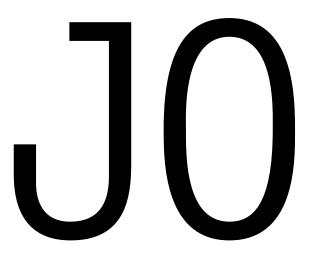


walks through the desks, looking for one in particular.

He now takes in

's appearance and her mended clothes.

3



sits, hands folded, trying to cover the ink stains.

looks again at her completely altered story.

hands over the story, Mr. Dashwood hands over the money, business done.

We find

(also becoming) sprinting
down the street with
 utter joy.

reading and walking at the same time, bounding two-at a time up the steps of a large brownstone boarding house.

### As

walks through the house, into the drawing room, she lets the cat down, and goes straight to the fireplace.

looks up from her notebook to see FRIEDRICH BHAER looking down at her.

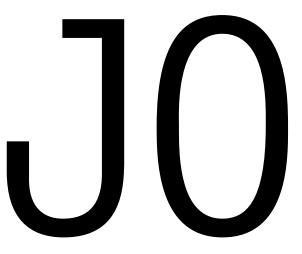
suddenly notices that the back of her dress has caught on fire.

is about to laugh when, MRS. KIRKE, the landlady, bustles into the room:

feels the intense pleasure and pain of being seen by someone, of knowing that they know you.

I'm... I couldn't believe

turned you down.



is in the back, the cheap standing-room.

At a certain point, he sees

and then watches her watching the play, her delight making him smile.



,still in her theatrical reverie, spots Friedrich.

walks through the crowd, taking it in, watching Friedrich. Another man young, speaking a language

doesn't know, offers his hand for the dance.

Who will you dance with,

?

Meg's hair is covered in papers, and

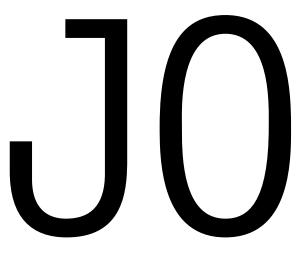
manipulates a pair of hot tongs.

goes back to working on Meg's hair.

Beth watches

handle the tongs, amazed and slightly worried:

removes the tongs, and a burnt clump of hair follows.



screams and Meg screams because...

screams.

## Meg and

walk down the hallway at the Gardiner's very fancy party, the party already in full swing.

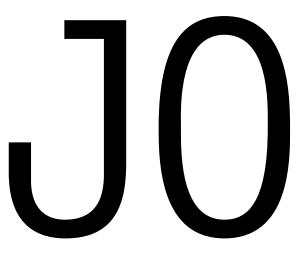
Meg is chastising

Sallie Moffat, at that moment Sallie Gardiner, pulls Meg away from



who is left standing awkwardly.

fades away into the back of the party.



,16, miserable, glumly watches the dancers.

Meg aggressively shakes her head, and

sighs, resigned.

A very large red-headed boy makes a beeline for



Yes, Mr. Laurence, but I'm not Miss March, I'm only



...would you like to dance?

Laurie bows,

awkwardly curtsies and then they go dancing wildly up and down a wrap-around porch.



is the woman and sometimes the man-same with Laurie.

Meg limps,

supports her and Laurie trails behind. A laughing Marmee, holding a book and covered in flour, opens the door on Laurie and

supporting Meg.

They could use an extra player, although you'll have to fight Jo for the male roles or play a girl

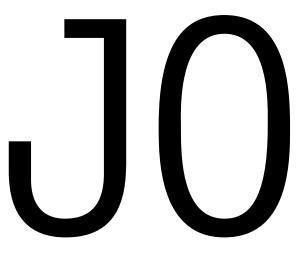
works with her writing costume on: an antique military jacket.

opens the book and almost greedily she begins to read, reciting the words to herself.

gave me this ring.

,deeply offended, starts to gather up her work.

,in fury and confusion, walks the streets, letting her feelings burn out.



tears it open and quickly reads.

## Dear

Our Beth has taken a turn for the worse.

drifts off to sleep, lulled by the movement.

March is sleeping in her large, cozy writing chair, a blanket wrapped around her.

yawns and stretches and looks through the attic window out onto the snow-covered New England world:



clomps down the stairs, pages of the play in her hand.

?

throws a pillow at Meg, it hits her squarely in the face.

Don't

it's so boyish.

tackles Amy and Beth and pulls in Meg.

Don't

Beth goes to the piano and

hands out the new pages:

,you look tired were you up again all night writing? Stop it,

hits Amy with a snowball, and there is a general tussle.

# Poor

-we can't give up our only brother.

takes her position behind the chair.

stands in the back so we can't see her cry.

The children are entranced as

,dressed as Hugo, with a black beard, a mysterious cloak, boots and a sword, calls out:

mouths the words along with her-she's written every one.

Princess Zara(Amy) and Roderigo(Meg) kneel before Don Pedro (

),as he pronounces them man and wife.

The whistle blows,

is being gently shaken awake.

They break apart from each other at the fork in the road, Beth and Meg going one direction and Amy and

,with her luggage, walks home on the familiar roads she knows so well.



in another.

hops over a fence and runs toward Aunt March's house.

Aunt March dozes, poodle in her lap, while

stands by the bookcase and surreptitiously reads her own book.

Meg goes instantly to Amy, while

gets distracted by all the books.

Laurie stands when

enters:

,who has been roaming the room, stops in front of a portrait of Mr. Laurence.

spins around and sees Mr. Laurence and her mother.

will teach you.

### And

,borrow any book you'd like!

looks towards the Laurence's house, which is dark, shutters closed.

Meg, Beth,

and Amy are all dressed as men, with hats and spectacles and pipes-Meg reading from the homemade newspaper in her lovely sonorous voice. A NEW PLAY, written by Miss

will appear at the Barnville Theatre, in the course of the next few weeks, which will surpass anything ever seen before on the American stage.

83

throws open the doors of the closet, and Laurie is there, already dressed for the occasion of the meeting.

holds the very same key and opens the post office box -nothing, of course.

walks in the kitchen, and is immediately surrounded by Hannah, Meg, Marmee, and Demi and Daisy.

# 0h

I've missed you!

turns to Marmee, who shows the truth in her eyes.

produces an envelope full of money.

,in her and Meg's room, places a pretty cover page on top of the novel she has written.

,where are you?

puts her novel carefully in a drawer that is filled with her finished writing, and closes it.

we're going to be late!

Laurie looks at

while Mr. Brooke looks at Meg.

INT.

AND MEG'S ROOM. EVENING.

Amy sneaks into

and Meg's room, searching every drawer and hiding place for the novel that she knows is there.

has just lovingly placed there.

notices and doesn't like it at all.

Laurie sees

's expression and offers his own arm in mock chivalry.

Meg and

waltz in.

sprints upstairs.

re-appears,walking slowly.

,don't!

'S ROOM.

INT.

is weeping, Beth cradling her head, Meg holds her hand.

I'm sorry,

Nothing from

's eyes are red and puffy and a remorseful Amy tries to sit beside her and make peace, but...

changes seats away from her.

springs up, thrilled to have something to do.



,not acknowledging her, grabs her skates and races out.

Don't say anything till

has got good-natured with Laurie, then take a quiet minute and just kiss her, or do some kind thing, and I'm sure she'll be friends again.

pretends not to hear, skating near the edge while Laurie tests the ice.

hesitates for a moment, and looks at Amy, who struggles with her skates - it's not clear whether or not she heard Laurie.

opens her mouth to say something, but changes her mind.

## (to

not seeing Amy)

takes off down the ice, jump-ing the gun, Laurie racing after her.

Farther along the river, Laurie and

suddenly feels a pang of guilt, but shoves her feelings down and races to catch Laurie. Laurie and

freeze and look at each other, and in the same instant they scramble up,

screaming.

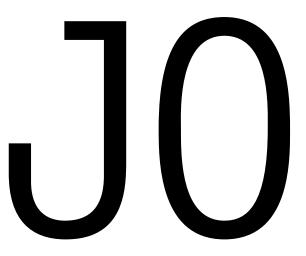
They race back,

sending up a breathless prayer, an incantation, a pleading with the universe:

is almost paralyzed with terror...

obeys quickly,blindly, using the incredible strength that is available to people in times of crises

drags a large branch over to Laurie, who stretches it over to Amy:



is terrified but keeping herself together to get Amy to safety.

Tears are streaming down

's face as she strips off all her warm clothes and bundles them around Amy.

is slumped down on the floor beside her, not even feeling herself worthy of a chair.

Marmee adjusts Amy's blanket, and then looking at

,decides to take a seat beside her, on the floor:

puts her head on Marmee's shoulder.

,sitting by the bed, watches over Beth as she did for Amy.

bows her head on Beth's bed.

Mr. Brooke is carrying her baggage, Hannah and the sisters and Marmee are helping with odds and ends, Laurie is "boxing" with

and Mr. Laurence is there in his proper, "over-seeingthings" kind of way. Yes, Captain

places the ring in Laurie's hand.

## I won't

,it's only a week!

What would

say?

I know it's silly, but please don't tell

This is Fred Vaughn,(a handsome young man) and his sister Kate, (a prim looking girl) and of course you know Mr. Brooke-and this is Meg, Amy, Beth and

is in New York, being a writer, and I am a failure.

tips her oversized hat.

and Laurie run into the ocean.

,trying to practice her badminton skills, keeps looking over at Meg, who gazes at Mr. Brooke adoringly. This annoys

(whispering to

whips around to look at Laurie.

More scenes of childhood on the beach play out over the sound of

's voice reading The Mill on the Floss by George Eliot: Beth is wrapped up and looking at the sea and

reads George Eliot's "The Mill On the Floss."

I love to listen to you read,

,but I love it even better when you read the stories you've written.



smiles and then lays back.

# is quiet.

Ιs

back yet from Aunt March?

At just that moment, the door swings open, and

rushes in and places money in her mother's hand.

removes her hat, and beneath, all of her beautiful long hair is gone -now it's just a short, blunt crop.

Gasps from everyone and exclamations of "What?/How?/ Why did you do it?/

?"

0h

,how could you?

(leaning close to

runs to Laurie, hugging him.

sits alone in the hallway, quietly weeping to herself.

Oh,

I'll go into town for groceries -

,can you go look into getting
 more firewood?

laughs and tries to help her pull her foot out, while Beth's little face turns stubborn.

But

clamps a hand over Amy's mouth - Meg takes Beth's arm and leads her to where the old piano used to stand, and in its place, a beautiful little piano forte.

... read it, I cannot.

reads a story for Beth that she's written herself, for Beth, finishing the last lines.

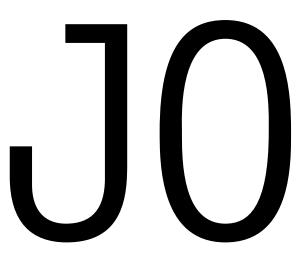
,sitting vigil, puts cold towels on Beth's hot forehead.

comes up with a bowl of soup, and touches Meg on the shoulder, relieving her.

cocks her head towards the window, John is standing outside.

Beth's fever is high and she knocked everything off the bed-

flies to her side, feeling her forehead, calling.



lays in bed with Beth.

Hannah, go make a clear broth and

get ice-we need to cool her.

Meg and

and Marmee take turns in shifts, making sure that Beth is as comfortable as she can be.

When it is

's turn, Beth is very weak, barely able to hold her head up.

is sitting watch, and drops off to sleep, her head on the bed, her hand grasping Beth's.

Beth opens her eyes and looks down at

and smiles.

jerks suddenly awake-she doesn't see Beth in the bed.

jerks awake to find Beth gone-she goes downstairs and sees Marmee there.

looks at Marmee, and her mother, for the first time in

's life, breaks.

becomes the parent at that moment, comforting her mother, who is trapped in the unimaginable pain of losing a child.

The March family: Mother and Father and

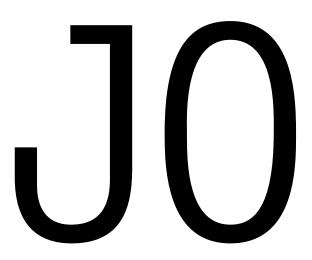
,Meg and John with their arms around each other, and Hannah.



cries, alone.

Inside, Meg prepares for her wedding with

helping her,placing flowers in her sister's hair.



suddenly kneels before her,
wild and desperate:

. . .

But,

sits back, heartbroken.

0h,

I'm not leaving you.

watches adoringly: the two halves of her heart.

Laurie and

taste the alcohol and decide it's terrible.

Meg dances with John, Marmee dances with Mr. Laurence,

tries to play the fiddle -then Marmee dances with Father,

and Meg dance, John and Amy dance, Hannah dances with Father. She runs to Marmee, who is now standing with

throws her arms around Amy, delighted.

Marmee takes

's hand, knowing how this hurt her.

smiles through her pain for Meg's day, but it is a true blow. Laurie and

walk through the woods together, as they've done for years.

It's no use

;we've got to haveit out

I've loved you ever since I've known you

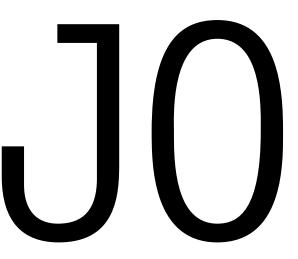
I couldn't help it, and you've been so good to me I've tried to show it but you wouldn't let me; now I'm going to make you hear and give me an answer because I can't go on like this any longer.

If you loved me

I would be a perfect saint!

is putting away Beth's things, and arranging her little dolls and toys.

You are much too lonely here,



stands and paces, anxiously.

infused with a new kind of energy, writes to Laurie.

In the forest,

finds the mailbox.

tries to find her way through the unfamiliar city-she isn't an expert at it quite yet.

. . .

## . . . . . .

?

,asleep on the couch, is gently shaken awake.

embraces him and looks at him and holds him for too long.

sits.

Mother and Father and Amy and John and Meg and Daisy and Demi- Amy goes straight to

,I want to say one thing, and then we'll put it away forever.



fixes her face and decides she will be the person she wishes she was:

straightens up and sees these couples - Mother & Father, John & Meg, Laurie & Amy.

Weeping, but also in a panic,

removes the letter from the mailbox and walks into the woods.

trudges back, and is surprised to find Mr. Laurence standing alone, looking at the March's house.

takes his arm tenderly.

starts awake - she looks around the room: she's all alone, everyone is truly gone.

makes her way up to the attic, and sits in her old writing chair, looking at the story.

nods off for a second then keeps writing.

finishes and carefully ties up the first few chapters of this experiment and writes a letter to Mr. Dashwood:

Amy,

and Meg walk around the big empty mansion.

laughs.

Suddenly,

lets out a WHOOP and runs through the house.

thinks for half a second, but she already knows:

turns bright red)

Mr. Dashwood sits, reading the pages that

gave him.

reads the note Mr. Dashwood sent:

stashes her writing and clomps down the stairs and heads straight for the table, not even looking around her.

,you might want to wait...

,dear, you have a guest.

hears his voice and bolts up.

,with all of her luggage, finds the address and rings the doorbell.

She leads

up through the stairs and...

takes a quick glance backwards at Friedrich, as if to confirm that the man she saw was real and not an apparition.

,I hope it is all right, I got your address from Mrs. Kirke.

# 0h

,he's VERY handsome.

is glowing with happiness.

Amy looks from Friedrich to

and from...

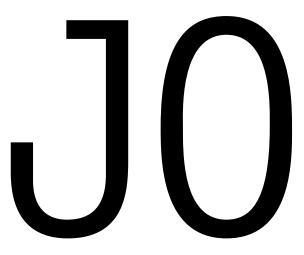
to Friedrich.

has an unconscious sharp intake of breath.

watches him, moved and deeply happy.

The sound of his music plays over Friedrich saying his goodbyes and telling

,as he stands at the door:



,if you ever come to California, I would love to see you.

I never thought I'd prepare a carriage to help

March go after a man, but I like it.

Meg, Amy, and

are all in the carriage, making top speed through the rain.

runs in the rain towards the beautifully lit station and the music swells and the thunder claps and we CUT TO:

sits where she originally sat across from Dashwood, but now she is more grown up, more together, more herself

thinks.

shifts.

runs from the carriage, out into the rain and into the crowd in front of the train station, looking for Friedrich.

sees Friedrich, also standing under an umbrella, but alone.



,why are you crying?

is supervising a great number of rambunctious girls and boys of all races and ages.



makes her way down the stairs and is handed a homemade cake by one of the children.

, captivated, watches type being set, each letter put into place, and one page after another pressed with her novel.

walks past Friedrich's classroom, all the students with their violins learning from him how to play.

Each page is stacked one on top of the other and the massive industrial sewing machine stitches the pages together as

observes.

walks past Laurie giving a fencing lesson(while also holding his baby), Amy conducting a painting lesson, Meg supervising children in a play rehearsal, John Brooke (his own children next to him)leading a botany lesson They all join

as she troupes down the lawn.

The excesses of each page are sliced off, making a satisfying sound, and making

jump and laugh at her jumpiness.

Leading a procession of children and family behind her, and holding the cake,

and the group arrive upon Father, teaching the very young children the alphabet by having their bodies form the letters, and also Marmee, who is having each child read aloud in their best dramatic reading voice.

The hard cover of the book is placed over the pages, the glue to hold it in place is so strong-smelling as to make

dizzy.

presents her mother with the cake, and all of them, Amy, Meg, Jo, Laurie, John, Friedrich, Father, and the children, wish her a happy birthday.

looks around at the group, so happy she was able to be alive with them, so amazed.

A man finishes the book, and unceremoniously hands it to

and gets to work on the next one.

Beth, Meg, Amy and

are very young girls, playing in their attic, together again, if only in memory, or in the book.



turns it over in her hands, touching it like the holy object it is, her inchoate desire made manifest.