

~~JO: Then you have to raise the child. And, of course, Meg is already navigating it all with grace and calm and strength. I don't know if I have it in me to be a mother. I know I'm supposed to be. I know I'm expected to have a family. But I don't know if it's for me and if I am for it. Still, it's a special time for us as a family. I want it to always be this way.~~

START

LAURIE: *(Off stage) Jo!*

~~JO: But I fear that isn't possible.~~

~~*—Transition. JO is on her way to MEG'S house to visit when LAURIE appears.*~~

LAURIE: Where are you off to?

JO: To Meg and John's. I'm taking a blanket Marmee made for the twins.

LAURIE: Then I'll come along.

They walk together. Suddenly, LAURIE stops.

JO: What?

LAURIE: You always take my arm when we walk.

JO: No. Not always.

LAURIE: Jo... We need to talk.

JO: Do we?

LAURIE: Yes.

JO: What about?

LAURIE: Jo, we've got to have it out once and for all. And the sooner the better, for both of us.

JO: Fine. Say what you like then.

LAURIE: Jo... I've... I've loved you ever since I've known you.

JO: Teddy-

LAURIE: I couldn't help it. You've been so good to me. And I've tried to show it, but you wouldn't let me. Now I'm going to make you hear it and give me an answer. Because I can't go on any longer like this. It's driving me mad.

JO: Teddy... I never wanted to make you care for me... Never. I went away even to try and keep you from it.

LAURIE: And that only made me love you all the more. I worked hard to please you, Jo. All this time I hoped that you... That you loved me. Even though I'm not half good enough for you.

JO: You are. And I am so grateful to you. And so proud and fond of you. I will always be fond of you, Teddy.

LAURIE: Grandfather's going to Europe on business. We can go. We can go together. We can travel the world together. I'll take care of you.

JO: I know you will, Teddy. But that's not what I-

LAURIE: If you love me Jo, I will be a perfect saint for you. You could make me be anything you like. I'll even start to read if you like.

JO: I don't want to make you be anything that you're not. I don't...

LAURIE grabs her hand in his. JO looks at him. She lets go of his hand and backs away.

I don't love you the way you want me to. I've tried. Lord knows I have. You know it's impossible for people to make themselves love another if they don't. I can't change the way I feel, and it would be a lie to say that I could. I'm so sorry. So desperately-

LAURIE: Is it because of him? Because of that professor of yours? Jo, if you say you love him I don't know what I'll do.... Something desperate probably.

JO: It isn't because of anyone else. It's because of me.

LAURIE: Jo, we can leave Concord if you want. We can go anywhere... Anywhere your heart desires.

~~*He goes to her and grabs her face.*~~

Jo... Don't disappoint us. Everyone expects it. Grandfather has set his heart upon it for years.

JO: Well, he shouldn't have.

LAURIE: I can't get on without you. Say you'll be mine. Say it.

He kisses her but JO pulls away.

JO: I... Can't. I can't.

LAURIE: What will become of me?

JO: You will love someone else. I know it.

LAURIE: I'm going to go abroad. You may never see me again.

JO: Laurie...

LAURIE: I don't believe you have a heart.

He leaves.

END

JO: Laurie! Laurie!

Transition. JO has been crying and BETH approaches her.

BETH: Jo? Are you coming to bed?

JO tries to compose herself.

JO: Yes. Yes.

BETH has an expression on her face that concerns JO.

My love, are you all right?

BETH: No. I have something to tell you. But I don't want to upset you further.

JO: Come now. You can tell me anything. In fact, I might have some idea already.

BETH: You do?

JO: Yes. Beth... I know you love Laurie. It's one of the reasons I went away because I couldn't... I just couldn't-

JO: In any case I finally started to write again. And this time I wrote about us. About our family. About all we have experienced together. About our adventures, our miseries, our grievances, our joys, our celebrations... And about our love for each other.

The title is taken from when Father used to call us his little women. Though I admit that after all this time... I still have no idea what it means to be a woman. But I look at the women in my life – Marmee, Aunt March, Meg, Amy, Beth – And I see strength, intelligence, resourcefulness. I see a determination to love, support, care, and make room for those around them. And I hope that all of this is what readers will find in my book.

Now I have a full novel. I have sent it on to Mr. Dashwood to read. I have no idea what he will think of it...

Transition. JO is writing and hears a knock at the door. Before she can answer it, the door opens and LAURIE appears.

START

LAURIE: Hello, Jo.

JO: Teddy.

LAURIE: No one's called me that in quite a while. You're glad to see me then?

JO: Yes, Teddy. I am. Did you think I wouldn't be?

LAURIE: I wasn't quite sure.

JO: I see. When did you arrive?

LAURIE: An hour ago.

JO: How was the trip?

LAURIE: Long.

JO: Where's Amy?

LAURIE: Your Mother has got her down at Meg's. We saw your Father, John, and the twins. I wanted her to come and see you but there was no getting my wife out of your Mother's-

JO: Your... Your wife? You're married? To... Amy?

LAURIE: Very much so it seems. It happened a few weeks ago in Paris. It was a small and quiet wedding. For even in our happiness we didn't forget dear Beth.

JO: Why didn't you let us know? Why didn't you-

LAURIE: Jo... I want to say something and then we'll put it by us forever. The way I was when we were last-

JO: Laurie-

LAURIE: Let me finish. I was a boy when I saw you last. I can't forgive myself for the way I acted. And I don't expect you to forgive me either. I was so tumbled up in my own mind. I hardly knew who I was or what I wanted. I was afraid to see past anything I already knew. Anything that already felt familiar. You and I had always shared such a closeness together. And while I adore you, Jo, and always will... When I saw Amy everything seemed to clear up at once. And I knew I was meant for her. And that she was meant for me. And now...

JO: Now we are sister and brother.

LAURIE: Sister and brother, yes.

END

JO places a hand tenderly on his cheek and they hug. The door opens. MARMEE, MEG, and AMY rush in.

AMY: Where is she? Jo! Wait, does she know?

She throws her arms around JO.

LAURIE: Yes, yes. Jo knows.

MEG: I still don't know why you didn't write.

AMY: We were going to but we wanted it to be a surprise.

MARMEE: Where will you stay? Where will you live?

LAURIE: With Grandfather for now. So, we will be as close by as ever.

MARMEE: Why don't I go with you and get you settled.

MEG: I think I can spare another hour or two before the twins need me again.