

Louisa and her Little Women – 4 female scene (Scene 2)  
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*(It is late afternoon late June. Lights up inside the Alcott home – their “Hillside” home in Concord, MA. All is well-worn with piles of books and scribbles everywhere. Maybe we spy MAY’S paintings. The dining room table has LOUISA’S atlas that she used as a desk along with pages and pages of writings. There are quills about, paints, music books, fabrics being sewn.*

*LIZZIE enters and cleans off the dining room table as best she can – putting things “somewhere.” Satisfied, that she can now set the table she exits back into the kitchen where she is making dinner.*

*LOUISA and MAY enter together. MAY has her school books and LOUISA has the mail and maybe a basket of sewing to finish. MAY dumps her school books on the dining room table as LOUISA sifts through the mail, squirrels away one letter – up her sleeve? in a pocket? and leaves the rest on the table.)*

MAY

I am never going back! If Mary and Clara were on fire and I had a glass of water – I’d drink it. If Priscilla was struck in a ditch, I’d cover her with bugs!

LOUISA

So it was another delightful day at school?

MAY

And I don’t need you making fun of me. And is that soup I am smelling for dinner? Again? It’s too hot for soup!

*(ANNA enters with books which she dumps on the dining room table.)*

ANNA

And how is everyone this fine evening?

MAY

I want to lock all my classmates in outhouses.

LOUISA

A fate worse than death!

*(LIZZIE enters with dishes.)*

LIZZIE

Get everything off the table! *(Beat.)* Please. I just cleared it.

MAY

Are you making soup again?

LIZZIE

What else can I make with the few ingredients we have?

LOUISA

At least salt it. You never put in enough salt.

LIZZIE

And you use way too much.

LOUISA

I like food salty. It suits me.

ANNA

They say you catch more flies with honey than vinegar.

LOUISA

I'll keep that in mind if I ever become a frog.

LIZZE

Ahem. Table. Please.

*(They clear the table – putting things “somewhere.” LOUISA steps aside and tries to read her letter.)*

ANNA

Good news?

LOUISA

Don't know yet. I'm afraid to open it.

*(LOUISA exits into kitchen.)*

MAY

Three more days of misery and then school ends.

ANNA

Louisa and I always wanted to go to a proper school. Consider yourself lucky.

MAY

I'd rather stay home with Lizzie. She wouldn't torture me.

LIZZIE

My good nature may expire soon if we don't get this table set.

LOUISA (*Entering*)

I added an onion. Old Man Clemons gave me one as a tip for hemming his pants.

LIZZIE

You know what Father says...

LOUISA

They grow underground which means they are a vegetable from the devil. I was feeling devilish.

ANNA

They do add flavor.

MAY

Which your soup needs.

LIZZE

You stay home and try and feed a family of six with what we have in the kitchen.

LOUISA

Is this "Lizzie" speaking? Sweet Lizzie who Father calls the "Sea of Tranquility."

LIZZIE

I'm sorry. It is hot and Heathcliff ran away and I guess I am out of sorts.

LOUISA

Heathcliff can't have gone far. He likes his dinner. Have you searched the attic?

LIZZIE

I've searched everywhere.

LOUISA

We'll look after we eat.

LIZZIE

Thank-you.

LOUISA

Why is the table set for four?

LIZZIE

Mother and Father are dining with the Hawthornes.

MAY

Quick! Sneak some meat on the table while he's gone.

LOUISA

Ha! Try and find some meat in the Alcott household. I wonder what Mother and Father are doing dining at the Hawthornes. We've been at Hillside for almost five years. Mother and Father have never dined with the them.

ANNA

Mr. Hawthorne's shy. And Mrs. Hawthorne is in delicate health. They don't get out much.

LIZZIE

Maybe they finally got around to being neighborly.

LOUISA

It's odd. Something's afoot.

LIZZIE

Look. I even baked bread! Do you want me to bring the soup out or shall we serve ourselves.

MAY

Let's make clean-up easy and serve ourselves.

*(LIZZIE and MAY exit into the kitchen. LOUISA opens her mail.)*

ANNA

And?

LOUISA

No.

ANNA

I'm sorry. What did you send them?

LOUISA

The latest. "The Witch's Curse."

ANNA

The audience loved it. It's filled with passion!

LOUISA

I know. But according to the publisher:

*(LOUISA takes out the letter.)*

LOUISA (cont'd)

“Our readers are of the female persuasion. As such, I think many murders are not suited to the delicate constitutions of our reader. If you have writings that are more tame and that quiet the emotions, we will be happy to read it.” Sincerely, blah-blah-blah.

ANNA

That’s encouraging!

LOUISA

That my writing is too excitable for women?

ANNA

That they’re willing to read more of your writing. That one gentleman in Boston wasn’t so kind.

LOUISA

Yes. The one that ended with, “please don’t send anything else” was not the most encouraging rejection.

ANNA

But still – you keep writing.

LOUISA

I have no choice. Ideas burst out of my hands. A small part of me believes that somewhere I will find an editor who is a good fit for my work. Who knows? Maybe he isn’t around yet. But will be in the future.

ANNA

It’s always a “he,” isn’t it?

LOUISA

Always.

*(MAY and LIZZIE enter with their soup and bread.)*

LIZZIE

Don’t let it get cold.

*(ANNA and LOUISA exit to the kitchen.)*

How is it?

MAY

Not bad. A bit salty.

LIZZIE

That sneaky Louisa. She added salt when I wasn’t looking.

MAY

She always thinks she knows better than us.

LOUISA (*Peeking out.*)

And I do!

*(MAY throws some rolls or bread at her.)*

LIZZIE

I just baked that!

*(There is the sound of a crash and a loud meow.)*

LOUISA

We found Heathcliff!

ANNA (*Entering.*)

Another charming dinner at the Alcotts.

*(And everyone settles down to their dinner, passing rolls and butter and possibly all speaking about their day all at one as the lights go down.)*