

JOHN: We got on the train as soon as he was cleared to travel.

MARMEE: John, thank you for bringing him home.

JOHN: I did my best to play nurse in your absence.

MR. MARCH: I can't believe I'm in the same room as all of you. The thought of you is the only thing that's kept me going all this time. The only thing that...

MARMEE: Come. Let me make you something. You must be starving after your journey.

*She leads MR. MARCH to the dining room table.*

MR. LAURENCE: The boy and I should be leaving. I'm delighted our little surprise worked.

JO: You can't go now. You should stay for dinner. Both of you should.

LAURIE: Can we?

MR. LAURENCE: If it isn't too much trouble.

BETH: Of course, it isn't.

*She grabs MR. LAURENCE's arm and leads him to the table.  
As they all leave the room to eat, JO heads upstairs.*

MEG: Where are you going?

JO: I have to write.

MEG: Now?

JO: Yes now. I have an idea for a new story. I don't want to forget it. I'll write it down quickly. I won't be long.

*As everyone leaves the room MEG grabs JOHN'S hand to keep him back.*

START

MEG: John. I can't thank you enough for being so good to mother and father... And to me. To all of us.

JOHN: Of course. I would do anything for you, Meg.

MEG: Thank you for that.

JOHN: Meg... I want you to know... I've been called to serve. I received a letter earlier this week. I'm to leave later this month.

MEG: No!

JOHN: It's all right. I want to go. But I don't know when I'll return or if I'll return so-

MEG: Oh, John. You will. You will. You mustn't think like that-

JOHN: And because I don't know when else I might have the chance to tell you... I want you to know that... I love you. Meg, I love you dearly. I think the world of you. And the timing is all very sudden and uncertain. But I'm willing to work all my life to make you feel loved. Nothing would make me happier in fact than spending the rest of my days making you as happy as I possibly can.

MEG: Oh John. I don't know. Is it too soon?

JOHN: I'll wait. I'll wait as long as you want me to.

*As JOHN takes MEG'S hands in his, the door swings open and AUNT MARCH enters the house.*

AUNT MARCH: Bless me, what is all this?

*MEG drops JOHN'S hands instantly.*

MEG: Aunt March! This is Father's friend... Our friend... My friend.

AUNT MARCH: Well, whose friend is he?

MEG: Mine. Both. This is Mr. Brooke. Mr. John Brooke.

JOHN: *(Reaching out his hand)* Pleased to meet you Aunt March.

AUNT MARCH: And what is this friend saying to you to make you blush so much?

MEG: We were merely talking.

AUNT MARCH: Aren't you that Laurence boy's tutor?

JOHN: That's correct.

AUNT MARCH: Hmmm, yes. I see now. It's all become quite clear. You haven't gone and accepted him, have you child?

~~MEG: Aunt March!~~

AUNT MARCH: Tell me Margaret, do you mean to marry this Mr. Cook?

JOHN: It's Brooke. Mr-

AUNT MARCH: Because I don't want you to spoil your whole life by making a silly mistake. You ought to marry well and help your family.

MEG: Mother and Father like John a great deal and are quite aware of who and what he is.

AUNT MARCH: Margaret, this Mr. Rook is poor!

JOHN: It's Brooke. Mr-

AUNT MARCH: He doesn't have any rich relations, does he?

MEG: He has many warm friends.

AUNT MARCH: You can't live on friends, Margaret regardless of how warm they are. He doesn't have any business, does he?

JOHN: I am a tutor.

AUNT MARCH: You intend to marry a man without money, position or business and go on only to work harder and longer than you do now? I thought you had more sense in you. You could be comfortable for all your days by listening to me and doing better.

MEG: I couldn't do better if I waited half my life! John's got heaps of talent. He's willing to work, he's energetic, and brave and-

AUNT MARCH: He knows you have rich relations. That's the secret of his liking, Margaret.

JOHN: I beg your pardon. How dare you say such a thing! I would never marry for money. And I am willing to work. I'm not afraid of being poor. I've been happy in my life so far with all that I have.

MEG: As have I.

JOHN: And nothing would make me happier than spending the rest of my days making Meg happy.

MEG: And I know I shall be happy with him because he loves me and I love him.

JOHN: You... You...

AUNT MARCH: Well, then I wash my hands of the whole affair. And now I haven't the strength to see sweet little Beth. Don't expect anything from me when you're married. Your Mr. Hook and all his friends can take care of you.

*As she walks to the front door JOHN shows her out and shuts the door behind her.*

JOHN: And the name is Brooke! Mr. John Brooke! *(To MEG)* Thank you for defending me. And proving that you do care for me.

MEG: I didn't know how much until she started to abuse you like that. John... My John.

JOHN: Oh, Meg. I don't know when I'll return.

MEG: We'll have a long engagement.

JOHN: Meg... Does this mean that you'll-

MEG: Yes, John. Yes. It does. With all my heart.

**END**

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*JOHN cups her face and kisses her. JO starts to come down the stairs but stops in her tracks when she sees them.*

MEG: Oh, Jo. Do congratulate us.

JO: Congratulate you? For what?

MEG: We're to be married.

JO: How long have I been upstairs? Marmee! Meg is sick!

*MARREE rushes in and sees MEG and JOHN together.*

MARREE: Oh, my word. Oh, my dears.

*LAURIE enters the room.*

JO: I can't believe you have twins!

MARMEE: All right. Everyone out of the room. Let us give the new parents some time alone.

*Everyone starts to trail out of the room. Except for JO. MARMEE looks at her and clears her throat.*

JO: Me?

MARMEE: Everyone.

JO: I only just got home.

MARMEE: Josephine.

JO: All right. All right.

*She pouts and leaves the room. MARMEE smiles and closes the door to the room. MEG and JOHN look at each other, deliriously happy and utterly exhausted. MEG starts to cry.*

START

MEG: Twins, John.

JOHN: Meg, I am so proud of you. So very, very proud. I have never seen such power before in all my life than watching you bring our beautiful babies into this world.

MEG: I'm afraid we are going to have our hands full. How will we manage?

JOHN: We will take each day as it comes.

*She looks at her children and then at JOHN.*

MEG: I love you, John.

JOHN: And I love you.

END

*Transition. JO turns to the audience.*

JO: Meg and John will stay at the house with us for a few days so we can offer as much help as possible and try to let Meg sleep. She hasn't had a single moment to herself since the twins were born. I am in such awe of what women have to endure in order to become mothers. And the birth is only the beginning.