

PERUSAL SCRIPT



Newport, Maine

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WELL-BEHAVED WOMEN

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

20 FEMALE ROLES (in order of appearance) (some may be doubled)

ALICE PAUL -- OLD and YOUNG (2 actresses can play her)
SUSAN B. ANTHONY --
MARY ANTHONY, her sister
GULA ANTHONY, her sister
HANNAH ANTHONY, her sister
ELIZABETH CADY STANTON --
HARRIOT STANTON, her daughter
VICTORIA WOODHULL --
MATILDA JOSLYN GAGE
ANNA HOWARD SHAW -- President of the NAWSA
JANE ADDAMS
INEZ MILHOLLAND
ROSE WINSLOW
CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT
LUCY BURNS
MARY NOLAN
WOMAN -- not a suffragist
EDITH WILSON -- wife to Woodrow WILSON
JESSIE WILSON -- daughter to Woodrow WILSON
MAUD --

35 MALE ROLES (in order of appearance) (roles may be played by females and may be doubled or trebled)

ROBERT GALLAGHER -- columnist for American Heritage Magazine
JOHN BINGHAM -- Chairman of House Judiciary Committee
ULYSSES MERCUR -- Congressman on House Judiciary Committee
BURTON COOK -- Congressman on House Judiciary Committee
Representative ELDEREDGE -- Congressman on House Judiciary Committee
WILLIAM LOUGHRIDGE -- Congressman on House Judiciary Committee
BENJAMIN BUTLER -- Congressman on House Judiciary Committee
A BARBER
JAMES
REGISTRARS (3)
YOUNG VOTER
GEORGE, a voter
WALTER, a voter
ARTHUR, a voter
Inspector MARSH
Inspector JONES
DEMOCRAT Inspector
ELISHA KEENEY -- Deputy Federal Marshall
JOHN VAN VOORHIS -- an Attorney
Judge HENRY Selden
Richard CROWLEY -- Prosecutor
JUROR 3
BAILIFF

JUDGE WARD HUNT
 JOHN E. POUND
 RICHARD HENRY LEE
 SENATOR THOMAS FERRY
 GENERAL HAWLEY
 POLICEMAN
 SEAMAN
 WOODROW WILSON
 JOE TUMULTY
 CHARLES CURTIS -- Senator
 JACOB HAROLD GALLINGER -- Senator
 PAGE -- Young assistant

ENSEMBLE GROUPS (in order of appearance)

JURORS -- 12
MARCHERS
NON-MARCHERS (CROWD)
SUFFRAGISTS
POLICE
STUDENTS
MEN
POLICEMEN

SUGGESTIONS FOR MULTIPLE ROLE CASTING:

Act I i	Act I ii	Act I iii	Act I iv	Act I v	Act I vi	Act I vii	Act I viii	Act II i	Act II ii	Act II iii	Act II iv	Act II v	Act II vi	Act II vii	Act II viii	Act II ix
		Registrar 3	Inspector Marsh			Juror #3	Henry Lee			Student #3		Mob		Jessie Wilson		Juror #3
	Victoria Woodhull	Registrar 1					Matilda		Lucy Burns	Lucy Burns	Lucy Burns	Lucy Burns				Lucy Burns
	Elizabeth C Stanton		Democrat Inspector		Elizabeth C Stanton		Elizabeth C Stanton		Inez	Inez		Mob				Elizabeth C Stanton
	Rep. Ben Butler	Barber	<i>Barber voting</i>		John Van Voorhis	John Van Voorhis				Student 1		Mob			Sen. Jacob G.	
	Rep. Loughridge		Walter		Henry Selden	Henry Selden				Police		Policeman		Joe Tumulty		Henry Selden
	Susan B. Anthony	Susan	Susan	Susan	Susan	Susan	Susan			Police		Police				Susan
	Rep. Elderedge	Registrar 2		Elisha Keeney		Bailiff			Rose Winslow	Suffragist		Rose Winslow				Rose Winslow
	Rep. U. Mercur	Voter	<i>James voting</i>			Judge W. Hunt			Jane Addams	Suffragist		Mob			Maud Younger	Maud Younger
	Mary Anthony	Mary	Mary	Mary			Mary		Anna H. Shaw	Suffragist	Anna H. Shaw					Mary A
			Arthur						Alice	Alice	Alice	Alice	Alice		Alice	Alice
Robert		Hannah Anthony	Hannah Anthony					Robert		Crowd 3		Woman		Edith Wilson		Robert
	Berton Cook		George			John Pound				Student 2		Seaman		Woodrow Wilson		Woodrow Wilson
	Rep. John Bingham	James	<i>Voter voting</i>			Richard Crowley				Crowd 2		Mob			Sen. C. Curtis	
	Harriot Stanton		Inspector Jones				Harriot				Carrie C. Catt					Carrie Catt
Old Alice		Gula Anthony	Gula Anthony				Gen. Hawley	Old Alice		Crowd 1		Mary Nolan				Old Alice

ANOTHER WAY TO LOOK AT MULTIPLE CASTING:

ACT I Scene 1 (2)

(Old) Alice Paul - Actress/Actor 15
Robert Gallagher - Actress/Actor 11

ACT I Scene 2 (11)

Susan B. Anthony - Actor/Actress 6
Mary Anthony - Actress9
Elizabeth Cady Stanton - Actress 3
Harriot Stanton - Actor/Actress14
Rep. John Bingham - Actor13
Rep. Ulysses Mercur - Actor/Actress8
Rep. Burton Cook - Actor12
Rep. Elderedge - Actor/Actress7
Rep. Loughridge - Actor 5
Rep. Benjamin Butler - Actor/Actress 4
Victoria Woodhull - Actress 2

ACT I Scene 3 (10)

Barber - Actor/Actress 4
James - Actor13
Voter - Actor/Actress8
Registrar 1 - Actress 2
Registrar 2 - Actor/Actress7
Registrar 3 - Actor/Actress 1
Susan - Actress/Actor 15
Mary - Actress9
Gula - Actress/Actor 15
Hannah - Actress/Actor 11

ACT I Scene 4 (13)

George - Actor12
Walter - Actor 5
Arthur - Actor/Actress10
Marsh - Actor/Actress 1
Jones - Actor/Actress14
Democrat Inspector - Actress 3
Susan - Actor/Actress 6
Mary - Actress9
Gula - Actress/Actor 15
Hannah - Actress/Actor 11
Barber - Actor/Actress 4
James - Actor13
Voter - Actor/Actress8

ACT I Scene 5 (3)

Susan - Actor/Actress 6
Mary - Actress9
Elisha Keeney - Actor/Actress7

ACT I Scene 6 (4)

Susan - Actor/Actress 6
Elizabeth - Actress 3
John Van Voorhis - Actor/Actress 4
Henry Selden - Actor 5

ACT I Scene 7 (8*)

Susan - Actor/Actress 6
Henry Selden - Actor 5
John Van Voorhis - Actor/Actress 4
Richard Crowley - Actor13
Bailiff - Actor/Actress7
Judge Ward Hunt - Actor/Actress8
John Pound - Actor12
Juror 3 - Actor/Actress 1
Other Jurors* - all who can

ACT I Scene 8 (7*)

Susan - Actor/Actress 6
Mary - Actor/Actress9
Matilda Joslyn Gage - Actress 2
Mary - Actress9
Harriot - Actor/Actress14
Richard Henry Lee - Actor/Actress 1
Gen. Hawley - Actress/Actor 15
Celebration attendees - all who can

ACT II Scene 1 (2)

(Old) Alice Paul - Actress/Actor 15
Robert Gallagher - Actress/Actor 11

ACT II Scene 2 (6)

Alice Paul - Actor/Actress10
Lucy Burns - Actress 2
Anna Howard Shaw - Actress9
Jane Addams - Actor/Actress8
Rose Winslow - Actor/Actress7
Inez Milholland - Actress 3

ACT II Scene 3 (14)

Alice - Actor/Actress10
Inez - Actress 3
Lucy - Actress 2
Suffragists - Actor/Actress7; ActorActress8; Actress9
Crowd 1 - Actress/Actor 15
Crowd 2 - Actor13
Crowd 3 - Actress/Actor 11
Police - Actor 5 & Actor/Actress 6
Student 1 - Actor/Actress 4
Student 2 - Actor12
Student 3 - Actor/Actress 1

ACT II Scene 4 (4)

Alice - Actor/Actress10
Lucy - Actress 2
Carrie Chapman Catt - Actor/Actress14
Anna Howard Shaw - Actor/Actress9

ACT II Scene 5 (13)

Alice - Actor/Actress10
Lucy - Actress 2
Mary Nolan - Actress/Actor 15
Rose Winslow - Actor/Actress7

Policeman - Actor5
Woman - Actress/Actor11
Seaman - Actor12
Police* - Actor/Actress6
Mob - Actor/Actress1; Actress3; Actor/Actress4; Actor/
Actress8; Actor13

ACT II Scene 6 (1)
Alice - Actor/Actress10

ACT II Scene 7 (4)
Woodrow Wilson - Actor12
Joe Tumulty - Actor5
Edith Wilson - Actress/Actor11
Jessie Wilson - Actor/Actress1

ACT II Scene 8 (5)
Page - TBD
Alice - Actor/Actress10
Maud Younger - Actor/Actress8
Sen. Charles Curtis - Actor13
Sen. Jacob Harold Gallinger - Actor/Actress4

ACT II Scene 9 (13)
Old Alice - Actress/Actor15
Robert - Actress/Actor11
Alice - Actor/Actress10
Lucy Burns - Actress2
Carrie Catt - Actor/Actress14
Maud Younger - Actor/Actress8
Juror 3 - Actor/Actress 1
Henry - Actor 5
Woodrow - Actor12
Elizabeth Cady Stanton - Actress3
Susan B Anthony - Actor/Actress6
Rose Winslow - Actor/Actress7
Mary Anthony - Actress9

WELL-BEHAVED WOMEN by Jes Marbacher. 35M 20F (doubling and tripling recommended) About 2 hours. (All roles are playable by any age actor) (*TYA, Children's Theatre, Amateur, Professional, Educational*) From the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848, and the launch of the women's right's movement, women worked tirelessly for their right to vote. After 72 long years the 19th Amendment was passed, and women were legally allowed to cast their ballots for the first time in the 1920 election. This movement spans decades and involves many women. Playwright Jes Marbacher deftly crafts a work in two Acts, the first focusing in on Susan B. Anthony's attempt to vote and subsequent arrest in 1872, and the second on Alice Paul and the suffragettes of the 1910's. Women's suffrage was a complex issue for a lot of people and students of today have a hard time wrapping their heads around why. Even more difficult to understand is why many of these issues still exist today. That is the perfect reason to produce this play, to remind people that these issues are still not fully taken care of. *A New Hampshire Theatre Project Young People's Playscript*. **ORDER #3166.**

Jes Marbacher is a writing and communications professional and freelance theater artist working in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. She first arrived at NHTP through an artists in residence program in the early 2000s. Jes performed with New Hampshire Theatre Project's Youth Repertory Company for many years and served as a technical intern before earning a degree in English from Colgate University in 2013. Following graduation, Jes returned to the seacoast and to NHTP. In addition to her work with New Hampshire Theatre Project, Jes now works in market research and moonlights as a stand-up comedian. Her original script about the women's suffragist movement, *Well-Behaved Women*, written for NHTP's Junior Repertory Company, premiered in April 2016 and is now published in this volume.

ACT I

Scene 1 -- (Scene card: 1973.) Alice Paul's home in Ridgefield, Connecticut. Robert Gallagher interviews Alice Paul for American Heritage Magazine. ROBERT GALLAGHER and ALICE PAUL are seated comfortably in Alice's home.

ROBERT: I know it has been a bit difficult to arrange this, Miss Paul. Thank you for agreeing to meet with me.

OLD ALICE: I did have a great deal of work to do before the election, Mr. Gallagher.

ROBERT: Please, call me Robert.

OLD ALICE: Yes, well Robert, you must know I've been busy working on the Equal Rights Amendment.

ROBERT: For fifty years now.

OLD ALICE: It has been a while, hasn't it?

ROBERT: And you were working on winning support before the election?

OLD ALICE: Yes. President Nixon has always been a friend of the Equal Rights Amendment, but in this campaign, Senator McGovern took a stronger position.

ROBERT: Well, thank you again for making the time. I know you're focused on ERA now, but I'd like to talk with you about your efforts in the women's suffrage movement.

OLD ALICE: Yes. You interviewers, Mr. Gallagher, you're obsessed with the past. Why in the world would anyone want to know about that?

ROBERT: You were jailed countless times in the fight for women's suffrage. I think that's a story worth telling.

OLD ALICE: I think it's fashionable, now, to have gone to prison for a cause.

ROBERT: Miss Paul, you're legendary in the women's movement, integral in the suffrage struggle. You have a continued dedication to women's rights.

(There is a pause. ALICE does not respond immediately. She considers ROBERT.)

OLD ALICE: Well, I don't know about all that. I was just trying to honor the movement that had begun so many, many, years before with Susan B. Anthony.

(BLACKOUT)

PERUSAL SCRIPT -- Well-Behaved Women by *Jes Marbacher*

Scene 2 -- (*Scene card: 1871.*) *Hearing room of the House Judiciary Committee in Washington, D.C. Victoria Woodhull becomes the first woman to address Congress. She argues on behalf of suffrage. Congressmen BINGHAM, MERCUR, COOK, ELDEREDGE, and LOUGHRIDGE are gathered around a table in the hearing room. The meeting has not yet been called to order, and members are having scattered conversations. SUSAN B. ANTHONY, her sister MARY ANTHONY, ELIZABETH CADY STANTON, and her daughter HARRIOT are seated slightly away from the table as they await the beginning of the meeting.*

ELIZABETH: Susan, have you any idea what the delay is? Shouldn't we have begun already?

SUSAN: Elizabeth dear, these are congressmen. Do you really expect them to start on time?

ELIZABETH: You're right, of course. I just worry that Harriot is getting a touch antsy. Harriot, I know you've taken quite an interest in suffrage, despite your father's best efforts, but this waiting is wearing on even those of us who have witnessed the slow progress of government for years.

SUSAN: Yes. I quite understand. Harriot, how are you, dear?

HARRIOT: Very well, Miss Anthony. I do hope Miss Woodhull is brought to speak soon. You don't think they've changed their mind about letting her, do you, mother?

SUSAN: I should hope they haven't! The first woman to address Congress - and they change their mind!

(SUSAN's indignation attracts the attention of several nearby congressmen.)

MARY: Susan, calm down, or they'll have us removed.

HARRIOT: Could they do that, Mother?

ELIZABETH: Don't worry, Harriot. I'm sure they won't.

SUSAN: If they deny us the right to vote, what should keep them from removing us from the hearing room?

(Attention is diverted as Congressman BENJAMIN BUTLER enters with VICTORIA WOODHULL. The congressmen gather around the table with JOHN BINGHAM at the head of the table. BUTLER and VICTORIA take their places at the side of the table.)

BINGHAM: I'd like to call this meeting of the House Judiciary Committee to order. It should be noted that we have many guests in attendance today. I would like to impress upon our visitors the importance of upholding the decorum of this body. Disruption will not be tolerated and I will not hesitate to remove anyone - of any sex - acting in a manner ill befitting this Congress.

SUSAN: (*quietly, to MARY*) Well, you were right, Mary. We can't yet vote, but heaven forbid we disrupt Congress.

BINGHAM: (*giving a stern glance to SUSAN*) The primary purpose of today's meeting is to address the petition brought before this body by Miss Victoria Woodhull at the request of the distinguished congressman from Massachusetts, Benjamin Butler. Representative Butler, you have the floor.

SUSAN: (*to ELIZABETH*) Let's hope Harriot's interest in our suffrage movement isn't killed in one fell swoop by the excitement of congressional committees.

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BUTLER: Thank you, Chairman. Miss Woodhull brought her petition to me, and I think it best that you hear the argument directly from her.

VICTORIA: Thank you, Representative Butler. And thank you to the Judiciary Committee for agreeing to hear my petition. I have come before you today to ask that Congress carry into execution the right vested by the Constitution in the citizens of the United States to vote, regardless of sex.

(Rep ULYSSES MERCUR gestures to Chairman BINGHAM, who acknowledges him.)

BINGHAM: Representative Mercur.

MERCUR: On what possible grounds can you make such a claim, Miss Woodhull?

VICTORIA: Well, sir, the recently passed amendments to the Constitution. The 14th and 15th amendments.

(Rep BURTON COOK gestures to Chairman BINGHAM, who acknowledges him.)

BINGHAM: Representative Cook.

COOK: Miss Woodhull, where do you find support for such a ridiculous proposition in either amendment?

VICTORIA: *(dryly)* In the text, sir.

(COOK is not amused by VICTORIA's guff. He makes to retort, but BUTLER intercedes and places a warning hand on VICTORIA's arm.)

BUTLER: Burton, please let her speak.

COOK: I did not allow Miss Woodhull into this chamber to make a mockery of the Constitution - or of me.

BINGHAM: Gentlemen, we agreed to hear this petition on its merits. Miss Woodhull, you may continue, but I must request that we all proceed with professionalism.

MARY: *(quietly, to SUSAN)* She has your brand of fiery professionalism, Susan.

VICTORIA: Women are citizens. The 14th Amendment protects the rights of citizens. It grants equal protection of the laws.

(Rep COOK gestures to Chairman BINGHAM, who acknowledges him.)

BINGHAM: Representative Cook.

COOK: Miss Woodhull, that does not apply to any privileges or immunities that are not in the original text of the Constitution.

ELDEREDGE: Yes, the 14th Amendment does not grant you any right you see fit.

VICTORIA: The 15th Amendment states that the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State!

ELDEREDGE: On account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude, Miss Woodhull. On those grounds expressly.

VICTORIA: The citizen who is taxed should also have a voice in the subject matter of taxation.

BINGHAM: Young lady, it is clear to me that you have read the amendments. But unfortunately, I wrote them. I can assure you those amendments do not change or modify the relations of citizens of the State and Nation as they existed under the original Constitution.

VICTORIA: Chairman -

BINGHAM: The prayer of the petitioner is not granted. The Committee on the Judiciary will not consider the matter further.

(BINGHAM and others rise and exit the chamber. VICTORIA is heavy with defeat. The women supporters stay, as do BUTLER and one of his colleagues, Representative WILLIAM LOUGHRIDGE. LOUGHRIDGE approaches VICTORIA.)

BUTLER: Victoria, this is Representative William Loughridge.

LOUGHRIDGE: Miss Woodhull, I want to commend your work on this petition. You should know that you have my support.

VICTORIA: Thank you, Mister Loughridge. You'll forgive me, but I had hoped to gain more than one supporter.

SUSAN: *(approaching VICTORIA)* You did, Miss Woodhull. I'm Susan B. Anthony. This is my sister Mary, my colleague and friend Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and her daughter, Harriot. We need more women like you.

VICTORIA: Unfortunately, we also need more Congressmen like Mister Butler and Mister Loughridge, but they seem to be in short supply.

LOUGHRIDGE: We may have a chance to sway some of the others before the committee submits its official report.

BUTLER: We'll work on them, Miss Woodhull.

LOUGHRIDGE: Yes. Don't abandon hope yet.

(BUTLER and LOUGHRIDGE exit.)

SUSAN: Don't abandon hope yet? How long can we hope if nothing ever happens?

ELIZABETH: Susan, we can't lose heart. Perhaps Victoria would be interested in bringing these ideas to our National Woman Suffrage Association convention.

SUSAN: We postponed the opening, actually, so we could hear you address the committee. My sister rightly noted that you have a fire we're looking for.

MARY: Yes, you're precisely the kind of woman my sister admires, Miss Woodhull.

VICTORIA: What kind of woman would that be, Miss Anthony?

SUSAN: A woman of action. I've grown tired of waiting. I joined this fight nearly 25 years ago.

ELIZABETH: We've hardly stopped fighting since.

MARY: We thought with the 15th Amendment they might think to include us women.

SUSAN: But apparently Chairman Bingham's hand was too tired in writing the amendments to include that voting could not be denied regardless of sex.

HARRIOT: Mother, you've been working on this for 25 years?

ELIZABETH: Yes, Harriot dear, I have.

HARRIOT: Do you think I'll ever get to vote?

ELIZABETH: If I have anything to say about it, you will.

SUSAN: I'm going to do it.

MARY: What are you going to do, dear?

SUSAN: I'm going to vote. I don't care what the committee says in their report. I will vote for president in 1872. I will register and I *will* vote.

VICTORIA: Susan, I tried to vote in the last election, but I was turned away.

SUSAN: We didn't have the amendments then, Victoria. We'll see if the registrars in Rochester know as much about the 14th amendment as Mister Bingham claims to.

(BLACKOUT)

Scene 3 -- (Scene Card: 1872.) Barber shop in Rochester, New York. Susan B. Anthony and her sisters register to vote. A BARBER is in the corner cutting JAMES's hair. JAMES is bombastic and somewhat inebriated. Three REGISTRARS, who are signing up a young VOTER, are seated behind a table with a collection of papers.

BARBER: You boys actually signing anyone up to vote?

REGISTRAR 1: Yes, sir. This fine young man here is going to help pick the president.

VOTER: I sure will. I tell you, I wouldn't but I keep hearing about General Grant and that gold ring. We can't have crooks working with the president!

BARBER: Hold on, son. You're planning to vote for Mr. Greeley then? To be president?

VOTER: He sure writes his newspaper okay.

BARBER: (*gesturing to man in chair*) James, you tell him what it says in the paper, there.

JAMES: Says right here. This reporter says that Greeley's nomination is a result of too much brains and not enough whiskey.

VOTER: (*scoffs*) Who ever heard of too much brains?

JAMES: I've sure never heard of not enough whiskey!

(SUSAN and her sisters GULA, HANNAH, and MARY enter the barber shop.)

BARBER: Sorry, madam. We don't cut women's hair.

SUSAN: That's no matter. I don't need a haircut, but where might I find a registration form?

REGISTRAR 2: (*laughing*) To vote?

JAMES: You must be crazier than this one - and he's voting for Horace Greeley!

REGISTRAR 3: You can't vote.

SUSAN: Well, not yet. We haven't registered.

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REGISTRAR 2: *(still laughing)* Now see, ladies, you go on home and just let your husbands know who you think they ought to vote for.

REGISTRAR 3: They might not listen, but so much for that.

GULA: Why won't you let us register?

REGISTRAR 3: Done said it, haven't I? Women can't vote.

MARY: We thought you might say that.

HANNAH: Susan, have you the Amendment?

SUSAN: Naturally.

(SUSAN pulls a paper from her bag and begins to read the text of the 14th Amendment)

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside.

GULA: We are citizens then aren't we? And as citizens of New York, we will vote.

REGISTRAR 3: No, no. It's New York law that matters here. Citizens vote, but women can't vote in New York.

GULA: But isn't the Constitution the highest law in the land?

REGISTRAR 1: I - yes - but... you can't vote!

SUSAN: Would you like me to read the Amendment again, sir?

REGISTRAR 1: Oh, I recognize you. You're that Anthony woman who's been going around stirring up trouble.

SUSAN: I've been doing nothing of the sort!

JAMES: Anthony?

(Stands and crosses to the Anthony sisters, getting very close to them)

My wife's been reading all that nonsense you and that other Stanton woman have been writing. She's getting all these funny ideas. She says that I should drink less!

HANNAH: *(holding her nose and wafting the scent of James away from her)* Yes, well, perhaps she has a point.

BARBER: *(leading James away)* You know, gentlemen, I actually don't see how it says they can't vote.

VOTER: Neither do I.

JAMES: *(to VOTER)* What do you know? You're voting for a vegetarian!

REGISTRAR 2: I just don't see how we can let them. They - well, I never heard of a woman voting before.

REGISTRAR 3: Precisely. There is simply no way we can allow any of you ladies to register.

(MARY pulls her sisters back from the men to regroup. The REGISTRARS seem to think they have won.)

MARY: If they won't register us, what can we do?

HANNAH: They can't refuse us the vote!

GULA: It seems they can. Have we anything else we can do, Susan?

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SUSAN: We did not come here to be turned away, Gula. We will register and we will vote.

GULA: Perhaps it would be better if we tried next time. Four years is not that long to wait.

HANNAH: It's four years more than I would like.

MARY: And decades more than we should have waited already.

GULA: Yes, but by then the Supreme Court may have had a chance to hear that case from Missouri. Virginia Minor tried to register in October and the registrar wouldn't let her. Now she and her husband are suing. If we wait, we may all soon be able to vote.

SUSAN: Gula, you've had a very good idea.

MARY: But Susan, I thought we were going to vote in this election!

SUSAN: We are.

(Approaching the REGISTRARS again, with as much authority as she can muster)

Gentlemen, if you refuse us our rights as citizens, I will bring charges against you in criminal court and I will sue each of you personally for large, exemplary damages!

GULA: Susan!

REGISTRAR 1: Now, Miss. There's no need for any of that.

SUSAN: I know I can win, too. I have Judge Selden as a lawyer.

REGISTRAR 3: *(to REGISTRAR 1)* We better let them register, Andrew.

REGISTRAR 2: I don't want to have to go up against Judge Selden.

REGISTRAR 1: Alright, alright. Come on and write your names down. Four women voting! Well, I never.

MARY: Oh, yes. There may be more than four. Some more women plan on coming down to register later.

HANNAH: We do hope there won't be any trouble.

(BLACKOUT)

Scene 4 -- *(Scene Card: 1872.) West End News Depot in Rochester, New York. Susan and her sisters lead women to vote. An array of voting booths lines arranged upstage. Downstage a group of voting men, including GEORGE, WALTER and ARTHUR, are standing in line to cast their ballots. WALTER has started drinking and has a bottle in a brown paper bag. Inspectors MARSH, JONES, and DEMOCRAT INSPECTOR are collecting the ballots. They place each certified ballot into a box.*

ARTHUR: What a sorry bunch of candidates this year.

WALTER: I miss the days when there was only one candidate I didn't want to vote for!

(Swigs from the bottle wistfully. SUSAN and her sisters, MARY and HANNAH emerge from behind voting booth curtains, clutching their ballots. They hang back to wait for GULA who is still voting.)

PERUSAL SCRIPT -- Well-Behaved Women by Jes Marbacher

HANNAH: (*teasing SUSAN*) Did you vote for your friend Victoria Woodhull then, Susan?

SUSAN: (*unamused*) Of course not.

MARY: Susan, don't be so --

SUSAN: Yes, I know. She had some good ideas. But then she goes around with all her free-love business and gets her name in the papers for accusing ministers of having affairs.

HANNAH: Well, perhaps you'll have to run for president in the next election then if you want a better woman candidate than Miss Woodhull.

SUSAN: Hannah, if they barely let us vote, do you think they'd ever let us win? A woman president! I say!
(*GULA emerges from her voting booth and moves towards her sisters. SUSAN, MARY, and HANNAH give a quiet cheer.*)

GEORGE: With some of these candidates, it does almost feel like voting in the circus.

WALTER: Talk about voting in the circus, George. (*gestures at GULA*) Will you look at the get up on that fellow?

ARTHUR: Who ever heard of coming in costume to the polls?

GEORGE: Oh. Actually, gentlemen, if I am not mistaken that - well, she might be a woman.

ARTHUR: (*laughing*) With the brains on you George, I'm surprised your name isn't on ballot.

WALTER: (*as GULA, MARY, HANNAH, and SUSAN approach*) No, Arthur. He's right. By George, you're right. Women!

SUSAN: Hello, gentlemen.

ARTHUR: You ladies playing some sort of joke or something?

HANNAH: (*mock confusion*) No. Are you?

WALTER: I actually do know a good one. See, this Methodist walks into a saloon.

ARTHUR: Not now, Walter.

(*ARTHUR stares down the women*)

MARY: (*meeting his stare, exasperated*) Can I help you?

ARTHUR: So what are you doing?

SUSAN: My goodness. The people they let vote these days!

HANNAH: We're voting.

ARTHUR: How do you mean?

MARY: See, sir, this is called a ballot.

SUSAN: Yes, they've gone and put a list of names on it. And you say who you'd like to be president.

GULA: Or in the Congress.

MARY: We're going to hand them to this voting inspector right here, and he'll certify the ballots.

SUSAN: And, then you see, in a few weeks, we'll all find out who the next president is going to be.

(*ARTHUR is dumbstruck. He looks to GEORGE and WALTER for help.*)

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SUSAN: I've voted the Republican ticket straight. They've promised to give women a fair hearing.

WALTER: Well, I'll be!

ARTHUR: You're voting?

SUSAN: Haven't we just said?

GEORGE: (*stifling Arthur*) Your first time?

HANNAH: (*beaming*) Our very first.

GEORGE: And how did you like it?

SUSAN: I have been determined to do it for years, and I must say that it was quite enjoyable.

MARY: Yes, I think I'll do it again. Don't you Hannah?

HANNAH: Of course.

GULA: God willing, I will.

SUSAN: And I hope this morning's telegrams will tell of many women - all over the country trying to vote.

GEORGE: Congratulations to all of you.

GULA: Thank you, sir.

ARTHUR: (*astounded*) George! Don't encourage them.

WALTER: Oh, Arthur! Don't be so dramatic! If the inspectors allow them to certify their votes, then I'll eat a jar of pickled pigs' feet.

ARTHUR: Actually, I quite enjoy pickled pigs feet.

(ARTHUR has reached the front of the line and does not realize it. INSPECTOR MARSH clears his throat.)

ARTHUR: Oh, pardon me.

(Starts to hand over his ballot, then pulls it back)

Actually, I'd rather have these ladies go right ahead of me.

(ARTHUR pulls GEORGE and WALTER out of line. SUSAN approaches INSPECTOR MARSH and hands him her ballot. INSPECTOR MARSH looks down at the ballot, then at SUSAN for a second.)

MARSH: Good morning, Miss.

SUSAN: Good morning.

MARSH: Now, I have to make certain. This is your own vote? It has not been compromised in anyway?

SUSAN: No, sir. It is my own.

MARSH: Very well, then.

(MARSH hands the ballot to INSPECTOR JONES. JONES makes to put the ballot in the box. DEMOCRAT INSPECTOR stops him.)

DEMOCRAT: Now hold on, Jones. What's that you're doing?

JONES: She's registered.

DEMOCRAT: We can't have that. We can't have her voting. It's illegal.

SUSAN: It's not illegal.

MARY: We'd be more than happy to read you the 14th Amendment.

JONES: What do you say, Marsh?

MARSH: I say put it in!

JONES: So do I!

DEMOCRAT: Now, we can't have that! We can't!

MARSH: It's two-to-one. We'll put it in.

DEMOCRAT: You can't be serious.

JONES: We'll fight it out right here on this line - even if it takes all winter!

(DEMOCRAT splutters, then shrugs.)

DEMOCRAT: On your own head be it.

(SUSAN and her sisters pass over their ballots. JONES places them each in the ballot box. SUSAN, MARY, GULA, and HANNAH exit. ARTHUR stares after them in disbelief.)

ARTHUR: Well, if they're voting, I don't even know if there's a point.

GEORGE: If you're that dumb, Arthur, then I wish you wouldn't vote either.

(ARTHUR angrily hands his ballot to MARSH and exits. WALTER takes a long swig from his bottle. GEORGE hands in his ballot.)

GEORGE: *(to MARSH and JONES)* I hope you gentlemen are here when my daughters are old enough to vote.

DEMOCRAT: I wouldn't count on it. I'm sure those women will be thrown in jail before long. And get us thrown in jail, too.

(GEORGE gives DEMOCRAT a look of disgust and exits. WALTER hands in his ballot.)

WALTER: Next year, I'm going to vote in a dress, too.

(BLACKOUT)

Scene 5 -- (Scene Card: 1872.) Anthony home in Rochester, New York. Susan is arrested for illegal voting. Front parlor of the Anthony home in Rochester, New York. SUSAN is writing at her desk while MARY grades some of her students' work.)

SUSAN: I'm almost done my letter to Elizabeth. Would you like me to put anything in from you, Mary?

MARY: Just my regards, dear. I still have all these student papers to read. It will be nice to have a few days rest for the holiday.

SUSAN: I've nearly forgotten what rest is, Mary.

MARY: I know you have, but sometimes I wonder if you haven't had a steam engine put right into your

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stomach, Susan

SUSAN: I can assure you I haven't. But I could do for some tea. I'll put the kettle on, shall I?

MARY: That would be wonderful.

(SUSAN exits. MARY returns to the student papers. There is a knock at the door. MARY rises to answer it and Deputy Federal Marshall ELISHA KEENEY enters.)

KEENEY: Is Miss Anthony in?

MARY: Yes, I am Miss Mary Anthony.

KEENEY: Begging your pardon, I am here to see Miss Susan Anthony.

MARY: May I tell her who's calling, sir?

KEENEY: Pardon me, I am Elisha Keeney. Deputy Federal Marshal Elisha Keeney. I am here on behalf of United States Commissioner William Storrs.

MARY: My sister is a busy woman, Mr. Keeney. But let me see if she has time to speak with you.

(MARY exits. KEENEY is visibly uncomfortable. SUSAN enters, KEENEY turns to face her.)

KEENEY: Ah, Miss Anthony. Very pleasant weather, isn't it?

SUSAN: It is, but I feel that soon it might grow unseasonably cold.

(SUSAN gives KEENEY a pointed look)

KEENEY: Yes, well. It is that time... Er, Miss Anthony? Do you know why I'm here?

SUSAN: Well, I can't say I haven't been expecting you, Deputy Marshall.

KEENEY: Truth be told, we've rather been expecting you to call at Commissioner Storrs' office. Were you not aware?

SUSAN: No, I was. And I sent word to Commissioner Storrs that I had no social acquaintance with him and did not wish to call on him.

KEENEY: Pardon me, Miss, but it isn't quite a social call.

SUSAN: I thought we might run into that difficulty.

(There is an uncomfortable pause.)

SUSAN: Well, you best get on with it, Mr. Keeney. I did have rather a lot I was hoping to do today.

KEENEY: *(uncomfortably)* Well, I am to return to the Commissioner's office. Perhaps you and your sister would like to follow me?

SUSAN: No. I would not. I've just put the kettle on.

KEENEY: Ah, Miss Anthony... well, Mr. Storrs would like to see you.

SUSAN: What for?

KEENEY: To arrest you.

SUSAN: Is that the way you arrest men?

KEENEY: No, Miss, it is not.

SUSAN: *(sighing)* Well, you best do the thing properly, Mr. Keeney.

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(SUSAN puts her arms forward, wrists together and stares at KEENEY. He stares at her, unsure how best to proceed. After a long silence, KEENEY breaks.)

KEENEY: That really won't be necessary.

(Gestures to the door)

Please, Miss Anthony.

(SUSAN exits ahead of KEENEY, who follows her reluctantly.)

(BLACKOUT)

Scene 6 -- *(Scene Card: 1873.) City Hall in Albany, New York. Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton confer with counsel. SUSAN sits alone on a bench in the hallway outside the state house courtroom. JOHN VAN VOORHIS stands nearby, riffling through his papers. ELIZABETH rushes in and finds SUSAN.)*

ELIZABETH: Susan, dear. Mary said I'd find you here.

SUSAN: Yes. Isn't it wonderful?

ELIZABETH: Susan. You've been arrested.

SUSAN: Oh, that's no bother. It's been quite wonderful for publicity as I'm sure you noticed.

ELIZABETH: Yes, it's been all over the papers. I've been busy writing editorials and letters to all our dear suffrage sisters, but they could put you in jail.

SUSAN: If I have to be locked up to unshackle all women, then so be it, Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH: I best get started on writing your speech to give in court then, shall I?

JOHN: Susan?

SUSAN: Yes, John? Pardon me, this is my dear friend Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Elizabeth, this is John Van Voorhis, one of my attorneys.

JOHN: I know you by reputation, of course, Miss Stanton. But Susan, about Miss Stanton writing your speech.

SUSAN: Yes?

JOHN: I'm afraid the judge won't let you testify... unfortunately he issued a ruling that you are not competent.

SUSAN: What on earth gave him that idea?

JOHN: You won't like it.

ELIZABETH: It can't be because she's a woman!

SUSAN: So I was competent enough to teach judges' children, but not to earn as much as a man, to vote like a man, to even defend myself in a court of law as men do?

JOHN: We're fighting it, Susan. Believe me. Here comes Henry. Maybe he has good news for us.

HENRY: *(as he enters)* Well, they raised your bail, Susan. They asked \$1000.

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SUSAN: Raised it? I still won't pay it. So let them charge whatever they may!

ELIZABETH: Yes. What's the difference between 500 and 1000 anyway?

HENRY: I've taken care of it, Susan.

(JOHN is visibly affronted by HENRY's remark. He gives him a searching look that is unnoticed by ELIZABETH and SUSAN, who continue to discuss their plans in earnest. HENRY begins searching his papers and does not pay attention to the discussion.)

ELIZABETH: And Susan, dear, I've already started drafting some speeches for you to give if the Grand Jury returns an indictment.

SUSAN: And then when we get the writ of habeas corpus, we can take this to the Supreme Court. I'll surely need some speeches for that!

HENRY: Susan. We can't get you a writ of habeas corpus now.

SUSAN: What? I thought you and Henry were petitioning --

JOHN: Yes, we were, but now that Henry has paid your bail, you've no way to get your case before the Supreme Court.

SUSAN: But that was the whole point. If they won't let me vote, then I want to take it to the Supreme Court.

JOHN: I'm sorry, Susan. I don't know what Henry was thinking.

SUSAN: (*sharply to HENRY*) Judge Selden!

HENRY: Miss Anthony?

SUSAN: Why have you paid my bail?

HENRY: I wouldn't have you stay in jail.

SUSAN: But John just said we won't be able to take my case before the Supreme Court now. Why would you do this?

HENRY: Miss Anthony, I simply could not see a lady I respected put in jail.

(HENRY exits.)

ELIZABETH: Of all the ridiculous ways to show respect!

SUSAN: Yes. Forget respect! I would have been happier if he had just listened to me!

(BLACKOUT)

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Scene 7 -- (*Scene Card: 1873.*) *Canandaigua courthouse in Canandaigua, New York. The trial of Susan B. Anthony. SUSAN, HENRY SELDEN, and JOHN VAN VORHEES are deep in discussion behind the defense table. Prosecutor Richard CROWLEY is across the room, he is making notations but appears very smug. The JURORS are seated across the courtroom. BAILIFF stands by door to judge's chambers.*)

SUSAN: Henry, this whole trial is utterly ridiculous. I haven't even been allowed to testify!

HENRY: I know. I've prepared a good argument though. Susan, there is law enough not only to protect you in the exercise of your right to vote, but to enfranchise every woman in the land.

SUSAN: That's not what what The New York Times said in the paper. I'm sure you've seen that editorial.

HENRY: I have.

SUSAN: And the Supreme Court upheld the law in Illinois preventing Miss Bradwell from becoming a lawyer.

JOHN: Yes. They did say the 14th Amendment didn't apply, but this trial is not over. Never mind the press. We have a jury to convince.

SUSAN: Yes. I suppose we do.

BAILIFF: All rise.

(All stand. JUDGE WARD HUNT enters and takes his seat. All others sit.)

HUNT: Are we all ready to proceed?

HENRY and CROWLEY: *(together)* Yes, your honor.

(HUNT nods. CROWLEY moves forward.)

CROWLEY: I propose to call Mister John E. Pound to testify.

(POUND enters and takes his seat.)

During the months of November and December, 1872, and January, 1873, were you Assistant United States District Attorney for the Northern District of New York?

POUND: Yes, sir.

CROWLEY: Do you know the defendant, Susan B. Anthony?

POUND: Yes, sir.

CROWLEY: Did you attend an examination before William Storrs, a United States Commissioner, in the city of Rochester, when her case was examined?

POUND: I did.

CROWLEY: Did she give evidence?

POUND: She did.

CROWLEY: Did you keep minutes of evidence on that occasion?

POUND: I did.

(CROWLEY hands POUND papers.)

CROWLEY: Please look at these papers and see if they contain the minutes you kept upon that occasion.

POUND: They do.

CROWLEY: Turn to the evidence of Susan B. Anthony!

SUSAN: (to HENRY) So I am not allowed to testify, but Mister Pound is charged with speaking for me? I was not aware I had become such an accomplished puppeteer.

CROWLEY: Did she, upon that occasion, state that she consulted or talked with Judge Henry R. Selden, of Rochester, in relation to her right to vote?

HENRY: (standing) I object to that upon the ground that it is incompetent. If the Court refuses to allow Miss Anthony to be sworn here, they should be excluded from producing any evidence that she gave elsewhere, especially when they want to give the version which the United States officer took of her evidence.

HUNT: (looks sternly at HENRY, then to CROWLEY) Go on.

CROWLEY: Was she asked, upon that examination, if the advice given to her by Judge Henry R. Selden would or did make any difference to her voting?

POUND: She stated, "I should have made the same endeavor to vote that I did had I not consulted Judge Selden. I didn't consult anyone before I registered. I was not influenced by his advice in the matter at all; I have been resolved to vote for a number of years."

CROWLEY: Thank you, Mister Pound.

(CROWLEY returns to his seat. JOHN stands to question POUND.)

SUSAN: (to HENRY) What does it matter if I spoke to you before or after I registered?

HENRY: It shouldn't. John will question Mister Pound and then I will clear it up. You were convinced of your right to vote. That's all that matters.

JOHN: Mister Pound, was Miss Anthony asked if she had any doubt about her right to vote? And did she answer "Not a particle?"

POUND: She stated "I had no doubt as to my right to vote."

JOHN: There was a stenographer there, was there not?

POUND: A reporter was there taking notes.

JOHN: Was not this question put to her "Did you have any doubt of your right to vote?" and did she not answer "Not a particle?"

HUNT: Well, he's said so, that she had no doubt of her right to vote. Are we done?

HENRY: I beg leave to state, in regard to my own testimony, Miss Anthony informs me that I was mistaken in the fact that my advice was before her registry. She states to me now that she was registered and came immediately to my office.

HUNT: Very well. Mister Pound, you may step down.

(POUND exits. HENRY addresses the jury.)

HENRY: The only alleged ground of illegality of the defendant's vote is that she is a woman. If the same act had been done by her brother under the same circumstances, the act would have been not only innocent, but

honorable. I believe this is the first instance in which a woman has been arraigned in a criminal court, merely on account of her sex.

JOHN: Miss Anthony, and those united with her in demanding the right of suffrage, claim that upon the principles on which our government is founded, every citizen has a right to take part in the formation and administration of government.

HENRY: By virtue of the 14th amendment, I insist that the act of Miss Anthony voting was lawful. Since the adoption of the fourteenth amendment it has never been questioned, and cannot be questioned, that women as well as men are included in the terms, nor that the same "privileges and immunities of citizens" are equally secured to both.

JOHN: Miss Anthony stands now arraigned as a criminal, for taking the only steps by which it was possible to bring this great constitutional question before the country. Her condemnation-under such circumstances, would only add another most weighty reason to those which I have already advanced, to show that women need the aid of the ballot for their protection.

(HENRY and JOHN resume their seats. HUNT removes a folded paper from his pocket and unfolds it.)

SUSAN: What's that? Has he already prepared a decision? Before the end of my trial?

JOHN: He wouldn't be that brazen would --

HUNT: I have given this case such consideration as I have been able to, and, that there might be no misapprehension about my views, I have made a brief statement in writing. *(reading)* The defendant is indicted for having voted in November, 1872. It is charged that the defendant thus voted, she not having a right to vote because she is a woman. Now, the 14th Amendment created and defined citizenship of the United States, but the right of voting is a privilege arising under the Constitution of the State, and not of the United States. The inability of a State to abridge the right of voting on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude, arises from the 15th Amendment. If the 15th Amendment had contained the word "sex," the argument of the defendant would have been potent. The Legislature of the State of New York, however, has seen fit to say that the franchise of voting shall be limited to the male sex. In saying this, there is, in my judgment, no violation of the letter or of the spirit of the 14th or of the 15th Amendment. The voting by Miss Anthony was in violation of the law. Upon this evidence I suppose there is no question for the jury and that the jury should be directed to find a verdict of guilty.

SUSAN: I'm not even to have the dignity of being convicted by a jury?

HENRY: Your Honor, I suppose that it is for the jury to determine whether the defendant is guilty of a crime or not.

HUNT: The question, gentlemen of the jury, is wholly a question of law, and I have decided as a question of law, Miss Anthony was not protected in a right to vote. The result must be a verdict on your part of guilty, and I therefore direct that you find a verdict of guilty.

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HENRY: That is a direction no Court has power to make in a criminal case.

HUNT: Take the verdict, Mr. Clerk.

HENRY: I certainly must object to the refusal of the Court to submit those propositions, and especially to the direction of the Court that the jury should find a verdict of guilty. I claim that it is a power that is not given to any Court in a criminal case. Will the Clerk poll the jury?

HUNT: No. Gentlemen of the jury, you are discharged.

(The jurors file out, except JUROR 3, who hangs back inconspicuously.)

JOHN: *(to SUSAN)* We'll prepare a motion for a new trial. This cannot stand.

HUNT: Now, has the prisoner anything to say why sentence shall not be pronounced?

SUSAN: Yes, your honor, I have many things to say; for in your ordered verdict of guilty, you have trampled under foot every vital principle of our government. My natural rights, my civil rights, my political rights, my judicial rights, are all alike ignored. Robbed of the fundamental privilege of citizenship, I am degraded from the status of a citizen to that of a subject; and not only myself individually, but all of my sex, are, by your honor's verdict, doomed to political subjection under this, so-called, form of government.

HUNT: The Court cannot listen to a rehearsal of arguments the prisoner's counsel has already consumed three hours in presenting.

SUSAN: May it please your honor, I am not arguing the question, but simply stating the reasons --

HUNT: The Court cannot allow the prisoner to go on.

SUSAN: But your honor will not deny me this one and only poor privilege of protest against this high-handed outrage upon my citizen's rights. May it please the Court to remember that since the day of my arrest last November, this is the first time that either myself or any person of my disenfranchised class has been allowed a word of defense before judge or jury—

HUNT: The prisoner must sit down—the Court cannot allow it.

SUSAN: All of my prosecutors, from --

HUNT: The Court must insist—the prisoner has been tried according to the established forms of law.

SUSAN: Yes, your honor, but by forms of law all made by men, interpreted by men, administered by men, in favor of men, and against women. Women must, to get their right to a voice in this government, take it, and I have taken mine and mean to take it at every possible opportunity.

HUNT: The Court orders the prisoner to sit down. It will not allow another word.

SUSAN: When I was brought before your honor for trial, I hoped for a broad and liberal interpretation of the Constitution and its recent amendments, that should declare all United States citizens under its protection. But failing to get this justice — failing, even, to get a trial by a jury *not* of my peers — I ask not leniency at your hands, but rather the full rigors of the law.

HUNT: The court must insist --

(SUSAN sits down. HUNT looks momentarily relieved, then remembering he must sentence SUSAN

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and she needs to stand for him to do so:)

HUNT: The prisoner will stand up.

(SUSAN stands.)

HUNT: The sentence of the Court is that you pay a fine of one hundred dollars and the costs of the prosecution.

SUSAN: May it please your honor, I shall never pay a dollar of your unjust penalty. And I shall earnestly and persistently continue to urge all women to the practical recognition of the old revolutionary maxim: Resistance to tyranny is obedience to God.

(Lighting change. All exit except JUROR 3, who crosses in front of the bench.)

JUROR 3: If I could have spoken, I should have answered “not guilty,” and the men in the jury box would have sustained me.

(BLACKOUT)

Scene 8 -- *(Scene Card: 1876.) Centennial Celebration outside Independence Hall in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Suffragettes argue for women’s rights. One of the stage half is in darkness. On the other half, SUSAN is sitting on a soap box surrounded by MARY, ELIZABETH CADY STANTON, HARRIOT, and MATILDA JOSLYN GAGE. ELIZABETH has a letter in her hands.)*

ELIZABETH: Susan may have told you I wrote to the President of the Centennial Commission.

HARRIOT: Joseph Hawley?

MARY: *(mock pompously)* General Joseph Hawley.

HARRIOT: Mother, you requested to read your declaration at the Centennial?

MATILDA: She certainly did. After Susan, your mother and I spent so much time writing it, it needs to be read.

ELIZABETH: Not exactly. We requested to present a copy of the Declaration to the President.

MARY: I suppose that’s something.

ELIZABETH: Yes. Well, we’ve finally received our reply from General Hawley.

MATILDA: That’s good news!

SUSAN: I wouldn’t say just yet, Matilda. Let’s give Elizabeth a chance to read it first!

(ELIZABETH holds the letter up ceremoniously, then opens it and begins to read aloud.)

ELIZABETH: Dear Madam --

HARRIOT: A strong start!

(Others shush her.)

ELIZABETH: *(reading)* I send you, with pleasure, half a dozen cards of invitation. As the platform is already crowded, it is impossible to reserve the number of seats you desire.

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(All groan.)

SUSAN: I suspect worse news yet is coming.

ELIZABETH: I regret to say it is also impossible for us to make any change in the programme at this late hour.
We are crowded for time to carry out what is already proposed.

(Next THREE at once:)

MATILDA: As though it would take more than a minute!

HARRIOT: Well, I never!

MARY: What a lot of nonsense!

SUSAN: *(quieting the others)* Did he say anything else, Elizabeth?

ELIZABETH: Yes. He goes on to say...

(reading again)

Undoubtedly, we have not lived up to our own original Declaration of Independence in many respects. Presenting your Declaration of Rights of the Women of the United States would allow it to become a historical part of the proceedings. I understand the full significance of your very slight request. If granted, it would be the event of the day – the topic of discussion to the exclusion of all others. I am sorry to refuse so slight a demand; we cannot grant it.

(All are silent for a moment as the letter sinks in.)

ELIZABETH: Well, Lucretia Mott and I expected as much and have already been planning our own convention. We'll hold it the same day. The First Unitarian Church will have us.

SUSAN: I'm still going to the celebration.

HARRIOT: There won't be any point...

SUSAN: Oh, yes there will, Harriot! Once we've taken our seats, who will stop us standing up?

(Light change to illuminate other half of the stage where RICHARD HENRY LEE is at a podium reading the Declaration of Independence to a crowd. Senator THOMAS FERRY stands beside him with Gen. HAWLEY. ELIZABETH exits. SUSAN and remaining women head toward the stage.)

LEE: And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

(As LEE finishes reading and descends, SUSAN climbs on stage. HAWLEY and FERRY are visibly affronted.)

SUSAN: Sir, allow me to present, on behalf of the women of this country, a new declaration.

(She holds up the declaration.)

A Declaration of Rights of the Women of the United States.

(FERRY bows as SUSAN hands him the declaration. The women move throughout the crowd handing out copies as SUSAN climbs down from the stage. The crowd is in a state of excitement. Some men stand on their chairs to ask for a copy.)

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HAWLEY: Order, order!

(SUSAN moves to her soap box outside and climbs upon it. MATILDA holds an umbrella over her. Some men from the celebration have followed SUSAN to hear her speak.)

SUSAN: While the nation is buoyant with patriotism, and all hearts are attuned to praise, it is with sorrow we come to strike the one discordant note, on this 100th anniversary of our country's birth. We do rejoice in the success, thus far, of our experiment of self-government. Yet we cannot forget, even in this glad hour, that while all men of every race and clime and condition, have been invested with the full rights of citizenship under our hospitable flag, all women still suffer the degradation of disenfranchisement.

(BLACKOUT)

12 more pages make up ACT 2