

MEG. (Panicked.) here they come!!!

AMY. —here they ALL come!

~~Amy primps fast as Laurie and Jo burst in. Meg is also primping fast, looking towards the door—~~

JO. Hurrah, Huzzah, Hail the conquering heroes!

LAURIE. EN GARDE!

JO. EN GARDE!

~~They roughhouse with much grunting and fighting—perhaps Laurie ends with a big “DIE, VILLAIN” with much splurting of fake blood—then he realizes that he’s standing in front of Marmee.~~

LAURIE. Mrs. March—pardon me, I—

MARMEE. (Sticking out her hand for a friendly handshake.) Please.—(Pressing his hand.) call me Marmee.

~~Beth enters with Mr. Laurence. Brooks trails after. Beth begins to play “The Battle Hymn.”—They all gather around under the photograph, which seems to glow—time may slide just a little bit—and:~~

Scene 11

~~Beth now transitions to “Joy to the World” slowly, as if she’s been playing for some time.~~

MARMEE. Beth, you’ll wear yourself out.

~~Beth, smiling, shakes her head and keeps playing. Marmee returns to the table.~~

I think she’ll never stop.

BETH. I wish I never had to.

JO. Your fingers are going to fall off!

~~Beth plays with one hand while wiggling the fingers on the other. Brooks, who has been hanging back, suddenly crosses the room to the opposite side, where Meg is talking to Jo.~~

BROOKS. Miss March.

He stares at Meg for a moment.

Merry Christmas.

MEG. Oh. Um. Merry Chr—

BROOKS. Would you—would you like to dance?

JO. Oh my God.

MEG. ...Now?

BROOKS. There’s music.

JO. CHRISTMAS music, Brooks.

BROOKS. (Still holding his hand out to Meg.) I’d like to try again.

JO. Oh my God!

BROOKS. —I’m sorry, you’re—it’s—I’ll (go)—

MEG. No! I mean yes. Yes. Let’s.

JO. Oh my God.

Meg gives her a look. They slowly, politely dance to the music. It’s desperately awkward.

AMY. D’AWWWWW!

MARMEE. Amy! Hush.

Laurie crosses to Jo.

~~LAURIE. You see that?~~

JO. No, Laurie, I went blind for the holidays.

LAURIE. It’s romantic!

JO. It’s disgusting!

LAURIE. Do you have such a low opinion of matrimony?

JO. Matrimony?! This is one dance. One incredibly awkward dance.

LAURIE. That’s how it starts...

JO. Meg is too young to be thinking about marriage.

LAURIE. We all grow up, eventually...

He sneaks his fingers up her arm.

JO. Stop! How could Meg want—that? —

LAURIE. Desgustibus / non est desputandum,