

# LITTLE WOMEN

*Dramatized by L. Don Swartz*

*From the novel by Louisa May Alcott*

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*Little Women*

-2-

## **DEDICATION**

*For my little women, Emily and Rosemary  
with love.*

## **STORY OF THE PLAY**

The play chronicles the life-changing events of the March family during a turbulent period of American history. Their joys, sorrows, loves and losses are played against the backdrop of a divided country mourning the loss of an assassinated president and struggling to stay united. Through it all, the sisters endure with a healthy dose of faith and the March family's legendary sense of humor. Along the way, the girls learn the value of family and friendship. All the most familiar episodes from the beloved novel are here as well as less familiar material, including Amy and Laurie's courtship, Aunt March's eleventh-hour reconciliation with the family, and scenes that illustrate how Marmee and maid, Hannah, steer the family through troubled waters while Father is off ministering.

## **ORIGINAL CAST**

*"Little Women" was originally produced by Starry Night Theatre, Inc. at the Ghostlight Theatre in North Tonawanda, New York on February 19, 2004. It was directed by L. Don Swartz, with costumes by Debby Koszelak Swartz and sets by Julie Senko. This adaptation was made possible in part with funds from the Decentralization Program, a re-grant program of the New York State Council on the Arts, administered by the Niagara Arts Council, Inc.*

*Meg March: Tammy Ives*

*Jo March: Justine Swartz*

*Beth March: Robyn Stein*

*Amy March: Kristen Pieper*

*Laurie Laurence: Chris Fire*

*Hannah: Joy Ann Wrona*

*Marmee March: Mollie McDermott*

*John Brooke: Paul McGinnis*

*Aunt March: Ida Scott*

*Professor Bhaer: Mark Campas*

**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*(7 w, 3 m)*

MEG MARCH: Oldest sister; determined to acquire finer things in life.

JO MARCH: Second oldest; tomboy, passionate writer who struggles to keep the family together.

BETH MARCH: Third-oldest sister; quiet musician.

AMY MARCH: Youngest sister; artist who tends to put on airs.

THEODORE "LAURIE" LAURENCE: Rich orphan; lives next door and is determined to worm his way into the March family.

HANNAH MULLET: March family's Irish housekeeper who is treated like one of the family.

MARMEE MARCH: Strong, determined head of March household.

JOHN BROOKE: Laurie's tutor and Meg's suitor.

AUNT MARCH: Girls' great aunt; her usually grouchy, judgmental demeanor masks her love for the girls.

PROFESSOR FREDRICH BHAER: German scholar and teacher who falls in love with Jo.

## **SETTING**

The March family living room and porch in Concord, Massachusetts, 1863-1871. There is a fireplace stage right with a woodbin and stool next to it. There is a comfortable armchair next to a window. Upstage from the fireplace, a door leads to the family study. The family piano is kept in the study offstage. Upstage center, a few steps lead to a landing, which is visible with stairs leading up and off SR. There is a window on the landing. Stage left of the steps is an open archway that leads to a hallway that connects with the kitchen, dining room and the front door. Part of the front porch is visible extreme stage left. There is a small table SL of center with two chairs and a small desk outside the study door. There are several good paintings and some bookcases loaded with books.

## **SYNOPSIS OF SCENES**

### **Act I**

**Scene 1:** August 1863. Afternoon. The March porch.

**Scene 2:** December 1863. Early afternoon.

**Scene 3:** January 1864. Late afternoon.

**Scene 4:** March 1864. Morning.

### **Act II**

**Scene 1:** April 1865. Afternoon.

**Scene 2:** November 1865. Evening.

**Scene 3:** The next day and March 1866. Early evening.

**Scene 4:** August 1871. Afternoon.

**ACT I**  
**Scene 1**

*(AT RISE: August 1863, afternoon. The four March girls -- MEG, the oldest; JO, the tomboy; BETH, the quiet one; and AMY, the baby -- are sitting on the porch, watching the sky. Meg is sewing and Amy is drawing on a sketch pad.)*

BETH: That one looks like a cat.

AMY: Where?

BETH: There. A cat on his back with one big crooked ear and one small ear.

JO: Oh, yes. I see it.

AMY: And that one looks like a beautiful princess on a throne.

JO: There's a unicorn!

*(LAURIE, the boy next door and the same age as MEG, appears.)*

LAURIE: There you are. Hello.

JO: Hello, Laurie!

*(The OTHERS greet HIM.)*

LAURIE: What in the wide world are you girls looking at?

JO: We're finding shapes in the clouds.

LAURIE: Mind if I join in, or is this a private family affair?

JO: Jump in. Give that rusty imagination of yours a kick.

LAURIE: Not so rusty. I'll jump in if Meg doesn't mind. If she does, I'll go away.

MEG: Why should I mind?

LAURIE: Much obliged. *(HE looks up.)*

JO: Well, Laurie? What do you see?

LAURIE: Hold on a minute. Ah! I see a castle!

AMY: That's not a cloud -- that's your house next door.

LAURIE: I don't live in a castle.

AMY: Next to our dinky house, it is.

LAURIE: No. Look up there. A castle in the air.

AMY: I see it!

*Little Women*

-6-

MEG: Laurie, how do you like living with your grandfather?

LAURIE: I'm getting used to it. When my parents died, I had no other living relative and nowhere else to go.

JO: I don't see a castle.

AMY: I wish I had a rich grandfather who lived in a castle.

MEG: Amy, really. Do you like the neighborhood?

LAURIE: I like the neighbors.

JO: Oh, there it is! Leave it to you, Teddy, to see castles in the air! Wouldn't it be fun if all the castles in the air would come true, and we could live in them?

LAURIE: I've made so many, it would be hard to choose.

MEG: Not fair. You may only choose one. What is it?

LAURIE: If I tell mine, will you tell yours?

MEG: Yes, if the girls will too.

JO: We will.

*(BETH and AMY agree.)*

LAURIE: After I'd seen as much of the world as I wanted to, I'd like to settle in Germany and be a famous musician with all of creation rushing to hear me, and I'm never to be bothered about money or business. That's my favorite castle in the air. Meg, what's yours?

MEG: *(Slowly.)* I should like a lovely home, full of all sorts of luxurious things, nice food, pretty clothes, handsome furniture, pleasant people, and heaps of money. I am to be mistress of it and manage it as I like, with plenty of servants, so I never need work a bit. How I should enjoy it! For I wouldn't be idle but do good and make everyone love me dearly.

LAURIE: Wouldn't you have a master for your castle in the air?

MEG: I said "pleasant people."

JO: Why don't you say you'd have a splendid, wise, good husband and some angelic children? You know your castle wouldn't be perfect without.

MEG: You'd have nothing but horses, inkstands and novels in yours.

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