

MARMEE

Come, let me hold my girls.

(SHE embraces them.)

AMY

We've never been parted before. I feel awful-

MEG

(not wanting Marmee to worry)

Amy!

JO

I'll look after everything, Marmee. Don't worry.

AUNT MARCH

(SHE enters swiftly)

My dear Margaret, make certain your husband recovers.

MARMEE

Yes, Aunt March. Thank you for taking Amy. Amy, tell Aunt March how excited you are.

AMY

I'm so excited about living with you while Marmee's in Washington.

AUNT MARCH

Naturally.

MARMEE

(to the Girls)

No glum faces. And no tears. I'll be back as soon as possible. How did you all grow up so fast? Goodbye, Aunt March.

(SHE goes, followed by The GIRLS. AMY says)

AMY

And you'll tell Father how much I miss him- and love him.

AUNT MARCH

(bellows, shocked, sees JO's shorn hair for the first time)

Josephine, what have you done?!

JO

I sold my hair so Marmee could have a safe journey to Washington.

AUNT MARCH

(furious)

You did what? I've told you, if you need money, come to me!

JO

I was hoping to earn my own money.

AUNT MARCH

Cutting one's hair and selling it like a beggar - is not an option for a lady. You look like a shorn sheep! Have you forgotten our contract?

(The GIRLS return)

JO

I never forget it. Traveling. Seeing Europe. Paris. London -

AUNT MARCH

You don't live up to your part of the bargain - why should I live up to mine?

JO

I've tried to live up to my part of the bargain. I went to a ball. I improved my manners. I read books on etiquette - I practiced dancing with Meg - I held my tongue in several situations when I wanted to scream out. I've got a fire in me, Aunt March!

AUNT MARCH

Well, just see how far this 'fire' takes you in life. See what doors this 'fire' will open. See what society thinks of your 'fire.'

JO

To hell with society!

AUNT MARCH

Josephine!

JO

We don't live for society. We live for what we have inside of us. We live to expand our minds. Fulfill our dreams. Engage in passionate exchanges -

AUNT MARCH

That's enough! You think you know everything, and you know nothing! As for Europe, you can forget it! Europe is meant for someone with a little more understanding of its rewards!

JO

Aunt March, please -

AUNT MARCH

(bites out with absolute finality)

The subject is closed!!!