

GEORGE

GEORGE. Y'know, Emily, whenever I meet a farmer I ask him if he thinks it's important to go to Agriculture School to be a good farmer.

EMILY. *(looks at him, happy that he might not leave town)*

Why, George –

GEORGE. *(eagerly)* Yeah, and some of them say that it's even a waste of time. You can get all those things, anyway, out of the pamphlets the government sends out. And Uncle Luke's getting old, – he's about ready for me to start in taking over his farm tomorrow, if I could.

EMILY. *(glowing)* My!

GEORGE. And, like you say, being gone all that time... in other places and meeting other people... Gosh, if anything like that can happen I don't want to go away. I guess new people aren't any better than old ones. I'll bet they almost never are. Emily... I feel that you're as good a friend as I've got. I don't need to go and meet the people in other towns.

EMILY. *(to him, arguing nobly against her inclinations)* But, George, maybe it's very important for you to go and learn all that about – cattle judging and soils and those things... Of course, I don't know.

GEORGE. *(after a pause, very seriously)* Emily, I'm going to make up my mind right now. I won't go. I'll tell Pa about it tonight.

EMILY. Why, George, I don't see why you have to decide right now. It's a whole year away.

GEORGE. Emily, I'm glad you spoke to me about that... that fault in my character. What you said was right; but there was *one* thing wrong in it, and that was when you said that for a year I wasn't noticing people, and... you, for instance. Why, you say you were watching me when I did everything... I was doing the same about you all the time.

(She looks at him wide-eyed, he at her.)

Why, sure, – I always thought about you as one of the chief people I thought about. I always made sure where you were sitting on the bleachers, and who you were with, and for three days now I've been trying to walk home with you; but something's always got in the way. Yesterday I was standing over against the wall waiting for you, and you walked home with *Miss Corcoran*.

EMILY. George!... Life's awful funny! How could I have known that? Why, I thought –

GEORGE. Listen, Emily, I'm going to tell you why I'm not going to Agriculture School. I think that once you've found a person that you're very fond of... I mean a person who's fond of you, too, and likes you enough to be interested in your character... Well, I think that's just as important as college is, and even more so. That's what I think.

EMILY. *(quietly)* I think it's awfully important, too. *(pause)*

GEORGE. Emily.

EMILY. Y-yes, George.

GEORGE. Emily, if I *do* improve and make a big change... would you be... I mean: *could* you be...

EMILY. I... I am now; I always have been.

GEORGE. *(pause)* So I guess this is an important talk we've been having.]