

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!