

Callback

Act II LITTLE WOMEN Act II



Brook came for his umbrella—er—didn't you, Mr. Brook?

BROOK: Er—yes! (*Goes hastily up to arch.*) I—I'll just step out into the hall and—er—look for it! Excuse me! (*Exits in hall and off L.*)

Aunt March

AUNT MARCH: (*Comes down c.*) Brook? That Lawrence boy's tutor? Ah—I understand now. I know all about it. (*Turns suddenly to MEG.*) You haven't gone and accepted him, child?

MEG: (*With a nervous glance toward the arch*) Sssh, Aunt March! He'll hear. Shan't I call Mother?

AUNT MARCH: Not yet, Meg! Come back here! (*MEG comes down to AUNT MARCH.*) I've something to say to you—and I must free my mind at once. Tell me—do you mean to marry this Cook? If you do, not one penny of my money ever goes to you. Remember that—and be a sensible girl!

MEG: (*Angrily*) I shall marry whom I please, Aunt March—and you can leave your money to anyone you like.

AUNT MARCH: Highty tighty! Is that the way you take my advice, Miss? You'll be sorry for it, by and by, when you've tried love in a cottage and found it a failure.

MEG: It can't be worse than some people find in big houses.

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AUNT MARCH: H'm! (*Sits in chair L. of table. Changes tone.*) Now, Meg, my dear, be reasonable, and take my advice. I mean it kindly. You don't want to spoil your whole life by making a mistake at the beginning. You ought to marry well—and help your family. It's your duty to make a rich match, and it ought to be impressed upon you.

MEG: (*L. c.*) Father and Mother don't think so. They like John—even though he is poor.

AUNT MARCH: Your parents, my dear, have no more worldly wisdom than two babies.

MEG: (*Stoutly*) I'm glad of it!

AUNT MARCH: This—er—*Rook*—is poor, and hasn't any rich relations, has he?

MEG: (*Loyally*) No—but he has many warm friends.

AUNT MARCH: Pooh—friends! You can't live on friends! Try it and see how cool they'll grow. He hasn't any business, has he?

MEG: Not yet—but Mr. Lawrence is going to help him.

AUNT MARCH: That won't last long. James Lawrence is a crotchety old fellow—and not to be depended on. (*Shakes her head.*) So—you intend to marry a man without money, position, or business, and go on working harder than you do now, when you might be comfortable all your days by minding me and doing better? I thought you had more sense, Meg.



MEG: (*Hotly*) I couldn't do better if I waited half my life! John is good and wise. He's got heaps of talent! He's willing to work, and sure to get on, he's so energetic and brave. Everyone likes and respects him, and I'm proud to think he cares for me—though I am so poor and young and silly.

AUNT MARCH: Humph! He knows you've got rich relations, child. That's the secret of his liking, I suspect.

MEG: (*Indignantly*) Aunt March, how dare you say any such thing? John is above such meanness—and I won't listen to you a minute if you talk so!

AUNT MARCH: (*Rises and crosses to MEG*) Now, don't get highy tighty with me, young lady! I ——

MEG: My John wouldn't marry for money, any more than I would. We're willing to work—and we mean to wait. I'm not afraid of being poor, for I've been happy so far, and I know I shall be with him, because he loves me, and I ——

AUNT MARCH: Well—I wash my hands of the whole affair! You're a wilful child, and you've lost more than you know by this piece of folly! (*Starts up to arch. MEG tries to stop her.*) No—I won't stop! I'm disappointed in you and haven't any spirit to see Beth or your mother now. Don't expect anything from me when you are married. Your Mr. *Hook's* friends must take care of you. I'm done with you forever!

Aunt March ——!