

CHARACTER BREAKDOWNS

Jo March: Second oldest March daughter who stands up for everything she believes in and becomes the author of novel.

Meg March: The oldest March girl. She is the most proper and inexperienced.

Beth March: The second youngest March girl who dies. Very sweet, giving, and caring.

Amy March: The youngest March girl who is always jealous of Joe and has a bit of an edge.

Laurie Laurence: The boy who lives next door to the March girls who strikes up a strong friendship with all the girls and who develops a crush on Joe.

John Brooke: The young soldier who Meg falls in love with at her first ball.

Professor Friedrich Baer: The straight-laced German Professor who Joe falls in love with in New York and ultimately marries.

Marmee March: The mother of all of the March girls. She brings warmth and compassion

Aunt March: uptight, old-fashioned Aunt of the March girls. She believes good manners and breeding are everything.

Mr. Laurence: Laurie's grandfather who lives next door. Slightly crotchety.

Hannah: House keeper for the March Family, is like a second mother to the March girls.

Mr. March: Father to the March girls.

MONOLOGUES

MEG: My dearest Mother: It is impossible to tell you how happy your last letter made us, for the news was so good we couldn't help laughing and crying over it. How very kind Mr. Brooke is. The girls are all as good as gold. Jo helps me with the sewing, and insists on doing all sorts of hard jobs. I'd be afraid she might overdo, if I didn't know her "moral fit" won't last long. Beth is as regular about her tasks as a clock, and never forgets what you told her. Amy minds me nicely, and I take great care of her. Mr. Laurence watches over us like a motherly old hen, as Jo says, and Laurie is very kind and neighborly. Hannah is a perfect saint. She does not scold at all, and always calls me Miss Margaret, which is quite proper, you know. We are all well and busy, but we long, day and night, to have you back. Give my love to Father and to dear Mr. Brooke, and believe me, ever your own, Meg.

JO: My precious Marmee: Three cheers for dear Father! I rushed up to my garret when the letter came, and tried to thank God for being so good to us, but I could only cry, and say, "I'm glad! I'm glad!" Didn't that do as well as a regular prayer? We have such funny times, and now I can enjoy them, for everyone is so desperately good, it's like living in a nest of turtledoves. I made a poem yesterday, when I was helping Hannah wash, and as Father likes my silly little things, I put it in to amuse him. A SONG FROM THE SUDS:
Queen of my tub, I merrily sing,
While the white foam rises high,
And we sturdily wash
and rinse and wring,
And fasten the clothes to dry.
I wish we could wash, from our
hearts and souls, the stains of the week away. Then on the earth there would be indeed,

A glorious washing day! Give Father my lovingest hug that ever was, and kiss yourself a dozen times for your Topsy-Turvy Jo.

BETH: Dear Mother, There is only room for me to send my love, and some pressed pansies from the root I have been keeping safe in the house for Father to see. I read every morning, try to be good all day, and sing myself to sleep with Father's tune. Amy wants the rest of the page, so I must stop. I didn't forget to cover the holders, and I wind the clock and air the rooms every day. Kiss dear Father on the cheek he calls mine, and do come soon to your loving Little Beth.

AMY: Ma Chere Mamma, We are all well. I do my lessons always and never corroborate with the girls. Meg says I mean "contradict" so I put in both words and you can take the properest. Laurie is not as respectful as he ought to be, now I am almost in my teens. He calls me Chick and hurts my feelings by talking French to me very fast when I say "Merci" or "Bon jour" as Hattie King does. I bear my troubles well but I do wish Hannah would put more starch in my aprons and have buckwheats every day. Can't she? Didn't I make that interrogation point nice? Adieu, I send heaps of love to Papa. Your affectionate daughter Amy Curtis March.

MARMEE: (*reading*) Give them all my dear love and a kiss. Tell them I think of them by day, pray for them by night, and find my best comfort in their affection at all times. A year seems very long to wait before I see them, but I know they will remember all I said to them, that they will be loving children to you, do their duty faithfully, and conquer themselves so beautifully that when I come back to them I may be fonder and prouder than ever of my little women.

Merry Christmas, little daughters. Come, gather close. I want to say a word before we sit down. Not far away from here lies a poor woman with a little newborn baby. Six children are huddled into one bed to keep from freezing, because they have no fire. There is nothing to eat over there. My girls, will you give them your breakfasts as a Christmas present?

HANNAH OR AUNT MARCH: Dear Miz March, I just drop a line to say we get on first rate. The girls is clever and fly round right smart. Miss Meg is going to make a proper good housekeeper. Jo does beat all for goin' ahead, but she don't stop to calculate first, and you never know where she's like to bring up. Beth is the best of little critters, and a sight of help to me, bein' so dependable. Amy does well without frettin'. Mr. Laurie turns the house upside down frequent, but he heartens the girls, so I let them have full swing. The old gentleman send a heap of things, and is rather wearin' but he means well, and it aint my place to say nothin'. My bread is riz, so no more at this time. I send my duty to Mr. March, and hope he's seen the last of his Pewmonia. Yours respectful, Hannah Mullet.

LAURIE OR BHAER OR BROOKS: Head Nurse of Ward No. 2: All serene on the Rappahannock, troops in fine condition, commissary department well conducted, the Home Guard under Colonel Teddy always on duty, Commander in Chief General Laurence reviews the army daily, and Quartermaster Hannah keeps order in camp. A salute of twenty-four guns was fired on receipt of good news from Washington, and a dress parade took place at headquarters. Commander in chief sends best wishes, in which he is heartily joined by. . . Colonel Teddy.

MR. LAWRENCE OR MR. MARCH: Dear Madam: The little girls are all well. Beth and my boy report daily. Hannah is a model servant, and guards pretty Meg like a dragon. Glad the fine weather holds. Pray, make Brooke useful, and draw on me for funds if expenses exceed your estimate. Don't let your husband want anything. Thank God he is mending. Your sincere friend and servant, James Laurence.

SIDES

JO/LAURIE

LAURIE: (*suddenly serious*) Jo—

JO: No, Teddy. Please don't!

LAURIE: It's no use, Jo. We've got to have it out, and the sooner the better for both of us.

JO: Say what you like then. I'll listen.

LAURIE: I've loved you ever since I've known you, Jo. I've tried to show it, but you wouldn't let me. Now I'm going to make you hear, and give me an answer.

JO: I wanted to save you this. I thought you'd understand.

LAURIE: Oh, but girls are so queer you never know what they mean. They say "no" when they mean "yes," and drive a man out of his wits just for the fun of it.

JO: I don't. I never wanted you to care for me so, and I went away to keep you from it.

LAURIE: I only loved you all the more, and I hoped you could love me— though I'm not half good enough.

JO: You, you are! You're a great deal too good for me, and I don't know why I can't love you as you want me to. I've tried, but it would be a lie to say I do when I don't.

LAURIE: Really, truly, Jo?

JO: Really, truly, dear.

LAURIE: You'll be sorry some day, Jo. (*storms off*)

JO: Oh, where are you going?

LAURIE: (*offstage*) To the devil!

JO: Oh, Teddy, I wish I could.

JO/BETH

JO: Christopher Columbus! What's the matter?

BETH: Stay away! You've had the scarlet fever, haven't you?

JO: Years ago, when Meg did. Why?

BETH: Oh, Jo, the baby's dead!

JO: What baby?

BETH: Mrs. Hummel's. She died in my lap before Mrs. Hummel got home.

JO: My poor dear, how dreadful for you! I ought to have gone.

BETH: It wasn't dreadful, Jo, only so sad! I saw in a minute she was sicker, but Lottchen said her mother had gone for a doctor, so I took Baby and let Lotty rest. She seemed asleep, but all of a sudden she gave a little cry and trembled, and then lay very still.

JO: Don't cry, dear! What did you do?

BETH: I just sat and held her softly till Mrs. Hummel came with the doctor. He said she was dead, and looked at Heinrich and Minna, who have sore throats. *(gruffly)* "Scarlet fever, ma'am. Ought to have called me before." Mrs. Hummel told him she was poor, and had tried to cure baby herself, but now it was too late, and she could only ask him to help the others and trust to charity for his pay. He smiled then, and was kinder, but I cried with them till he turned round all of a sudden, and told me to go home and take belladonna right away.

JO: Oh, Beth, if you're sick I'll never forgive myself!

BETH: I guess I won't have it badly. I looked in Mother's book, and saw

that it begins with headache, sore throat, and queer feelings like

mine, so I took some belladonna, and I feel better.

JO: I'll call Hannah. She knows all about sickness.

BETH: Don't let Amy come! She never had it, and I should hate to give it to her.

JO MARCH / PROFESSOR BHAER

JO: So how is Mrs. Kirk?

BHAER: As impossible as ever.

JO: And the boarders?

BHAER: As strange as ever.

JO: And you?

BHAER: Me?... The same.

JO: You look—

BHAER: Old, I know. Nearly 50.

JO: You're 34.

BHAER: 35.

JO: You had birthday?

BHAER: They made a party for me. I get sick. I do not like parties. I brought back your manuscript. It was so good of you to send the book to me. A novel?

JO: There's no one who's opinion I respect more than yours. Forgive me for presuming —

BHAER: It touched me deeply, Miss March. I saw you on every page. I heard your voice. I felt your spirit. It was magnificent!

(beat)

JO: I often think about you, Professor. I wonder how you were doing.

BHAER: Soon after you left. I bought a kite and took it to the park. I never had a kite. You know you were right to think I was old. I was old.

JO: No, I—

BHAER: I was. But since we met—everything is different. Everybody noticed. My students even. They say, "Professor Bhaer, you are smiling today." Miss March—

JO: Jo.

BHAER: Jo. We are not at all alike. We have our differences.

MEG MARCH / MR. JOHN BROOKE

MEG: Sir! You've taken my dance card!

BROOKE: Your dance card? Oh? Is this yours? Sorry? (suddenly SEES her) So, you're Margaret March?

MEG: Yes, I am.

BROOKE: It's—a splendid party, isn't it?

MEG: Yes, it is. Quite—"lovely". So you're from Boston?

BROOKE: Actually Maine.

MEG: I've never been to Maine.

BROOKE: You should go. It's a beautiful country. Very primitive.

MEG: I like primitive.

BROOKE: I am a romantic.

MEG: Really?

BROOKE: Well, no, no. I read Sheats and Kelley. I mean—Keats and Shelley. MEG: So do I.

BROOKE: You read Keats and Shelley?

MEG: All the time.

BROOKE: Would you like to dance, Miss March?

MEG: I'd be delighted, Mr. Brooke.

AMY MARCH / AUNT MARCH

AMY: Everybody? I'm home!

AUNT MARCH: Look at this house!

AMY: Marmee! Jo!

AUNT MARCH: We left it in shambles—and it's still in shambles.

AMY: Meg? Aunt March, did you see the look I gave the coachman? His impertinence! He caught every bump in the road.

AUNT MARCH: One should always be civil to a coachman. You must respect those who have the reins—until you wrench the reins from them.

AMY: Yes, Aunt March. Jo! Marmee!

AUNT MARCH: And remember, Amy, you're a lady now.

AMY: Yes... I'm a lady. (shouting in a ladylike way) Meg! ...When did this house get so small?

AUNT MARCH: As we grow grand, Amy, the world around us often diminishes in size. I have known people who have almost disappeared before my very eyes.

AMY: You're such a dear, Aunt March! Thank you for everything.

AUNT MARCH: I'll go see to that wretched coachman.

AMY: Remember, Aunt March, respect those who have the reins.

AUNT MARCH: Very good.

MARMEE / JO MARCH

MARMEE: It's been awhile since you've been up here. JO: I know.

MARMEE: The room needs an airing. And a dusting. JO: I'll get to it.

MARMEE: The attic used to be such a sanctuary for you. Whenever you were sad or disappointed, you'd run up here, bolt the door, and come back hours later so full of life. I haven't seen that Jo in a long time.

JO: ...I can't write. I can't do anything, really. You're right, in the past I could always come up with something. I was always so good at that. Beth would say, "Jo can make the clouds disappear." I want Beth back! I never should have broken the promise. I never should have gone to New York. If I'd stayed her—

MARMEE: Jo—

JO: --everything would have been different.

MARMEE: Jo, stop it! No one could have done more for Beth than you did. You could not have changed what happened.

JO: How do you manage? How do you go on day-in, day-out, as if nothing has happened?

MARMEE: You think that's how I go on?

JO: You're strong and wise. How can I be like you? How can I find your strength?

MARMEE: Don't make so much of me, Jo.