorus, when the Hag appears, she is accompanied by a Chorus of Hags (up to 8 girls) who join her in song as she guides Clarissa on her journey (see SCORE #18, measure 84). Hag and Chorus of Hags exit at measure 105.

HAG

I CAN HELP YOU CHOOSE,
BUT YOU MUST MAKE A SACRIFICE.
GIVE ME SOMETHING, DEAR.
THOSE COMBS ARE NICE.

CLARISSA

WITHOUT THESE COMBS WHAT WILL I BE?

HAG

PERHAPS A HAG AS DULL AS ME?

CLARISSA

I CAN'T!

HAG

YOU'LL NEVER KNOW YOUR DESTINY
UNLESS YOU GIVE UP VANITY.

CLARISSA

(Giving her combs to the Hag)

I'VE GOT TO KNOW.
PLEASE SHOW ME WHERE TO GO.

HAG

(Pointing to one of the roads)

YOUR FATE AWAITS YOU THERE.

(As her journey continues, CLARISSA becomes more and more bedraggled, loses more of her clothing.)

JO

The path is perilous. She avoids swamps. Loses her footing. Her shoes tumble off. The sleeve of her dress gets caught on a twisted limb. She comes to wild rapids and can go no further.

CLARISSA & JO

How do I get across?

JO

A Troll appears.

If using a chorus, when the Troll appears a chorus of up to 8 other Trolls (4 male, 4 female) also appears; the Chorus of Trolls join the Troll in song (see SCORE #18, measure 111).

TROLL

IF YOU WANT TO CROSS: YOU MUST PAY ME!
I'VE THE ONLY BOAT THAT CAN GET YOU THERE ALIVE.
I SEE YOU WEAR A NECKLACE THAT HOLDS A PRETTY JEWEL.
MY PRICE TO GET ACROSS IS WHAT YOU'RE WEARING ROUND YOUR NECK
OH HOW IT'S GLITTER MAKES ME DROOL.

CLARISSA

(looking at her necklace)

I'VE NOTHING LEFT BUT THIS.
MY PROSPECTS ARE SO BLEAK.

TROLL

YOU'LL NEVER KNOW WHAT WISDOM IS
UNTIL YOU GIVE UP ALL YOUR RICHES.

CLARISSA

(giving the TROLL her necklace)

HERE: IT'S YOURS!
NOW SHOW ME DISTANT SHORES.

TROLL

I'LL TAKE YOU TO YOUR FATE.

If using a chorus, the Chorus of Trolls crosses the stage with the Troll and all exit together at SCORE #18, measure 133

(The TROLL takes CLARISSA across the rapids, as JO sings the following to PROFESSOR BHAER and MRS. KIRK)

JO

SOMETIMES WHEN YOU DREAM
YOUR DREAMS COME TRUE
IN EXTRAORDINARY WAYS.
SUDDENLY A DAY CAN BE SO AMAZING.
AND SOMETIMES WHEN YOU YEARN YOU BURN THE AIR,
AND SOMEONE ELSE FEELS THE FLAME
YOU ALWAYS KNEW WAS THERE!

(CLARISSA has crossed the rapids and continued on her journey. An old and feeble KNIGHT appears.)

If using a chorus, when the Knight enters so does a chorus of up to 8 male monks, who sing a latin text (see SCORE #18, measure 142). The Chorus of Monks sing underneath the scene between the Knight and Clarissa. When the Knight exits at measure 149, so does the Chorus of Monks.

KNIGHT

(calls)

Stop, please.

CLARISSA

I cannot stop.

KNIGHT

Can you not give a tired old knight some assistance?

CLARISSA

I have nothing left to give.

KNIGHT

Give me your time.

CLARISSA

My fate awaits me.

KNIGHT

Can you not care for me? It's been years since I felt the touch of another hand.

CLARISSA

(stops and looks at him)

Then take mine.

(SHE touches him)

And take my shawl. Ragged as it is.

(SHE wraps it around him)

KNIGHT

You have completed your journey. My sword is yours. It will protect you against your enemies. You can now return to the moors.

YOUR FATE IS IN YOUR HANDS.

JO

And Clarissa raced from the forest, raced to the moors, where she called: 'I have returned, Braxton! I will free the moors of your tyranny! Fight me!'

BRAXTON

(appearing)

I always knew you'd come back to me. They always do!

(CLARISSA and BRAXTON battle on the moors as JO illustrates the sword fight in the boarding house.)

JO

Clarissa thrusts. She parries. She backs up Braxton, pins him against the tree. She leaps up on a craggy rock, her sword swishing and swooshing. Never has she been so determined. She is on fire! Pity she hadn't taken dueling lessons. Out of nowhere—who should appear—the long forgotten Rodrigo.

(BRAXTON knocks the sword from her hand. RODRIGO 2 appears, seemingly out of nowhere, and grabs the sword out of thin air and puts the blade through BRAXTON's heart.)

RODRIGO 2

This is your end, villain! I've waited a lifetime to destroy you.

BRAXTON

(to Rodrigo)

Who ARE you?

RODRIGO 2

I am your worst nightmare, Braxton. I am — her sister!

(RODRIGO 2 rips the plumed hat from her head, revealing long curls that cascade down her shoulders and back. Everybody, including PROFESSOR BHAER and MRS. KIRK, gasps audibly. BRAXTON dies.)

JO

AND THEN DASHWOOD GOT ON HIS KNEES,
CRYING, 'SELL THIS TO ME, PLEASE!'

PROFESSOR BHAER

(pleased)

Miss March!

JO

THEN HE ORDERED FOUR MORE.
NOW I'M WRITING FOR
THE WEEKLY VOLCANO PRESS!

The entire Chorus of Hags, Trolls and Monks joins the entire company at SCORE #18, measure 172 and sings as noted in the score through to the end of the song. All Chorus members exit with company at song's end.

PROF. BHAER, MRS. KIRK,
HAG, TROLL, KNIGHT

SOMETIMES
WHEN YOU DREAM
YOUR DREAMS
COME TRUE
IN EXTRAORDINARY WAYS.
SUDDENLY A DAY
CAN BE SO AMAZING.
AND SOMETIMES
WHEN YOU YEARN
YOU BURN THE AIR,
AND THEN YOU ARE
NOT THE SAME,
THE WORLD BECOMES
YOURS TO CLAIM,

JO, CLARISSA, RODRIGO,
RODRIGO 2

I'M READY FOR DESTINY!
MY TRESSES ARE CURLED.
I'LL TAKE WHAT IS
RIGHTLY MINE,
WITH CURTAINS UNFURLED.
I WILL NOT QUIT,
I WON'T BE FORGOTTEN.
I WILL SHINE,
I'LL DAZZLE
AND MORE!
I'M READY TO
TAKE A BOW!
I'VE TAKEN A
SOLEMN VOW!

(PROF. BHAER, MRS. KIRK
HAG, TROLL, KNIGHT)

WHEN SOMEONE ELSE
FEELS THE FLAME
YOU ALWAYS
KNEW WAS THERE!

(JO, CLARISSA, RODRIGO,
RODRIGO 2)

MY DESTINY
HERE AND NOW:
I'LL ASTONISH
THE WORLD!

PROFESSOR BHAER

Congratulations! I am - what is the word?

JO

Amazed?

PROFESSOR BHAER

Flabbergasted. And delighted!

JO

Christopher Columbus, today I feel anything is possible. You were right professor.

PROFESSOR BHAER

About what?

JO

(SHE quickly thinks, then blurts out)

Everything! I'm going to be a published writer! I can't believe it! Fifteen dollars!
And twenty-five more for my commission!

MRS. KIRK

You are rich!

JO

I feel rich! Do you dance, Professor?

PROFESSOR BHAER

No.

JO

Neither do I. But today I could!

(SHE grabs him and THEY dance a few steps. THEY break, uncomfortably, and look at each other)

PROFESSOR BHAER

We should celebrate your success, Miss March. Have you ever been to the Broadway Gardens?

JO

Are you asking me to dinner, Professor?

PROFESSOR BHAER

No. Yes.

JO

I should like that.

MRS. KIRK

Miss March, I almost forgot in all the excitement - this telegram came for you.
More good news I suspect.

PROFESSOR BHAER

(Having stopped)

Open it, Miss March.

JO

I will. Today I could start a revolution. I could -

(SHE rips it open and reads)

MRS. KIRK

What is it, Miss March?

PROFESSOR BHAER

(sensing her sadness)

It is not good news?

JO

Dear God, no. My sister Beth has contracted scarlet fever. She is gravely ill. I must go to her immediately.

(SHE starts away)

MRS. KIRK

I'm sorry, dear. Sorry for you and your family.

PROFESSOR BHAER

Is there anything we can do?

JO

(Backing away)

No thank you, Professor. Mrs. Kirk, tell your girls -

MRS. KIRK

They'll be fine.

JO

Tell them to keep reading.

MRS. KIRK

I will.

JO

Thank you both for everything.

(SHE starts away)

PROFESSOR BHAER

(Runs after her. Stops)

Miss March! I would like ... to accompany you.

JO

Accompany me?

PROFESSOR BHAER

You - you should not travel alone.

JO

I traveled here alone. I'm not afraid. I shall be fine. But thank you.

(SHE starts away)

PROFESSOR BHAER

(shouts after her)

Miss March! You will be back?

JO

(SHE turns back)

Of course, I will.

(SHE continues on)

PROFESSOR BHAER

And Miss March - viel gluck.

JO

Yes - I need good luck.

(SHE rushes to her room)

MRS. KIRK

(calls as she goes. SHE turns back to the Professor)

Your simple acquaintance is leaving you, Professor.

PROFESSOR BHAER

Yes.

(HE is left alone)

#18a – NYC To Concord Transition

MRS. KIRK

(from off-stage)

Time to get up, Mr. Felix! Feet off the sofa.

(SHE shouts at boarders as the scene segues)

SCENE 2

(THE MARCH PARLOR: #7. Summer 1865.

A few weeks later. JOHN BROOKE, now married to Meg, is assisting MR. LAURENCE in moving his piano into the March house).

MR. LAURENCE

A little more, John. Keep pushing. Heavy piece of wood, isn't it?

MR. BROOKE

Light as a feather, sir.

MR. LAURENCE

And Beth knows nothing?

MR. BROOKE

Jo has seen to everything.

MR. LAURENCE

...There! That's it.

MR. BROOKE

(Stepping back, out of breath, impressed)

Yes!

MR. LAURENCE

At last it's found a home.

MR. BROOKE

It's a beauty, sir. I'll let Jo know -

MR. LAURENCE

John, wait. The flowers!

(JOHN rushes for the bouquet. MARMEE rushes in, taking off the apron)

MARMEE

(seeing the piano)

It's magnificent. But Mr. Laurence, you shouldn't have.

MR. LAURENCE

But I did. And enough said on the matter.

(HE takes the bouquet from John and places it on the piano)

MR. BROOKE

(HE rushes up the stairs, calling)

Jo!

(JO rushes down the stairs)

JO

She's ready.

MR. BROOKE

It's in place.

JO

(calls)

Meg!

(A pregnant MEG appears at the top of the stairs with a frail and blindfolded BETH.

JO takes her from Meg and slowly leads her down the stairs)

BETH

Where are you taking me?

MEG

You'll see.

BETH

Is it Amy? Is she back?

JO

It's not Amy. And she's not back.

BETH

Well, what is it?

JO

Patience.... There!

(SHE removes the blindfold)

BETH

(SHE sees)

Mr. Laurence - ?

MR. LAURENCE

Over here.

BETH

(Turning)

Your piano?

MR. LAURENCE

No, Beth - yours.

BETH

Mine? ... Marmee - no.

MARMEE

There was no arguing with him.

BETH

But why, sir?

MR. LAURENCE

Because it kept calling, 'Where is that dreadful little March girl?' It missed you.

JO

Go sit at it, Beth.

BETH

Thank you, Mr. Laurence. I shall treasure it.

(SHE sits at the piano with Marmee's help)

MARMEE

Play something for us, Beth.

#18b - Beth Plays Piano

(BETH hits a note. SHE looks up)

It sounds good.

(BETH plays a few more notes)

MR. LAURENCE

I forgot to tell you, I received a letter from Laurie this morning. He had been in New York -

JO

Laurie was in New York?

MR. LAURENCE

Didn't he come see you?

JO

No.

MR. LAURENCE

I'm sorry. But he was in such a bad way. Moping about for weeks. I insisted he do some business for me. Then go to Europe and enjoy himself. And guess who he met up with in Florence?

MEG

Who?

MR. LAURENCE

Amy and your Aunt March.... Miss March ... may I join you?

BETH

It'd be an honor, sir.

(HE sits with Beth. SHE plays)

#19 – Off To Massachusetts Reprise

MR. LAURENCE

IF YOU SAY,
'COME WITH ME,
OFF TO MASSACHUSETTS,
THEN TO MASSACHUSETTS
WE WILL GO.

BETH

WE WILL BUY DISHES THERE,
MAYBE EVEN TWO SETS.

MR. LAURENCE & BETH

BUY THE FINEST CHINA,
THEN WE'LL DINE A WHILE
ON CREPE SUZETTES.

(THEY play a four-handed duet.

As the others disappear, JO wends her way up to THE ATTIC: #5. There SHE closes the door, feeling alone. SHE shuts the storm windows - puts things away)


JO

New York? I miss New York.

MR. LAURENCE, BETH, MARMEE, JOHN BROOKE & MEG

OFF TO MASSACHUSETTS,
YES WE'RE OFF TO WHERE THE SHOPS ARE SWEET!
WE WILL HAVE NO REGRETS
OFF IN MASSACHUSETTS...

JO

 (SHE writes)

Dear Professor Bhaer: I've been wanting to write you.

#19a - Jo To Proffesor Bhaer Transition

So much is happening here. My sister Meg is having a baby. My sister Beth is very frail. But I know I have it in me to make her better. I've decided to take her and my mother to Cape Cod - to Falmouth - for a few days. Given all that is happening here, I don't know when I can return to New York. I miss it. I miss those volatile exchanges we had. I miss - '


(The scene segues to MRS. KIRK'S BOARDING HOUSE: where PROFESSOR BHAER is reading the letter)

PROFESSOR BHAER & JO

- our walks in the park to hear the speakers shout how they would change the world. I too would like to change the world.

(HE looks up)

PROFFESOR BHAER

 Yes, of course.

#20 - How I Am

(HE reads from the beginning again)

'And how are you, sir?'

SHE ASKS HOW I AM.

AND SO: HOW AM I?

MY DAYS ARE THE USUAL DAYS.

I WAKE UP, I GO OUT.

TIME GOES BY.

MY DAYS ARE EXACTLY THE DAYS I HAVE LIVED SINCE ARRIVING HERE.

IN FACT, HOW I AM IS AMAZED HOW THIS COMFORTS ME YEAR BY YEAR.

I WORK AND I EAT.

LIFE IS MUFFINS AND JAM.

THE HOUSE IS NICE AND QUIET NOW.

THAT IS HOW I AM.

FIVE YEARS IN THESE ROOMS

READING HEGEL AND KANT.

MY MIND IS DEVOTED TO THOUGHTS

OF THE MEANING OF LIFE.

(PROFESSOR BHAER)

WHAT MORE COULD I WANT?
SO WHY IS IT LATELY I FIND I'M UNEASY ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT?
AND WHY EVEN NOW DOES MY SKIN FEEL EXPLOSIVE AS DYNAMITE?
WHY DOES MY HEART POUND
LIKE A BATTERING RAM?
HOW CAN SHE ASK ME HOW I AM?
HOW I AM IS FINE!

(HE writes.)

'DEAR MISS MARCH, THERE IS NOTHING DRAMATIC OR NEW TO REPORT.
THIS WILL BE SHORT.
MORNING AND EVENING I LIVE IN MY USUAL WAY.
ON THE DAY YOU RETURN YOU WILL SEE FOR YOURSELF!
TELL ME, MISS MARCH, ARE YOU HAPPY SO FAR FROM THE CLANG
AND THE BEAT OF OUR TURBULENT STREET?
QUITE OFTEN I THINK OF OUR DAYS IN NEW YORK.
THOUGH OF COURSE SINCE YOU WENT I HAVE BEEN QUITE CONTENT.'

(HE tears the note to pieces.)

ACH!
I WAKE IN THE MORNING AND ALL THAT I HEAR
IS THE ABSENCE OF SOUND.
YES!
MY PEACE IS DISTURBED BUT THE RUCKUS IS ME
AS MY THOUGHTS RUN AGROUND.
I WANTED A LIFE BY MYSELF IN THESE ROOMS,
BUT NOW ALL AROUND ME ANOTHER LIFE LOOMS.
WHO ASKED HER TO COME AND TO GO AND TO LEAVE ME LIKE THAT?
AND NOW SHE EXPECTS ME TO SEND HER A NOTE?
WITH WORDS, IF I SPOKE, THAT WOULD STICK IN MY THROAT!
WHO ASKED HER TO CHANGE HOW I LIVE, HOW I THINK, HOW I AM?

(HE picks up her letter)

SHE ASKS HOW I AM.
HOW CAN I REPLY?
I GO THROUGH MY DAILY ROUTINE.
I GIVE LESSONS, I WAIT.
TIME GOES BY.
YET LATELY I FIND THERE IS PLEASURE IN HUMMING A SILLY TUNE.
AND SOME DAYS I GO TO THE PARK AND I SIT THERE ALL AFTERNOON.
SOME EVENINGS I SWEAR

(PROFESSOR BHAER)

I CAN HEAR A DOOR SLAM.
THE HOUSE IS FAR TOO QUIET NOW.
THAT IS HOW I AM.

#20a – To The Beach**SCENE 3**

(A BEACH AND PAVILION IN FALMOUTH ON CAPE COD. September 1865.
MARMEE wheels BETH on in a beach stroller)

If using a chorus, up to 10 beachgoers appear on the beach during the scene change (at SCORE #20A, measure 2) and into the top of the scene. The Chorus of Beachgoers moves as follows as transition music plays: a few boys play tag, an old man walks with a cane, a group of girls sits down in the sand, whispers, laughs, then exits. All beachgoers exit by measure 8

BETH

Marmee, it's so beautiful - the waves, and all the shells.

MARMEE

(SHE picks up a shell and gives it to Beth)

I believe this one's a thousand years old, listen Beth. Remember how we always talked about coming to Cape Cod.

BETH

And now Jo with her 'wee literary earnings,' as she calls it, has brought us.

MARMEE

I'm so happy to be here with you. Promise me, Beth, whatever's got hold of you, you'll continue to fight it.'

JO

(SHE rushes on with a basket full of stuff)

Look what I bought! A kite for my Beth. Look at the tail? I told the man I wanted all the colors of the rainbow for my sister.

BETH

That is the most beautiful kite I have ever seen.

MARMEE

I shall leave you two.

JO

No, Marmee!

BETH

Stay.

MARMEE

I'll go write a letter to Father and tell him how beautiful the Cape is this time of year.
I love you.

(SHE goes)

JO

Oh, Beth, this is a dream come true. Come, out of the chair. Help me put this kite together.

(SHE helps her out of the stroller)

BETH

Tell me again about New York.

JO

It's a circus.

BETH

(laughs)

A circus?

JO

Clowns. Waltzing camels. Dancing horses. Sometimes you see them right out on the street. And museums. And theaters, Beth, everywhere.

BETH

And the women - are they shameless?

JO

Some of them anyway. It's an amazing place, Beth. I'm going to take you there.

BETH

(laughs)

To New York?

JO

And we'll dine in the best restaurants. And see Shakespeare. And ride the omnibus. And mingle with unsavory characters....

BETH

(interrupts)

Jo, I have something for you. Marmee says this shell is over a thousand years old. And I believe that once upon a time it had an amazing life. If you put it to your ear, it talks to you.

JO

What does it say?

BETH

It says, 'We grow up too fast,' You're a woman of the world now. I'm so proud of you, Jo.

#21 - Some Things Are Meant To Be

JO

When you were first born, not an hour old, I told Marmee -

BETH

'Beth is mine!'

JO

Everyone has someone special in the world, and I have you. My sweet Beth, give me a task to do!

BETH

LET'S PRETEND
WE'RE RIDING ON A KITE.
LET'S IMAGINE
WE'RE FLYING THROUGH THE AIR.

JO

(SHE sends the kite into the air)

WE'LL ASCEND
UNTIL WE'RE OUT OF SIGHT.
LIGHT AS PAPER, WE'LL SOAR.

BETH

LET'S BE WILD, UP HIGH ABOVE THE SAND.
FEEL THE WIND, THE WORLD AT OUR COMMAND.
LET'S ENJOY THE VIEW AND NEVER LAND.

JO

FLOATING FAR FROM THE SHORE.

BETH

SOME THINGS ARE MEANT TO BE:
THE CLOUDS MOVING FAST AND FREE.

JO

THE SUN ON A SILVER SEA.

BETH & JO

A SKY THAT'S BRIGHT AND BLUE.

BETH

AND SOME THINGS WILL NEVER END:

JO

THE THRILL OF OUR MAGIC RIDE.

BETH

THE LOVE THAT I FEEL INSIDE FOR YOU.

JO

WE'LL CLIMB HIGH
BEYOND THE BREAK OF DAY.

BETH

SLEEP ON STARDUST
AND DINE ON BITS OF MOON.

JO

YOU AND I
WILL FIND THE MILKY WAY.

JO & BETH

WE'LL BE MAD AND EXPLORE.

BETH

WE'LL RECLINE,

JO

(echoing)

WE'LL RECLINE,

JO & BETH

ALOFT UPON THE BREEZE.

BETH

DART ABOUT,

JO

(echoing)

DART ABOUT,

JO & BETH

SAIL ON WITH WINDY EASE.
PASS THE DAYS DOING ONLY AS WE PLEASE.
THAT'S WHAT LIVING IS FOR.

BETH

Can I tell you a secret?

JO

Anything.

BETH

I never made plans about what I would do when I grew up. And I'm not afraid to die. The hardest part, Jo, is leaving you.

JO

I won't let it happen. You'll get better. You will.

BETH

SOME THINGS ARE MEANT TO BE.
THE TIDE TURNING ENDLESSLY,
THE WAY IT TAKES HOLD OF ME
NO MATTER WHAT I DO.
BUT SOME THINGS WILL NEVER DIE:
THE PROMISE OF WHO YOU ARE,
YOUR MEMORIES WHEN I AM FAR FROM YOU.

ALL MY LIFE I'VE LIVED FOR LOVING YOU.
LET ME GO NOW ...

(SHE lets go of the kite string)

SCENE 4

(THE MARCH PARLOR: #8. Winter 1865.)

AMY returns from Europe with AUNT MARCH. SHE rushes in excited, holding an armful of things. SHE looks different, having left Concord a child and returned a young woman)

AMY

Everybody? I'm home!

AUNT MARCH

Look at this house!

AMY

Marmee! Jo!

AUNT MARCH

We left it in shambles - and it's still in shambles.

AMY

Meg!

(AMY)

(SHE puts down the things she is holding, removes her bonnet)

Did you see the look I gave the coachman, Aunt March? His impertinence! He caught every bump in the road.

AUNT MARCH

One should always be civil to a coachman. You must respect those who have the reins - until you wrench the reins from them.

AMY

Yes, Aunt March.

(SHE shouts)

Jo! Marmee!

AUNT MARCH

And remember, Amy, you're a lady now.

AMY

Yes.... I'm a lady.

(SHE shouts in a ladylike way)

Meg! ... When did this house get so small?

AUNT MARCH

As we grow grand, Amy, the world around us often diminishes in size. I have known people who have almost disappeared before my very eyes.

AMY

(Running to Aunt March, embraces her, almost in tears)

You're such a dear, Aunt March! Thank you for everything.

AUNT MARCH

(Breaking from her)

I'll go see to that wretched coachman.

AMY

Remember, Aunt March, respect those who have the reins.

AUNT MARCH

Very good.

(SHE goes)

MEG

(Surprised. Entering)

Amy?!!

AMY

(Rushing to her)

Meg! Meg! Meg! It's really you?

MEG

(calls)

Marmee!

MEG

Let me look at you. You're so beautiful.

AMY

Let me look at you.

AMY

You're a mother now. Twins. I can't believe it.

MEG

Neither can I.

AMY

Marmee! Marmee! Marmee!

(AMY rushes to Marmee, who has entered)

MARMEE

Amy? My baby is home!

MEG

Look at her, Marmee!

MARMEE

(Stepping back)

You're all grown up.

AMY

(full of emotion)

I am, Marmee. I really am. I feel older. I'm sophisticated. You can't imagine all the experiences I had. And wherever I was, I'd think if only Meg were here, if only Jo, if only Beth-

(SHE holds back tears)

MARMEE

(consoling)

Amy -

AMY

I was so sorry I wasn't here to say goodbye to her. I cried for weeks. I couldn't stop. Aunt March said I was being unreasonable. But my heart was breaking not to be here with her

JO

(Having entered)

Beth understood.

AMY

(overwhelmed with emotion)

Jo! Jo! Jo!

(SHE rushes to embrace her)

JO

She said tell Amy not to fret.

AMY

Did she really say that?

JO

She was so brave - to the very end. You'd have been proud of her.

AMY

I'd bought her this metronome. The man said there wasn't another one like it....

(SHE pulls herself together)

Where did we get that magnificent piano?

JO

Mr. Laurence gave it to Beth.

AMY

He's a dear, isn't he? It's so good to be home. In our dear house.

(Taking up some of her things)

MARMEE

Come, Amy. Show us what you brought back.

AMY

It's a king's ransom. I have so many things to tell you all. I ate frogs, actual frogs. And how is John? Is he still romantic?

MEG

More so.

AMY

I knew it! Men are so amazing.

(THEY go but JO. LAURIE comes on carrying several pieces of luggage)

LAURIE

(calls)

It's almost everything!

JO

Laurie?

(HE stops, seeing Jo)

I hadn't realized you were coming back too.

LAURIE

Yes. We all sailed on the same ship.

(HE puts down the luggage)

JO

You look different.

LAURIE

Do I? I'm taller. An inch or so.

JO

It was so good of you to comfort Amy and Aunt March after our loss of Beth.

LAURIE

When I heard the news I was devastated. I didn't come to see you when I was in New York. I wanted to. I thought of it -

JO

I don't blame you, Laurie. I was horrible to you. I was so unfeeling.

LAURIE

You said what you felt.

JO

No.... Guess what? I sold a story.

LAURIE

I knew you would! I always had that sort of faith in you, Jo.

JO

I know you did.

LAURIE

You look different too, you know. Very distinguished.

JO

(laughs)

Really? ... I've missed you.

LAURIE

I've missed you too. You know, I've learned something about myself.

JO

What's that?

LAURIE

I was never meant 'to fly on golden wings.'

JO

Who is?

LAURIE

You. You, Jo. You were meant to soar. Me? - I was meant for more mundane things. I've decided to go into grandfather's business. I know it's the last thing in the world I would have thought for myself. But the truth is, I'm sort of fascinated with the prospects. I shall be wily and shrewd...

AMY

(SHE comes back)

Laurie, there you are -

(SHE stops seeing the two of them)

LAURIE

Amy, did you tell Jo?

JO

Tell me what?

#22 – The Most Amazing Thing

AMY

THE MOST AMAZING THING...

LAURIE

REALLY QUITE A THING...

AMY

You tell her.

LAURIE

No, you tell her.

AMY

All right, I'll tell her.

AMY

(Continued)

WE WERE UNDER THE BRIDGE OF SIGHS -

LAURIE

IN A GONDOLA.

AMY

UNDER ITALIAN SKIES -

LAURIE

SHE WAS SINGING LULLABIES.

AMY

HE SAID HE LIKES THE WAY I SING.

LAURIE

THE DAY WAS OURS.

AMY

WE TALKED FOR HOURS.

LAURIE

IT WAS AMAZING.

AMY

I SAID I LOVE FIREFLIES.

LAURIE

I SAID SO DO I!

AMY

I TOLD HIM I HATE GOODBYES.

LAURIE

THERE WAS SOMETHING IN HER EYES.

AMY

I SWEAR THAT BELLS BEGAN TO RING.

LAURIE

WE FOUND THAT WE -

AMY

WERE SO ALIKE -

LAURIE & AMY

IT WAS AMAZING.

JO

So...tell me...who proposed to whom?

AMY

know? We were trying to be so discreet about it.

LAURIE

(relieved, excited)

AMAZING!
THERE WE WERE IN VENICE -

AMY

IN A GONDOLA-

LAURIE

IN VENICE.

AMY

WHEN HE SUDDENLY STOOD UP-

LAURIE

AND SHOUTED:

LAURIE & AMY

WILL YOU MARRY ME!

AMY

IT WAS SO ROMANTIC!

LAURIE

THEN I FELL INTO THE WATER -

AMY

AND BEFORE WE EVEN KNEW IT -

LAURIE

SHE DOVE IN AND RESCUED ME!

AMY

IT HAPPENED BEFORE WE KNEW.

LAURIE

HOW COULD WE HAVE KNOWN?

AMY

AMAZING WHAT TIME CAN DO.

LAURIE

FROM THAT MOMENT MY HEART FLEW.

AMY

WE'LL BE MARRIED IN THE SPRING.

LAURIE & AMY

WHO EVER THOUGHT IN ALL THE WORLD
WE'D FALL IN LOVE AND YET WE DID.

AMY

IT WAS AMAZING.

LAURIE

AMAZING.

LAURIE & AMY

AMAZING.
THE MOST AMAZING THING.

AMY

Come, Laurie, help me with the rest of my things.

LAURIE

She bought half of Europe.

AMY

I'll get the other half on our next trip. And later Aunt March wants to talk to us
about proper wedding etiquette.

JO

Laurie! ... Welcome to the family.

LAURIE

Thank you, Jo.

(HE goes with the last piece of luggage. AMY lags behind)

AMY

I never meant for it to happen like this.

(To Jo)

I had always thought of Laurie as yours.

JO

He's never been mine. He's always been one of us.

AMY

Jo - Jo, I brought this for you. It's a book of my drawings.
I drew all the things you should have seen. All the churches and palaces and
mountains...I want you to have them.

(JO takes the book)

JO

Amy, I can't.

AMY

Yes, you can. We'll be close, Jo. That will never change.

JO

Never.

(AMY starts out)

Amy, thank you. Your drawings are beautiful.

#22a - To The Attic

(AMY turns back, smiles and goes. JO looks at all the things, at the piano, and the baby things Meg has left about, and the drawings.)

SHE goes up to THE ATTIC: #6. SHE has not been there for months. Everything is covered with sheets or blankets. SHE starts to break down, catches herself.

MARMEE enters. SHE looks at Jo)

MARMEE

It's been awhile since you've been up here.

JO

I know.

MARMEE

The room needs an airing. And a dusting.

JO

I'll get to it.

MARMEE

The attic used to be such a sanctuary for you. Whenever you were sad or disappointed, you'd run up here, bolt the door, and come back hours later so full of life. I haven't seen that Jo in a long time.

JO

... I can't write. I can't do anything really. You're right, in the past I could always come up with something. I was always so good at that. Beth would say, 'Jo can make the clouds disappear.'

(SHE cries out)

I want Beth back!

(SHE struggles - manages to collect herself)

I never should have broken the promise. I never should have gone to New York. If I'd stayed here -

MARMEE

Jo -

JO

- everything would have been different.

MARMEE

Jo, stop it! No one could have done more for Beth than you did. You could not have changed what happened.

JO

How do you manage? How do you go on day-in, day-out, as if nothing has happened?

MARMEE

You think that's how I go on?

JO

You're strong and wise. How can I be like you? How can I find your strength?

#23 - Days Of Plenty

MARMEE

Don't make so much of me, Jo.

I NEVER DREAMED OF THIS SORROW.

I NEVER THOUGHT I'D HAVE REASON TO LAMENT.

I HOPED I'D NEVER KNOW HEARTBREAK.

HOW I WISH I COULD CHANGE THE WAY THINGS WENT.

I WANTED NOTHING BUT GOODNESS.

I WANTED REASON TO PREVAIL.

NOT THIS BARE EMPTINESS.

I WANTED DAYS OF PLENTY.

BUT I REFUSE TO FEEL TRAGIC.

I AM ACHING FOR MORE THAN PAIN AND GRIEF.

THERE HAS GOT TO BE MEANING.

MOST OF ALL WHEN A LIFE HAS BEEN SO BRIEF.

I HAVE GOT TO LEARN SOMETHING.

HOW CAN I GIVE HER ANY LESS?

I WANT LIFE TO GO ON.

I WANT DAYS OF PLENTY.

YOU HAVE TO BELIEVE THERE IS REASON FOR HOPE.

YOU HAVE TO BELIEVE THAT THE ANSWERS WILL COME.

YOU CAN'T LET THIS DEFEAT YOU.

(MARMEE)

I WON'T LET THIS DEFEAT YOU.
YOU MUST FIGHT TO KEEP HER THERE WITHIN YOU.

SO BELIEVE THAT SHE MATTERED
AND BELIEVE THAT SHE ALWAYS WILL.
SHE WILL ALWAYS BE WITH YOU.
SHE'LL BE PART OF THE DAYS YOU'VE YET TO FILL.
SHE WILL LIVE IN YOUR BOUNTY.
SHE WILL LIVE AS YOU CARRY ON YOUR LIFE.
SO CARRY ON FULL OF HOPE.
SHE'LL BE THERE
FOR ALL YOUR DAYS OF PLENTY.

(SHE goes. JO is alone in the attic.)

#24 – The Fire Within Me

JO

HOW DO I GO ON?
JUST AN EMPTY ROOM.
ALL I HAVE ARE MEMORIES.
I NEED A TASK TO DO.
SOMEONE GIVE ME A TASK TO DO.
I NEED A - -

(SHE finds the shell BETH gave her)

I THOUGHT THAT SOMEHOW
WE WOULD ALWAYS HAVE FOREVER.
I THOUGHT THE PROMISES WE MADE
WOULD HAVE A DIFFERENT END.
I THOUGHT THE LOVE WE SHARED
WOULD KEEP US AS WE WERE.
IT WAS THE FIRE WITHIN ME.

WE DREAMED AND PLOTTED
WITH ABANDON IN THIS ATTIC.
WHEN WE WERE GATHERED HERE
THE ROOM BECAME OUR CITADEL.
WE WERE AMAZING THEN
MY SISTERS AND I.
THEY WERE THE FIRE WITHIN ME.

(JO)

IN THIS ROOM I KNEW WE WERE ALIVE.
NOTHING WAS TOO PAINFUL TO SURVIVE.
WE FACED THE WORLD TOGETHER,
THE FOUR OF US FOREVER SIDE BY SIDE.
EVERYTHING I PROMISED WAS FOR THEM.
I WAS THEIRS NO MATTER WHERE OR WHEN.
HOW CAN THAT BE LOST FOREVER?
HOW WHEN I GAVE EVERYTHING WITH ALL MY HEART?

(SHE pulls the sheets off of everything, letting in the light. SHE gets an idea.)

'It was several days before Christmas.'

(Suddenly the idea deepens. SHE writes with passion.)

It was several days before Christmas. The sisters sat about the parlor and grumbled about their fate. Meg, the oldest and most romantic, said, 'It's not fair some girls have pretty things while we have nothing.' 'It won't be Christmas without presents,' said Amy, with her usual pout. 'And we haven't got Father to read to us,' said Jo, who yearned to travel and write great books. 'Only Beth, sitting contented, said, in a tone so sweet even angels would have listened, 'But we've got each other.'

EVERYTHING I PROMISED THEM IS HERE.
ALL OF US THE WAY WE USED TO BE.
WE WILL ALWAYS HAVE EACH OTHER.
THEY WILL ALWAYS BE THE FIRE IN MY HEART.

HERE I GO AND THERE'S NO TURNING BACK:
MY GREAT ADVENTURE HAS BEGUN.
I MAY BE SMALL BUT I'VE GOT GIANT PLANS
TO SHINE AS BRIGHTLY AS THE SUN.
HERE IN ALL THE SMALLEST DETAILS OF THE PAST,
HERE IN THIS ATTIC, SUDDENLY LIFE IS SOMETHING VAST.
THE FOUR OF US FOREVER HERE AT LAST.
AS UNEXPECTED AS CAN BE.
ASTONISHING.

(SHE continues to write feverishly)

#24a - After Fire Within Me

SCENE 5

(OUTSIDE THE MARCH HOUSE. Spring 1866.)

It is the morning of Amy's wedding. JOHN is on a stool fixing the arbor, which is full of flowers. MEG is handing him some final decorations)

MEG

Will we ever get through this day?

MR. BROOKE

This day will be magnificent. Soon Laurie and Amy will be in wedded bliss.

(AMY rushes out of the house in her wedding dress)

AMY

Meg! Look at me! I can't get married looking like this. The dress is not *tres beau*!

MEG

The dress is very *tres beau*.

AMY

(SHE looks at the flowers)

Why did I choose white for the flowers?

MARMEE

Amy, come, let me finish your hair.

AMY

I've made all the wrong choices for the wedding, Marmee. The flowers, this dress -

MR. BROOKE

You look like a Madonna.

AMY

(a discovery)

Merci, John.

(As SHE goes off very lady-like)

It was all Laurie's idea to have the wedding at our very *petite maison*. And I can deny *mon amour* nothing.

MARMEE

Why is she speaking French?

(SHE goes)

MEG

Was I that silly at our wedding?

MR. BROOKE

Worse.

#13 - Transition

SCENE 5/6

(THE SUN PORCH - outside the March House. Spring 1865)

MR. LAURENCE

(HE enters, urgent)

Mrs. March, we must be getting to the station.

MARMEE

(calls)

Amy, darling! Are you ready? Amy, Aunt March will be here soon!

MR. LAURENCE

You don't want to miss your train.

MARMEE

I'll need a few more minutes. I'm waiting for Jo. Tell me I'm doing the right thing.

MR. LAURENCE

You're doing the right thing.

MARMEE

I've never left my girls before.

MR. LAURENCE

Your husband has pneumonia and needs you with him in Washington.

MARMEE

I feel like I'm being torn in two. One part of me here, the other part -

MR. LAURENCE

I'll look in on the girls every day.

MARMEE

Thank you, Mr. Laurence.

MR. LAURENCE

I'll just take this to the carriage.

(HE takes the valise. As HE goes, HE greets BETH who has just entered)

Good morning, Beth.

BETH

Morning, sir.

(To Marmee)

I fixed you a basket of food.

AUNT MARCH

Where is Josephine?

MEG

I'll go find her.

(SHE goes)

AUNT MARCH

(calls to Meg)

And tell Amy I wish to talk to her about receiving line etiquette. We have the cream of Concord society arriving any moment.

JO

(SHE comes out)

I understand you want to talk to me?

AUNT MARCH

I suppose you realize this could have been your day.

JO

You think I made a ghastly mistake?

AUNT MARCH

I do not. Amy and Laurie are ideally suited to each other.... I've gone over my will.

JO

(not wanting to discuss this)

Aunt March -

AUNT MARCH

Meg will inherit most of my money. Amy is making her way into society and won't need any of it. And as for you -

JO

I don't want -

AUNT MARCH

I know, you don't want anything. And yet you want everything. Josephine, every girl - every woman - needs something to fall back on when times are bleak. I'm leaving you my house.

JO

Your house?

AUNT MARCH

Do something worthwhile with it. Make a library of it. Or a school.

JO

at's very generous of you.... Thank you, Aunt March.

(SHE kisses her awkwardly on the cheek)

AUNT MARCH

I don't like that dress.

JO

It's one of your old ones.

AUNT MARCH

Well, it looked better on me.

(SHE goes. MEG comes out)

MEG

Jo, there's a strange man at the front gate asking for you.

24b - Professor Bhaer Entrance

(SHE goes back inside. JO goes one way. PROFESSOR BHAER enters from another. HE holds a tied up ream of paper and an umbrella. JO turns)

JO

(surprised)

Professor Bhaer - ?

PROFESSOR BHAER

Hello.

JO

Hello. This is a surprise.

PROFESSOR BHAER

I know. You wrote if I should ever come north, I should come visit you.

JO

Yes, but -

PROFESSOR BHAER

You never thought I would do it. Well, I did it. I am here. Should I go?

JO

No -

PROFESSOR BHAER

I am not intruding?

JO

You're not intruding.... Come inside, I'll introduce you -

PROFESSOR BHAER

(stopping her)

No. Not yet....

JO

(After an awkward beat)

... So how is Mrs. Kirk?

PROFESSOR BHAER

As impossible as ever.

JO

And the boarders?

PROFESSOR BHAER

As strange as ever.

JO

And you?

PROFESSOR BHAER

Me? ... The same.

JO

You look -

PROFESSOR BHAER

Old, I know. Nearly 50.

JO

You're 34.

PROFESSOR BHAER

35.

JO

You had a birthday?

PROFESSOR BHAER

They made a party for me. I get sick. I do not like parties.

(HE moves uncomfortably about. HE turns to her)

I brought back your manuscript. It was so good of you to send the book to me. A novel?

JO

There's no one who's opinion I respect more than yours. Forgive me for presuming -

PROFESSOR BHAER

(coming right in)

It touched me deeply, Miss March. I saw you on every page. I heard your voice. I felt your spirit. It was magnificent!

(MEG rushes in)

MEG

Jo, Amy is driving me insane. Now she's talking about changing her veil.

(SHE sees Professor Bhaer)

Oh, excuse me.

JO

This is my sister Meg. This is Professor Bhaer.

PROFESSOR BHAER

Aah, yes, I recognize you now from your sister's book.

MEG

(with a smile)

So you're the one she's let read it.

JO

I'll be right there.

(MEG goes)

PROFESSOR BHAER

I have come at a bad time.

JO

No, it's just a wedding.

PROFESSOR BHAER

A wedding?

JO

(coming right in)

I often think about you, Professor. I wonder how you were doing.

PROFESSOR BHAER

I bought a kite.

JO

You bought a kite?

PROFESSOR BHAER

Soon after you left. I bought a kite and took it to the park. I never had a kite. You know you were right to think I was old. I was old.

JO

No, I -

PROFESSOR BHAER

I was. But since we meet - everything is different. Everybody noticed. My students even. They say, 'Professor Bhaer, you are smiling today.' Miss March -

JO

Jo.

PROFESSOR BHAER

Jo. We are not at all alike.

#25 - *Small Umbrella In The Rain*

We have our differences. May I be blunt?

JO

Be blunt. By all means.

PROFESSOR BHAER

(Fumbling with the umbrella)

I THINK, PERHAPS, IT LOOKS LIKE RAIN.

JO

THE SKY GETS BLUER BY THE HOUR.

PROFESSOR BHAER

THE WATER FALLS IN LITTLE DROPS.

JO

THAT'S WHY IT'S CALLED A SUN SHOWER.

PROFESSOR BHAER

AH, AND NOW IT STOPS...

(HE fidgets more)

JO

You were about to be blunt?

PROFESSOR BHAER

IF I SAY RAIN, THEN YOU SAY SUN.

IF I SAY YES, THEN YOU SAY NO.

IT SEEMS BEFORE WE START, WE'RE DONE.

WE EVEN ARGUE AT "HELLO"

IF I SAY, SHARE WITH ME THIS SMALL UMBRELLA.

JO

I SAY, WHO CARES IF I GET WET?

PROFESSOR BHAER

WE ARE AS DIFFERENT AS THE MORNING AND THE NIGHT.

JO

NO, WE'RE AS DIFFERENT AS THE WINTER AND THE SPRING.

PROFESSOR BHAER

WE ALWAYS SEEM TO FIGHT.

JO

WE DISAGREE ON EVERYTHING.

PROFESSOR BHAER

AND YET...

YOU MAKE ME SMILE,

YOU MAKE ME LAUGH,

YOU MAKE ME CARE.

HOW CAN I EXPLAIN?

INSIDE MY HEART

I FEEL A PAIN

WHEN YOU'RE NOT THERE.

THOUGH WE ARE NOT AT ALL ALIKE,

YOU MAKE ME FEEL ALIVE.

IF WE HAD THAT IN COMMON,

THAT ONE SMALL THING IN COMMON,

LOVE COULD BE LIKE A SMALL UMBRELLA IN THE RAIN.

(As HE takes her hand AUNT MARCH enters, cutting him off)

AUNT MARCH

Josephine!

PROFESSOR BHAER

(HE moves away, exasperated)

Christopher Columbus!

AUNT MARCH

The guests will be arriving soon. I want the family gathered in the parlor. And just who are you?

JO

This is my Aunt March. This is Professor Bhaer.

PROFESSOR BHAER

Call me Fritz.

JO

Fritz? Is that your name? Fritz?

PROFESSOR BHAER

Did I not tell you?

JO

No.

AUNT MARCH

Well - bring in Fritz.

(SHE exits)

JO

You were saying, Fritz?

PROFESSOR BHAER

(Nervous again)

WHEN PEOPLE DISCOVER PASSION,
THEY'VE COME UPON SOMETHING RARE.
THIS FERVOR THEY HAVE IN COMMON,
WILL SHELTER THEM ANYWHERE.
THOUGH THE REST MAY BE ROUGH,
WITH SUCH PASSION TO SHARE,
I THINK THEY HAVE MORE THAN ENOUGH -
ENOUGH TO MAKE A MARRIAGE IF WE DARE.

JO

You are proposing?

PROFESSOR BHAER

No. Yes! Yes! I do not mean today. Or tomorrow. Or even next month. In a year maybe. Two years even. I am a patient man.

JO

I WON'T BE SWEET, WON'T BE DEMURE.

PROFESSOR BHAER

THIS I PREFER, THIS I ADORE.

JO

I'LL SPEAK MY MIND, YOU CAN BE SURE.

PROFESSOR BHAER

I'LL BE ENCHANTED TO THE CORE.

JO

IF I SAY, LET ME SHARE YOUR SMALL UMBRELLA.

PROFESSOR BHAER

I'LL SAY, WHO CARES IF WE GET WET?

JO

WE'LL BE AS DIFFERENT AS A HUSBAND AND A WIFE.

PROFESSOR BHAER

NO, WE'LL BE DIFFERENT AS A WOMAN AND A MAN.

JO

WE'LL FIGHT OUR WAY THROUGH LIFE.

PROFESSOR BHAER

WE'LL DISAGREE THE BEST WE CAN.

JO

AND YET...

(It starts to rain. HE opens his umbrella. THEY stand together under it.)

JO & PROFESSOR BHAER

YOU'LL MAKE ME SMILE,
YOU'LL MAKE ME LAUGH,
YOU'LL MAKE ME CARE.
HOW CAN I EXPLAIN?
INSIDE MY HEART
I FEEL A PAIN
WHEN YOU'RE NOT THERE.
THOUGH WE ARE NOT AT ALL ALIKE,
YOU MAKE ME FEEL ALIVE.

JO

YES, WE HAVE THAT IN COMMON.

PROFESSOR BHAER

THAT ONE SMALL THING IN COMMON.

JO & PROFESSOR BHAER

OUR LOVE IS LIKE A SMALL UMBRELLA IN THE RAIN.

(THEY kiss tentatively)

PROFESSOR BHAER

(a new excitement)

I have news for you. I showed your novel to Henry Dashwood.

JO

You did what?

PROFESSOR BHAER

It was wrong of me, but I could not resist. Horrid man, Dashwood. Stubborn. Blunt to a fault.

JO

What did he say?

PROFESSOR BHAER

He said: 'It's a bit long. He missed the blood and guts. He likes the four sisters - particularly the outspoken one.

(HE kisses her again)

He wants to publish it.

JO

He said that?

PROFESSOR BHAER

If it is all right with you.

(HE drops the umbrella. THEY kiss more passionately)

MARMEE

(SHE comes out)

Jo!? We need you inside.

JO

Marmee. Marmee, I want you to meet - a good friend of mine. Professor Fritz Bhaer. He has come to stay with us. We're thinking - of starting a school together.

PROFESSOR BHAER

(surprised)

A school?

JO

(looking at the Professor)

Not today. Or next week. But someday.

MARMEE

Welcome, Professor. Come and meet our family.

#26 – *Volcano Reprise*

JO

(Alone. SHE picks up the umbrella)

SOMETIMES WHEN YOU DREAM
YOUR DREAMS COME TRUE
IN EXTRAORDINARY WAYS.
SUDDENLY A DAY CAN BE SO AMAZING.
AND SOMETIMES WHEN YOU YEARN
YOU BURN THE AIR.
AND THEN YOU ARE NOT THE SAME...
AND THE WORLD IS—

PROFESSOR BHAER

(HE comes back out)

Jo, we are all waiting for you.

*(SHE goes and takes his hand and THEY start inside)**(End of Act Two)*#27 – *Bows*#28 – *Exit Music*