

(BROOKE enters.)

MEG. Mr. Brooke. Hello, Mr. Brooke!

BROOKE. Forgive me — I seem to have left my umbrella —

(JO tosses him his umbrella.)

JO. Come, Amy — something's burning on the stove. (*Aside to MEG:*) Remember what you plan to say.

(JO exits with AMY.)

BROOKE. Hello, Margaret. What do you plan to say?

MEG. (*Backing away.*) Mother will like to see you. I'll call her.

BROOKE. Your mother's not home. I saw her in the village. Are you afraid of me, Margaret?

MEG. (*Stops herself.*) No, of course not. Welcome home, Mr. Brooke. You've been so kind to Marmee and Father.

BROOKE. Margaret, while I was away, your letters meant so much to me.

MEG. Yes. We're all so grateful to you, Mr. Brooke.

BROOKE. Lovely letters — so full of home! (*Takes her hand.*)

MEG. (*Drops his hand.*) Oh, no — please don't!

BROOKE. I only want to know if you care for me a little.

MEG. I don't know... I'm all flustered. Please go away!

(AUNT MARCH enters.)

AUNT MARCH. What's all this?

MEG. Hello, Aunt March!

(BROOKE flees to the dining room.)

AUNT MARCH. I came to call on your father.

MEG. Father's not yet home. I'm so surprised to see you.

AUNT MARCH. That's evident. And who was that?