

LAURIE. (*Gesturing after Amy with the handkerchief she dropped.*) She may need this.
JO. (*Friendly, taking the hankie.*) If she's the damsel in distress, you must be the knight in shining armor?

~~Laurie makes a fake blow of a trumpet's charge.
BROOKS. Theodore!... Latin. (*Reminding himself.*) LATIN!
Brooks staggers back towards the Laurence house. Laurie pulls a face, whistles as he goes in—the tune low-whistled to him at the piano.~~

MEG. (*Offstage.*) Jo!
Jo goes inside.

Marmee + girls

Scene 5

Amy sits crying. Beth massages Amy's slapped hand—Meg consoles. Jo hangs back a bit, after handing off the hankie to Meg with raised eyebrows.

MARMEE. There's enough violence in the country without men hitting little girls.

AMY. I'm not a little girl!

MARMEE. You can take leave from school for now, Amy—
AMY. Huzzah!

MARMEE. —and be tutored by me at home, instead.

AMY. Oh.

MARMEE. "Oh." And no limes in my classroom.

MEG. Let's wash your face.

She leads Amy out of the room.

JO. Marmee, we all had to survive school—why shouldn't she?

MARMEE. You liked school.

BETH. I got to stay home, Jo.

JO. Yes, Beth, but you're—you're my conscience, is what you are,

and Amy is terribly spoilt. What kind of lesson will she learn?
MARMEE. —Look at Beth's flowers, will you?

JO. Marmee, please—no analogies.

MARMEE. Here's a violet: How do we care for it, Beth?

BETH. They like things calm—not too hot or cold. And they like the shade of other plants, so we pot them with their relations.

MARMEE. And here's a rose: What does it need?

BETH. You have to put it where sun is! And it's delicate; you have to give it support, or it won't thrive.

JO. Ow.

BETH. —thorns.

MARMEE. The rose would wilt if she gave it the care of another flower, and the violet too. One isn't better than the other. They just need different things to grow.

JO. So if Beth is a violet—

BETH. (*Surprised.*) Oh!

JO. And Amy a rose—what is Meg?

BETH. (*Delighted to play the game.*) A—Daisy! She bloomed before all the others!

JO. Then I am... Moss. Dirt. (*Snap.*) A rock.

MARMEE. You are—whatever you're supposed to be.
Look at them: Aren't they beautiful together?

Meg and Amy return; Amy's hand is wrapped in a comically large bandage.

MEG. The wound is salved—with Mr. Laurence's hankie, no less.

AMY. His NAME is LAURIE.

JO. Laurie Laurence? That's terrible.

MARMEE. I want to hear all about him, and about the rest of your days—so wash up for dinner.

MEG. Speaking of my day, Jo—the Mingotts invited us to their dance this weekend.

Amy GASPS with extreme delight. Meg stares at Jo.

JO. Oh no. No nonono—