

PARROT: Josephine!

JO: Stupid bird!

Transition. At home JO finds MARMEE, MEG, and BETH crowded around AMY. MEG places a wet cloth on AMY'S hands.

START

JO: What's all of this?

AMY holds up her hands, which are covered in red welts.

AMY: When I got to school, everyone heard I brought twenty-four limes and that I was going to treat each of my friends to one because I am so generous even though Mr. Davis had declared that pickled limes were banned from our class.

MARMEE: Amy!

AMY: I didn't take them out from my desk. But Mr. Davis found out and he asked me to come to his desk and he made me hold out my hands and he struck me with a strap.

MARMEE presses the cloth harder on AMY'S hands.

Oww! It hurts. It hurts.

BETH: That man should be arrested.

JO: Marmee, we can't let her go back there.

AMY: Yes, Marmee. Don't make me go back there.

MARMEE: I'll write to Mr. Davis today to inform him that Amy will no longer be attending his class.

AMY: Oh, thank you. Thank you, Marmee.

JO: Marmee, Amy needs to be in school. She needs to study.

MARMEE: I agree. But I don't approve of corporal punishment. Amy, you'll study with Beth here every day. But you can't spend your time simply working on your sketches. You must study.

AMY: Oh, I will, Marmee. I will.

MARMEE: And Jo... Since you feel so strongly about the matter-

JO: Oh, I do, Marmee. We can't stand for this.

MARMEE: From now on you can be the one to tutor them.

JO/AMY: What!

MARMEE: We will work in this manner until your Father comes home. He can resume some of the teaching then. I have no doubt this will be an agreeable situation.

JO: For who?

AMY: Yes, Marmee. For who?

MARMEE: Jo, I want you to decide tonight what the lessons will be for tomorrow. Understood?

END

JO: But-

MARMEE: Understood?

JO: Yes, Marmee.

Transition. JO turns to the audience.

I can tell you what the lesson for tomorrow will be. Lesson number one is keep your mouth shut.

She opens a newspaper and flips through the pages.

I haven't heard from The Concord Journal yet. But I have a sound feeling that I'll find out soon enough.

She stops on a certain page and reads.

(Reading) "Announcing the winner of our New Works Contest... My Heart's Sublime by Mr. William Burns."

JO looks at the paper then closes it quickly. She looks at the audience, trying to hide her disappointment.

Well...

JO: You need to rest. Dr. Bangs will be back in the morning to check you.

BETH: Have you heard from the professor?

JO: No.

BETH: Have you written?

JO: No. I don't know what to say.

BETH: Jo March, you don't know what to say?

JO: Hush. You need to rest.

She kisses BETH on the forehead and closes the door behind her. In the hallway MARMEE is standing outside the door.

MARMEE: That poem, Jo... It was beautiful.

JO: You could have come in.

MARMEE: I don't want her to see me like this. Oh, Jo. I fear it might be any day now. A mother shouldn't outlive her child. How will we ever get through this?

JO: Oh, Marmee. I don't know. I really don't know.

Transition. The lobby of a hotel. LAURIE is dressed up. He's carrying a small wrist corsage. He watches as men and women come and go. After a moment, he sees AMY dressed beautifully. LAURIE looks at her, struck by her beauty. AMY opens the fan and places it in front of her face. He moves closer and places the corsage on her wrist.

START

LAURIE: You look stunning. The dress. Where is it from?

AMY: I made it.

LAURIE: And the fan. Where is it from?

AMY: It was a gift.

LAURIE: From Fred?

AMY: No. From Aunt March.

LAURIE: I see. When does Fred Vaughn arrive?

AMY: Fred is away on business until next week.

LAURIE: What is it you see in him, Amy?

AMY: He's a good man.

LAURIE: There are lots of good men out there.

AMY: There aren't, actually. And he's kind and intelligent and ambitious. He has ideas for his life, and he intends to make them happen. You could learn something from Fred.

LAURIE: Could I?

AMY: Laurie, you have been frolicking around Europe for months and you have nothing to show for it.

LAURIE: And I suppose that if Fred were to properly go down on one knee, you would say yes.

AMY: He already has.

LAURIE: Oh. And what did you say?

AMY: I haven't said anything yet.

LAURIE: But you will.

The music starts to play.

AMY: I thought we were going to dance together tonight, Laurie.

LAURIE: So did I. **END**

~~*He moves to her, takes her in his arms, and they dance. They move with familiarity but also as two people getting to know each other for the first time.*~~

~~*Transition. BETH is in bed with her eyes closed. Her breathing is labored. JO and MARMEE sit on the bed, each*~~