

SAINT SUSAN

by

Marsha L. Grant

An historical dialogue based on the life of Susan B. Anthony. "She gave to the Cause every moment of her life, every dollar she could beg or earn, and to her belongs the love and gratitude of every woman in the world's history. We, your daughters in the spirit, rise and call you blessed."
--Carey Thomas, Pres. Bryn Mawr College, 1905.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to Lynn Sherr's PBS broadcast on the life of Susan B. Anthony, which sparked my interest in this remarkable woman, and Sherr's book, *Failure is Impossible*, which she calls a collection of delicious sound bites. As much as possible the dialogue in the play was excerpted from speeches, letters, and diaries written by Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Frederick Douglass, Ernestine Rose, Isabella Beecher Hooker, M. Carey Thomas, Carrie Chapman Catt, Lucy Stone, and transcriptions of speeches given by Sojourner Truth. Source materials were:

Susan B. Anthony, A Biography, by Kathleen Barry.

The Life and Work of Susan B. Anthony, by Ida Husted Harper.

The History of Woman Suffrage, Vol I-IV, by Anthony, Stanton, Harper.

Eighty Years and More, by Elizabeth Cady Stanton

*Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division,
National American Woman Suffrage Association Collection;*
www.loc.gov

The Papers of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, ed. Ann D. Gordon, et al (Columbia, SC: Model Editions Partnership, 1999)
<http://adh.sc.edu>

This historical drama was designed to bring an audience face-to-face with two very real women whose words speak to us just as forcefully today as when first spoken over a century ago. In modern dress they could be the women of NOW. If litigators and judges squirm uncomfortably during the re-enactment of the trial, *The United States vs Susan B. Anthony*, let me reassure them that the essential testimony and verdict were extracted verbatim from the original trial transcript. In a published interview with Susan Anthony in 1896, Nellie Bly gives us a sense of Anthony's personality: "In disposition (she) is very lovable...always good-natured and sunny tempered. She has a remarkable memory and in speaking is both eloquent and witty. She keeps an audience laughing...enjoys a good joke and can tell one. She never fails to see the funny side of things though it be at her own expense."

M. L. Grant 1998

CAST OF CHARACTERS

13 Women, 9 Men, (all ages) plus extras – The cast list may be shortened if roles are doubled; for example, the same actor might play the reporter, a teacher, a factory girl and a farmer's wife. Ideally, the roles offer opportunities for experienced actors as well as novices. In the original production the roles of Anthony and Stanton were double cast by two women in their 80's and two in their 40's which made the fast cross fade from the end of the Prologue to I-1 particularly effective. This is an option left to the director. The trial scene could be played by either the younger or elder Anthony. The roles of Sojourner Truth and Sara were played by the same actor. All of the roles represent historical characters and age is not a determinate except for Anthony and Stanton. Running time 1:50 hrs.

Susan B. Anthony-the younger & elder	Nellie Bly
Elizabeth Cady Stanton-the younger & elder	Judge Ward Hunt
Carrie Chapman Catt	President Davies
Ernestine Rose	District Attorney Richard Crowley
Catherine Beecher	Defense Attorney Henry Selden
Isabella Beecher Hooker	Deputy Marshall Keeney
Lucy Stone	Inspector Edwin Marsh
Sojourner Truth/Sara	Frederick Douglass
Phoebe Harris Phelps	William Lloyd Garrison
Molly Greeley	Horace Greeley
Factory girls & farmer's wives	Male & female teachers

PRODUCTION NOTES

Speeches may be underscored and scenes bridged with piano or electronic keyboard using familiar tunes in the public domain. Suggestions contained in the script are optional, and at the discretion of the director.

Members of the cast may be seated in the audience during the Prologue and trial scene. Male patrons who agree to be jurors may be called to the stage by Deputy Keeney at the opening of Act III and seated on the benches. They will be escorted off stage at the appropriate time, never speaking a word. All speeches are to be directed to the audience.

Open staging with minimal props, stage furniture, and cross fades via area lighting will enable the scenes to flow seamlessly from one into the other during Acts I and II. Except for the trial scene, a small tea table with two chairs and three or four simple wooden benches are all that is necessary. The benches may be used for the jurors in the trial scene, adding only two tables and 3 chairs for Susan and the attorneys, a judge's bench and witness chair. Jurors and witnesses enter from the audience.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Prologue (1900) Washington DC, Stanton's home in NYC
Act I-1 (1851-53) Stanton's home in Seneca Falls NY; a rural town in NY, NYC
Act I-2 (1856-58) Seneca Falls, Baltimore MD.
Act II (1860-65) Seneca Falls, Boston MA, NYC, Albany NY, Leavenworth KS,
Act III-1 (1873) Canadaigua NY.
Act III-2 (1890) Rochester, NY
Act III-3 (1900) Stanton's home in NYC
Epilogue (1920) Washington DC

PROLOGUE - 1900

[AT RISE CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT, & SUSAN ARE SPOTLIGHTED CS, SEATED ON THE APRON WHICH MAY BE DECORATED WITH BASKETS OF FLOWERS OR GREENERY. IT IS THE OCCASION OF MISS ANTHONY'S 80TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION. A SMALL TEA TABLE AND TWO CHAIRS ARE PRESET ON STAGE RIGHT, 3 or 4 PLAIN WOODEN BENCHES PRESET ON STAGE LEFT. AS THE AUDITORIUM DARKENS, CATT RISES AND GIVES OPTIONAL OPENING ANNOUNCEMENTS, THEN ADDRESSES THE AUDIENCE.]

CATT: Ladies and gentlemen, some movements in history have been brought about by a stroke of the pen, some by a sudden uprising of the people; others have come slowly as the result of years of effort, and represent the gradual growth of conviction. Two generations ago, Miss Susan B. Anthony and Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton wrote the trumpet calls to freedom that began and carried forward the emancipation of women. During that time Miss Anthony has given to the Cause every year, every day, every moment of her life, and every dollar she could beg or earn. To her belongs by right, the love and gratitude of all women in the world's history. We your daughters in the spirit rise and call you blessed. (All rise and applaud)

SUSAN: I wish you could realize with what joy and relief I retire from the presidency of the Woman's Suffrage Association—not because I am unable to do the work--I am good for at least another decade, and Yankee enough to watch every potato that goes in the pot-- but because I wish to see the organization in the hands of those who will manage it in the future, and scold them if they do not do it well. A great many doors are now open to us. But the one which guarantees us the greatest freedom of all is still firmly shut. So, my friends, you'll find me stumping the halls of Congress, and smack-dab in the middle of every quadrennial bluster until the United States ratifies the 16th amendment giving women the right to vote. (applause) Now, gentlemen, you may commence your attack.

1st MALE VOICE FROM THE AUDIENCE: Miss Anthony, surely you have seen how degrading politics can be. I can't believe that any refined and delicate woman would willingly tread its muddy waters.

SUSAN: Since politics in this country has been the sole territory of men for the past hundred years, is your confession one of success or failure? (women respond with "hear, hear.")

2nd MALE VOICE: Ladies and gentlemen, let us not forget that the founding fathers of this Republic extended the franchise to those citizens

they felt worthy and capable of assuming the grave responsibilities of government.

SUSAN: In New York and Ohio the franchise is extended to anyone twenty-one years of age, with the exception of idiots, lunatics, and convicts. Now I ask you, sir, into which category would you place your wife?

3rd MALE VOICE: Miss Anthony, do you believe that women will ever have full suffrage in this country?

SUSAN: I most assuredly do! We can no more deny the right of self-government to one-half our people than we could keep the Negro in bondage. It will not be wrought by the same disrupting forces that freed the slave, but it will come. I have been attending woman's rights conventions here in Washington for thirty years, and have presided over a great many of them. The honors you bestow upon me in my 80th year, I accept not for myself, but in the name of the Cause. During the fifty years I have worked to advance it, I have been jeered, ridiculed, cut down, and vilified, but all that dims before the bright young faces I see before me, dedicated young women who will carry it forward after I am gone. Now, it is time for me to step down and turn the gavel over to my duly elected successor, Carrie Chapman Catt. (applause)

CATT: Your president, if you please, but Miss Anthony's successor, never! When she began her labors there were no women's organizations. Now they number in the thousands. I shall not be your leader as Miss Anthony has been, but merely an officer in this association. (she hands Susan a bouquet of white lilies) Mrs. McKinley shakes hands with you spiritually and sends you these lovely flowers.

SUSAN: Thank you, Catt. Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you all for the many expressions of gratitude and kindness that we have listened to today. If I have one regret, it's that Mrs. Stanton could not be with us. I would have accomplished nothing without her.

[CROSS FADE TO STANTON AT AGE 85, VISIBLY ILL AND BLIND. SHE SITS ON ONE OF THE BENCHES SL, HER LEGS COVERED BY A BLANKET. SUSAN CROSSES AND SITS BESIDE HER, TAKING HER HAND]

SUSAN: How are you feeling today?

STANTON: The same as yesterday and the day before. An agile brain trapped in a useless body. Did they ask about me?

SUSAN: You were sorely missed.

STANTON: They thought it strange, no doubt. . .

SUSAN: (jokingly) That we were not joined at the hip?

STANTON: I fear that they have forgotten me, my small contributions...

SUSAN: Mrs. Stanton, you are the mother of us all. Without you, I would have been but a voice crying in the wilderness.

STANTON: (reflectively) What a pair we made. You, a quiet, dignified Quaker girl. . . and I, a plump, jolly matron, scarcely five feet high. My dear, I liked you thoroughly from the beginning. Whenever I saw my stately friend striding across the lawn, I knew that the sons of Adam were soon to be set on their ears.

SUSAN: We complemented one another...did better work together than either of us could have done alone...

STANTON: I was the better writer...

SUSAN: And I, the better critic. I supplied the facts and statistics...

STANTON: And I, the philosophy and rhetoric.

SUSAN: You were so bold and flamboyant, hair bobbed in the modern style, outfitted in Miss Bloomer's new costume...

STANTON: Humph! I was nursing my fourth, and you were a constant thorn in my side, urging me to get back into the fray.

[CROSSFADE TO SUSAN AND STANTON AS YOUNG WOMEN AT THE TEA TABLE SR.]

ACT I, Scene 1
1851 - 1853

[STANTON, AGE 36, IS SITTING AT THE TEA TABLE WITH SUSAN, AGE 31]

SUSAN: Mrs., Stanton, it grieves me no end that you give yourself over to baby making, and leave poor, brainless me to do battle alone.

STANTON: (pouring tea) Susan, stop! Say not one more word, for I swear to you that while I am tending my babies, I shall not be tormented with suffering humanity.

SUSAN: You have one babe in the cradle and three at your knee. How long must I await your pleasure?

STANTON: Patience, my dear. You and I have the prospect of a good long life. We shall not be in our prime before fifty.

SUSAN: Mrs. Stanton, I refuse to spend the next twenty years sitting quietly through male dominated meetings.

STANTON: Oh, I know! It brings me to the boiling point! I feel that if I cannot use my tongue on important issues, I shall die of intellectual repression...a woman's rights convulsion. (beat) Tell me, what did the "gentlemen" accomplish at the Temperance conference?

SUSAN: The first day was spent crowding a woman off the platform; the second day, gagging her; and the third, voting that she remain gagged.

STANTON: Did she try to force the question of woman's rights?

SUSAN: She simply asked her privilege as a delegate.

STANTON: And the delegates' response?

SUSAN: Disgraceful. A mob of rowdies spat out obscenities, and shouted for her to sit down, shut up, or get out.

STANTON: Susan, I do beg of you, waste no more powder on the Temperance Society. We have bigger fish to fry. I know that Slavery is the all-absorbing issue of today, but we need to push forward the great central question that underlies all others.

SUSAN: Mrs. Stanton, what we need to do is call a Woman's Rights convention and establish a platform as we see the need.

STANTON: I called a woman's rights convention three years ago. A more helpless body of women I've yet to meet. You would have thought I was asking them to construct a steam engine from memory. It was the general consensus that we must elect male officers in order to justify our organization, and since that was in direct contradiction to my intent and purpose; I disassociated myself from the group.

SUSAN: But you planted the seed of revolution. Let's try again and see if it has borne fruit.

STANTON: Women must first be educated and enlightened in order to see the degraded position assigned to them.

SUSAN: Whenever I converse with women, they plead the lack of time and money.

STANTON: Woman will have no true freedom until she holds her own purse strings.

SUSAN: But how can this be if a wife is denied the right to her individual and joint earnings?

STANTON: The demand must be made by petitions to the legislature, and I suppose the work could commence by first holding a convention and adopting some plan of united action.

SUSAN: Mrs. Stanton, we might as well be great Newfoundland dogs baying at the moon as to be petitioning for the passage of bills without the right of suffrage.

STANTON: My dear, it's the only legal recourse we have available to us. Some days I pace up and down like a caged lioness longing for the freedom men take for granted. My husband may walk at will the whole wide world, but I'm compelled to hold my noblest aspirations in abeyance in order to be a mother, a nurse, a cook...

SUSAN: Oh, the ineffable joys of maternity! Mrs. Stanton, not another baby is my peremptory command.

STANTON: I promise this will be my last. Woman should take to her soul a purpose and then make circumstance fit that purpose.

SUSAN: What would you have me do?

STANTON: Someone must be the workhorse. You might begin by setting up a committee to write the petitions.

SUSAN: How should they be worded?

STANTON: First, broach the subject of temperance, which has all women in accord. That may vitalize them into speaking and acting on the broader issues.

SUSAN: And the question of marriage and divorce?

STANTON: Man in his lust has regulated this whole question of sexual intercourse long enough. But I do not think the world is ready to discuss the question of marriage relations. I would not initiate it, neither would I avoid it.

SUSAN: Well, Mrs. Stanton, if I am to be your workhorse will you not apply yourself to the writing of articles, tracts, pamphlets... whatever it takes to bring our cause to the public's attention?

STANTON: Susan. . . Susan, I give you my solemn promise, while you canvass the state I will turn my poor children over to the hired help and chain myself to the writing table. Now, you must be prepared to meet with women wherever they gather--homes, churches, and even saloons, if necessary. Don't be discouraged if your initial attempts are rejected. It will not be an easy road.

SUSAN: Mrs. Stanton, I've not traveled any other kind.

[CROSSFADE TO BENCHES. FARMER'S WIVES ENTER HESITANTLY AS SUSAN GREET'S THEM.]

SUSAN: Good afternoon, ladies... come in...come in. Have a seat. I am so pleased to see you. My name is Susan Anthony. When I spoke earlier, my audience was comprised solely of men.

1st WOMAN: Our husbands, Miss Anthony. They would not permit us to come until they checked you out first.

SUSAN: Do they deem me safe enough now?

2nd WOMAN: It isn't customary for a lady to go around making speeches. We heard you were stuck in a snowdrift half the night.

SUSAN: Oh, my yes! The sleigh went over the fence into a cornfield, so the driver disengaged the horses, and we plowed through the drifts on foot. I was never so cold in my entire life.

3rd WOMAN: You're not at all what we expected, Miss Anthony.

SUSAN: What? A two-headed dragon, perhaps?

3rd WOMAN: (giggles) No... one wearing pants

SUSAN: They would have been preferable to these cumbersome skirts and petticoats. I have nothing but the highest praise for the kind woman who took me in, gave up her warm bed for me, and arose at 6 o'clock this morning to fix me a breakfast of fried pork, mashed potatoes, and a dish of the most delicious baked apples I've ever tasted. When I offered her recompense, her husband grabbed the money and stuffed it in his pocket. He had done nothing but sit and watch her work.

4th WOMAN: If I need two cents to buy a darning needle, I have to ask my husband for it, and then explain what it's for.

1st WOMAN: I used to take in boarders to make a little extra, but every penny I made went into my husband's pocket...and out again at the corner saloon. I want to see them places closed for good.

2nd WOMAN: If you don't mind me askin', Miss Anthony, why have you not married?

SUSAN: (lightly) Because the men I wanted, I couldn't get, and those that wanted me, I wouldn't have.

3rd WOMAN: It don't bother you, bein' called an old maid?

SUSAN: (lightly) In my experience an old maid is the cleverest creature I ever saw. But an old bachelor is nothing but a perfect nuisance. (the ladies laugh in response)

4th WOMAN: Is it true what folks say...that you're a heretic?

SUSAN: Ladies, I pray to God every day of my life; not on my knees, but with my work.

1st WOMAN: Miss Anthony, we've heard tell how you've broken up homes, carried on about divorce...

SUSAN: Please, ladies, it has never been my intention to split apart a happy family. But consider the plight of the woman and her children continually abused by a drunk husband and father? No woman should have to remain wife to a drunkard, and no drunkard should remain father to his children.

2nd WOMAN: Miss Anthony, the marriage vow is sacred. Divorce is an offense against God.

SUSAN: Is it God's will that the wife and children of a confirmed drunkard continually suffer his abuse with no means of recourse?

3rd WOMAN: From earliest childhood we are admonished to be meek and seemly in order to attract a husband, and once married, our role is to obey him. The church teaches that man brings logic and wisdom to a marriage, the woman—love and compassion...

SUSAN: Is it logic or wisdom to deprive a mother of her God-given right to care for her children? Is it love and compassion that keeps you totally dependent upon another human being, no matter his condition?

4th WOMAN: Why should I petition the legislature if I have no cause for complaint? Most of the women I know have all the equality they want?

SUSAN: The majority of children are against going to school, but we send them just the same. In every city from Boston to Indianapolis, enlightened women are coming together to challenge the man-made laws that subjugate and degrade them. Can we do no less here?

1st WOMAN: Miss Anthony, the states may soon be at war. Drunk husbands and women's property rights do not overly concern us right now.

SUSAN: We are all afraid that the sin of slavery will thrust this nation into bloody conflict. But of equal concern, is the woman who is held in bondage no different than the black man in the south. So, I beg you, ladies, add your names to our petition for the good of yourselves and your children.

[CROSSFADE TO CENTER SPOTLIGHTING SOJOURNER. FARMER WIVES EXIT]

SOJOURNER: Folks, I'm called Sojourner Truth. I think that twixt the Negroes of the south and the women at the north, all talking about rights, the white men will be in a fix pretty soon. But what's all this here talking about? The man over there says that women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud-puddles, or gives me any best place! And ain't I a woman? I could work as much, and eat as much as a man – when I could get it – and bear the lash as well. I bore thirteen children and seen most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me. And ain't I a woman? That little man in black there, he says women can't have as much rights as men cause Christ wasn't a woman. Well, children, where did your Christ come from? From God and a woman, that's where. Man had nothing to do with it. Now, if the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down all by herself, these women together ought to be able to get it right side up again. Obligated to you for hearing me.

[CENTER SPOTLIGHT WIDENS AS GROUPS OF MEN AND WOMEN ENTER, DRESSED FOR A PARTY. THE GROUPS MOVE APART AND REFORM AS THE SCENE PROGRESSES.]

MAN: Mr. Greeley, women engaged in reform work are a hybrid species, half man, half woman, belonging to neither sex.

GREELEY: They should stick to their own sphere—the domestic circle.

ROSE: Mrs. Hooker, have you noticed that women will do a Herculean task for the “superior” race, but so few will shout for their own freedom. They are so listless it is hard to have patience with them.

HOOKER: Mrs. Rose, a large majority of American women regard suffrage as an act of oppression. Holy scripture inculcates for us a higher sphere apart from public life. Why risk this precious certainty for a doubtful good.

ROSE: Fol-da-rol! It was not because the three-penny tax was so exorbitant that our Revolutionary fathers fought and died, but for the principle that one class may not usurp the power to legislate for another.

MAN: I'll tell you what the leaders of this Woman's Rights convention want. They want to vote, and to hustle with the rowdies at the polls. They want to be members of Congress, and in the heat of debate, subject themselves to coarse jests and indecent language.

D.A.: If they run with the horses, they must expect to be betted on.

HOOKER: Well, Mrs. Rose, I wish to be counted with Miss Anthony's people. She is, without doubt, a woman of incorruptible dignity.

ROSE: We are always pleased to see a new face in the ranks, Mrs. Hooker. So many have dropped by the wayside to become husband and baby tenders.

GARRISON: I don't see how an old maid who has neglected to fill the position God created for her can lecture married women on topics she should be innocently ignorant of.

SOJOURNER: Since you was never a slave, Mr. Garrison, you ought to quit lecturing on slavery.

[SUSAN ENTERS]

MRS.GREELEY: Susan, my dear. I'm so glad you could join my little soiree. The Woman's Rights convention is on everyone's lips this evening. Please extend my congratulations to Mrs. Stanton. She will make a fine leader of our organization.

SUSAN: She sends her apologies, Mrs. Greeley, but she has babies to tend, and speeches to write.

MRS. GREELEY: Then the petition drive was successful.

SUSAN: Mrs. Greeley, I had doors slammed in my face, was thrown out of assembly halls, and called all manner of rude names, but we obtained over twenty thousand signatures, so the effort was indeed a success.

MRS. GREELEY: Excellent. Now, tell me, how is your family?

HOOKER: I feel certain that among my close circle of friends, some may be persuaded to join us.

ROSE: Oh, and how do you propose to put starch in the spines of women too long coddled in their feathered nests?

HOOKER: Trust me, Mrs. Rose. I plan to rattle some bones.

MAN: Mr. Greeley, how would you characterize Mrs. Stanton's opening address?

GREELEY: To untaught minds she was a wonderful phenomena in her knowledge of history and the Constitution—so glibly did her tongue convey its explanation and exposition. To the well-informed, it was all balderdash, coupled with a lamentable ignorance or a guilty intention to misrepresent. Outside of that, her argument was well stated, and her deductions logical.

SUSAN: (to Mrs. Greeley) Mother has been a chronic sufferer of this severe cold epidemic. So, I spent the better part of a fortnight superintending the plowing of the orchard and putting the last loads of hay in the barn. Refinished a chest for my sister, Hannah, gave the house a thorough cleaning, and helped Harriet Tubman fit out a slave for Canada.

MRS. GREELEY: Don't you try and do too much, Susan, or the wheel horse will be gone and the chariot will stop.

D.A.: I can't help thinking that while pleading a cause, Mrs. Stone, or Mrs. Stanton might suddenly be taken with the pains of parturition, and give birth to bouncing baby boy right there on the platform. (male laughter)

SUSAN: Lucy Stone, how was your honeymoon?

LUCY STONE: Oh, ever so lovely. I wish you had a good husband, Susan. It's a great blessing.

SUSAN: I doubt that I'll ever marry.

LUCY: A married woman has position and respect. Single, she is nothing...a social outcast.

SUSAN: That's a risk I must take... for I would rather devote my life to amending the state law that denies mothers the guardianship of their own children, than produce a half-dozen more who are not legally my own!

MRS. GREELEY: Sojourner Truth. What an unusual name.

SOUJOURNER: My name was Isabella, but when I left the house of bondage I asked the Lord to give me a new name. He gave me Sojourner because I was to travel up and down the land. I told the Lord I wanted another name, cause everybody else had two names, so He gave me Truth, cause I was to declare the truth to my people.

D.A.: Did you notice that a woman signed the guest book, Mrs. General Saxton? Is that to be the new order of address for the spouses of the military? Mrs. Sergeant Ramrod and Mrs. Major Paine! (hearty male laughter)

LUCY STONE: Mrs. Greeley, now that I occupy a position in which I can not draw the money I earned in my own name, or sign a legal document without being examined to determine if I'm a fool, a minor, or mad, I have begun to doubt my ability to do any work at all.

MRS.GREELEY: Oh, my dear, these are but small annoyances which should not detract from matrimonial bliss. In no time at all, you will have learned all the little tricks a wife uses to twist her husband around her finger.

[FREDERICK DOUGLASS ENTERS. EVERYONE STOPS TALKING AND LISTENS.]

DOUGLASS: Miss Anthony, will you allow me a question?

SUSAN: (in jest) Of course, Mr. Douglass. Anything for a fight.

DOUGLASS: Will granting the right of suffrage to women change anything—in respect to the nature of our sexes? (male laughter)

SUSAN: It will enable her to earn her own bread... make her equal in the competitive struggle for life.

DOUGLASS: That is also true for the black woman—not because she is a woman, but because she is black.

SUSAN: Do you feel divine today, Mr. Douglass...content to earn the money and dole it out to us? Give a man power over my substance, and he has power over my whole moral being.

DOUGLASS: Alexander Hamilton couldn't have said it better. Woman! She has ten thousand modes of grappling with her difficulties. The slave has but one—escape, only to be returned and maimed for life if he is unsuccessful in the attempt. When there were but few houses into which a black man could safely put his head, this woolly head of mine found refuge in Mrs. Stanton's.

[ALL EXIT DURING CROSSFADE TO TEA TABLE. SUSAN JOINS STANTON WHO IS SEATED READING A NEWSPAPER. TEACHERS ENTER LEFT, SIT ON BENCHES AND FREEZE]

SUSAN: Congratulations, Madam President. A great many influential women are now firmly in our camp.

STANTON: You, too, have become something of a celebrity, my dear. Here, read this. (hands her the newspaper)

SUSAN: (reading) “Miss Susan B. Anthony considers it her mission to keep the world, or at least her part of it, in hot water. Gentlemen, take notice.” Well, I hope so!

“In appearance, Miss Anthony typifies the typical old maid... tall, angular, and inclined to be vinegar visaged.” Oh dear! “Susan is lean, cadaverous and intellectual, with the proportions of a file and the voice of a hurdy-gurdy.” How mortifying! With reports such as these, I shall undermine everything we have accomplished.

STANTON: Nonsense! Such unrest will unify women far more quickly than pandering to the prurient male ego. The State teacher's conference convenes in two weeks. Do you still plan to attend and stir that pool of intellectual stagnation?

SUSAN: Indeed, I must, for until every college and university opens its doors to women, she will never be admitted to the higher professions, or properly

educated to her social responsibility. But as I have no natural gift for speaking, you are the one who should be on the platform, Mrs. Stanton, not I.

STANTON: Poppycock! All in the world you need is practice, and forget everything but the thoughts you want to pound into the heads of your audience. While you're about it, abandon the terrible bondage of those long skirts. Miss Bloomer's new costume allows much greater physical freedom.

SUSAN: Should I rise to speak, I want the audience's attention fixed on my words, not my hemline.

STANTON: It's all ginger, cloves, and nutmeg. The weightier the matter of justice, the less you should worry about the tyranny of fashion.

SUSAN: What progress have you made on the address to the state assembly? The Lord knows full well that I can't get up a decent document, so I beg you, for the love of me and the saving of womanhood's reputation. . . .

STANTON: Some revision, a change in wording may be necessary. But I seldom have one hour to sit down and write undisturbed... four boys hallooing for my attention... baking...sewing...

SUSAN: Return to your writing table, Mrs. Stanton. I shall stir the pudding for you, wash the dishes, and bounce your babies on my knee. It is of but a small moment who writes the address, but of a vast moment that it is done well.

[STANTON EXITS. CROSSFADE TO TEACHERS ON THE BENCHES. MR. DAVIES ADDRESSES THEM.]

DAVIES: Gentlemen, the question under discussion is whether women should be added to the Committee for the Location of the Next Annual Meeting. The Chair feels it would set a grievous precedent. We gentlemen enjoy the small talk and frivolities afforded by the fairer sex, but this is a question of practicalities.

[SUSAN ENTERS, SITS ON DOWNSTAGE BENCH, THEN TURNS TO THE WOMAN NEXT TO HER]

SUSAN: For two days I have sat here, and although two-thirds of those attending this conference are women, none have risen to speak. What is even more humiliating, is that the women appear to be perfectly satisfied with the position assigned them. The rebel in my soul will speak...(stands) President Davies...(shocked reaction) Mr. President...

DAVIES: What will the lady have?

SUSAN: I wish to speak to the question under debate.

DAVIES: What school district do you represent, Miss.?

SUSAN: Miss Anthony...Susan B. Anthony. I taught for ten years at a lady's academy in Canajoharie.

DAVIES: Miss Anthony, this conference convened for the edification of New York's public school teachers.

SUSAN: Your notice said that all were welcome who paid the one-dollar registration fee.

DAVIES: That is correct. The public is welcome to listen and learn from the discourse of duly qualified educators.

SUSAN: I, too, am a duly qualified educator, certified by the New York board of regents. I was raised in this state, and attended school here, so I have some knowledge, and certainly a personal interest, in what transpires.

DAVIES: That may be, but if we allowed all former students to air their gripes and opinions, this convention would last well into the next century. (laughter)

SUSAN: It is not my intention to attack the system, but to offer suggestions on how certain inequities might be remedied.

DAVIES: To what inequities do you refer?

SUSAN: For all the gentlemen's talk about raising the social and economic status of teachers, it appears you have failed to grasp the root of the problem.

DAVIES: And you do?

SUSAN: Yes, Mr. President, I believe I do.

DAVIES: What is the pleasure of the convention?

1st MAN: The lady is out of order.

2nd MAN: Gentlemen, I say we can afford to indulge the lady if she will confine her comments to a short space...

DAVIES: All in favor? (weak response of "Aye")

SUSAN: President Davies, ladies, and gentlemen...it seems to me that you fail to comprehend the cause of the disrespect of which you complain. Look around you. Note the vast number of women engaged in the teaching profession. Don't you see that so long as society says woman has not brains enough to be a doctor,

lawyer, or minister, but has plenty to be a teacher, every man of you who condescends to teach, tacitly admits he has no more brains than a woman? (shocked silence)

2nd MAN: Well-spoken, Miss Anthony.

WOMAN: (to the 2nd man) You should not have done that. It will only encourage her to speak again.

SUSAN: Mr. President, in this state there are eleven thousand teachers, and of these, four-fifths are women. Yet from the \$800,000 allocated by the state for teacher's salaries, the women receive only one-third. I believe this reflects the general opinion on the value of women teachers. In order to change public opinion there must be equity in pay, and women must have equal voice with men on decisions of policy and practice.

1st MAN: Point of order, Mr. President. The lady is not speaking to the question.

DAVIES: The Chair asks that Miss Anthony confine herself to the question before this assembly.

SUSAN: I only wish to be thoroughly understood. If teachers are to be accorded the same elevated status as lawyers, doctors, and ministers, the education of women, who comprise the vast majority in our profession, must be equal to that of men.

DAVIES: And how should this problem be addressed?

SUSAN: Co-education of the sexes, Mr. President.

2nd MAN: Objection, Mr. President. That is not a subject for discussion!

SUSAN: Oh, I disagree. I think it's a subject too long ignored by the educators of this state.

DAVIES: What you propose is monstrous...a social evil condemned from every pulpit and by every righteous parent! Close proximity of the sexes can have but one result, and such immorality can not, and will not, be sanctioned by men and women of pure and noble thought.

SUSAN: If children have not the innate strength to resist natural desires and passions, keeping them separated only increases their incompetence.

WOMAN: Miss Anthony's claims are not without precedent. The colleges of Oberlin and Antioch are co-educational.

SUSAN: Yes, but the girls are restricted, whilst the boys are free to ramble over hill and dale. (with levity) If they are afraid the girls will molest the boys in their solitary rambles, they could send someone to protect them. Common justice demands that girls--however dangerous--should enjoy similar freedom. If boys and girls are permitted to attend picnics together, it certainly will not injure them to use chalk at the same blackboard.

1st MAN: Point of order, Mr. President. . .

SUSAN: So, I ask the members of this convention to adopt a resolution stating that that it is the duty of all schools, colleges, and universities to open their doors to both sexes in order to give women the same educational advantages as are currently afforded to men. (sits)

2nd MAN: Mr. President, I move to strike Miss Anthony's resolution. It is inappropriate and out of order.

MRS. PHELPS: (stands) Mr. President, before any further discussion by this assembly, I have two resolutions I wish to see adopted.

DAVIES: You are out of order, Mrs. Phelps.

WOMAN: Mr. President, I move we suspend the rules in order for Mrs. Phelps to be heard at this time.

SUSAN: I second.

MRS. PHELPS: Thank you. Resolved: that this association recognize the right of female teachers to share in all the privileges and deliberations of this body. Resolved: that teachers' salaries shall be regulated according to the amount of labor performed with no distinction regarding the sex of the laborer.

[SUSAN MOVES INTO SPOTLIGHT CENTER STAGE]

SUSAN: (to the audience) To the utter amazement and discomfiture of President Davies, these resolutions were passed unanimously by the 500 teachers in attendance. The world moves! Next stop on the road, the New York State Assembly.

[TEACHERS EXIT DURING CRISSEFADE]

ACT I, Scene 2
1854-58

[STANTON IS SPOTLIGHTED CENTER STAGE ADDRESSING THE AUDIENCE AS SHE CONCLUDES HER SPEECH TO A SPECIAL ASSEMBLY OF THE NEW YORK LEGISLATURE]

STANTON: In conclusion, gentlemen, we, the daughters of the Revolutionary heroes of '76, demand at your hands the redress of our grievances, a revision of your state constitution, a new code of laws. If you regard marriage as a civil contract, then let it be subject to the same laws which control all other contracts. A wife who is beholden to no law except that of her husband's, is subject to the bloated conceit of Petruchios, who seem to say:

I will be master of what is mine own;
She is my goods, my chattels; she is my house,
My household stuff, my field, my barn,
My horse, my ox, my ass, my anything...

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Who are these people that signed your petitions, Mrs. Stanton? Nothing but women and children.

STANTON: Why shouldn't women's names be as powerful as men's? They would be if they had the power to vote.

[CROSSFADE TO TEA TABLE. SUSAN & STANTON ENTER REMOVING THEIR CLOAKS AND HATS]

SUSAN: (angrily pacing back and forth) Would to God they knew the burning indignation that fills my soul. All those weeks, yea months, I trudged through pouring rain, sleet, mud, snow, to beg and plead with indifferent and reluctant women to sign our petitions...twenty thousand in all...and you at your writing table...formulated such a powerful plea that even the most fevered opposition could do naught but what we asked...and they laughed at us! Laughed! It was all a joke to them! Every little stripling of twenty-one, half drunk, half nothing, may stagger to the ballot box and make his vote count, while the political opinion of the most intelligent and superior woman is worth no more than an idiot's. Oh! I have never been so angry and humiliated!

STANTON: I, too, am bitterly disappointed.

SUSAN: What shall we do now?

STANTON: Try harder next time.

SUSAN: And if we fail?

STANTON: My dear, failure is impossible! (beat) Now, my condition precludes further public appearances...

SUSAN: Mrs. Stanton, you promised, no more!

STANTON: Mr. Garrison is mounting a campaign to protest the expansion of slavery into western states. He has asked if you would lend your organizational skills...

SUSAN: (sarcastically) Mr. Garrison is somewhat conflicted over the role woman's rights should play in his Boston wing of the Anti-slavery League, and the ladies wear their good works like fashionable new bonnets.

STANTON: Then turn your talents to the woman's Bible committee. We could use a dose of your good common sense.

SUSAN: (heatedly) Mrs. Stanton, how many times must I remind you that I don't want my name associated with any woman's Bible. You'll have to fight that battle alone. But you might put some women on your committee who have read the King James all the way through.

STANTON: Well! If you have become weak and truckling, have lost your will to fight, lack the insight...

SUSAN: What you propose violates the right of individual judgment.

STANTON: Rewriting the Holy Scriptures from a feminine point of view does not violate anyone's judgment except the men who twist God's Commandments in order to keep women subjugated.

SUSAN: You will alienate women who profess orthodox beliefs.

STANTON: Our plan is to rewrite only those passages derogatory to women. And it may quiet those who say we are agnostics. Some say you don't believe in God because you call a meeting to order without the benefit of prayer.

SUSAN: Owing to my Quaker training I consider the Bible historical, made up of traditions, not a plenary inspiration.

STANTON: Women must be emancipated from the superstitions of the past before suffrage will be of any benefit.

SUSAN: And I say just the reverse. Women must be enfranchised before they can be emancipated from their superstitions.

STANTON: If we get rid of religious bigotry, then political rights will follow.

SUSAN: No! Get political rights first and religious bigotry will melt like dew before the morning sun. Rewriting the Bible is as useless as denying Canada to a runaway slave.

STANTON: Susan, when did you start pandering to public opinion, like the Republicans do?

SUSAN: Mrs. Stanton, when the World Temperance Society condemned us as pernicious heretics, I said to them, men are more likely to follow a saloon keeper's advice than a Bible thumper's, and was publicly criticized for my flippancy. I am not your enemy.

STANTON: Then you should recognize that it is no less impious to criticize those pages in the Bible which degrade women than it is to criticize the laws on our statute books which degrade her.

SUSAN: It will be the ultimate irony if your liberal intent fosters petty espionage, a revival of the Spanish inquisition, subjecting to spiritual torture, anyone who speaks or writes against the tenets you propose. If our platform is not wide enough to hold women of all faiths, or of no faith, then I do not wish to stand upon it. We seek political and social reform, not religious. So, I repeat...I will neither promote, nor sanction something so useless, and potentially dangerous, as a woman's Bible.

STANTON: And I will not keep butting heads with you. If we are to disagree, then let us do so amicably. (they pause to cool their heated tempers) What will you do now?

SUSAN: While you produce the next generation of workers, Mrs. Stanton, I will mend my frocks and petticoats and go south with Mrs. Rose.

[CROSSFADE TO ROSE PACKING HER SUITCASE BY THE BENCHES.
SUSAN CROSSES TO HER]

SUSAN: Mrs. Rose, there is no promptness, no order, no anything about these southerners. What an astonishing number of servants have attended to my needs in this boarding house. Three northern girls could do the work of a dozen of these, whether slaves or free. (black maid enters)

SARA: You want some help, Miss?

ROSE: No, thank you. We're finished now. What is your name?

SARA: Sara, Miss.

ROSE: Are you free, Sara?

SARA: No, Miss!

ROSE: Do you belong to Mrs. Walters?

SARA: No, Miss, she hires me of my Master for \$8 a month.

ROSE: Do you get any portion of it?

SARA: No, Miss, only my Master give me my clothes.

ROSE: Does he keep you well clothed?

SARA: Sometimes, Miss, and sometimes I get short.

ROSE: Do you have any pocket money of your own?

SARA: Only what the ladies give me, Miss.

ROSE: (handing Sarah some coins) Then please take this.

SUSAN: Are you married, Sarah?

SARA: I was, then my master sold me up north.

SUSAN: Children?

SARA: Three, Miss. Two of my husband, one of my master.

SUSAN: Where are they now?

SARA: One dead, other two got sold. (Susan turns away in horror) If you want me, Miss, I be down in the kitchen. (exits)

SUSAN: Mrs. Rose, I've heard stories of families brutally separated by slavery. Here in this room, I finally meet the cold reality and it chills my blood.

ROSE: The degradation of slavery, the ownership of one human being by another. . . It defies redemption, yet our leaders continue to engage in philosophical and political debates. How blind are those who do not see.

SUSAN: With what ease I became accustomed to the cursed influence that is all around us. This noon I ate my dinner without once asking myself, are these human beings who minister to my wants, slaves to be bought and sold and hired out at the will of a master? The thought never entered my mind.

ROSE: Personal soul-searching merely conforms to your private morality. It does not produce political action.

SUSAN: What would you have me do, Mrs. Rose?

ROSE: Words no longer suffice, my dear. The red tide is upon us. Come, it is time we depart. [SARA ENTERS]

SARA: (to Susan) Miss, this come for you.

SUSAN: Thank you, Sara. (opens it, scans the page, gasps in horror and sits) It's from my sister, Mary. (reading) Yesterday received the awful news of the Osawatomi raid. Mr. Mowry, who was in the battle, arrived in town saying fifty were killed, twenty survived. Father brought home the Democrat giving a list of killed, wounded and missing, and the name of our Merritt is not therein, but oh! the slain are sons, brothers and husbands of others as dearly loved and sadly mourned.

SARA: Your family, Miss?

SUSAN: Merritt is my brother.

[BLACKOUT]

ACT II
1860-1865

AT RISE SUSAN AND STANTON ARE AT THE TEA TABLE. STANTON HAS HER HEAD BURIED IN THE TRIBUNE.]

SUSAN: (Angrily) Mrs. Stanton, the country is at war, free speech is tarred and feathered, exiled and hung. In Washington it is subject to bluster, threat, insult and ridicule. In Boston the very sprigs of fashion choke it down with perfume. The anti-slavery leagues have brushed the suffrage movement aside, and you say you must attend to your domestic duties. How you can excuse yourself is more than I can understand.

STANTON: Susan, you have become a thorn in my side. Have I not burnt the midnight oil preparing all manner of tracts, resolutions, petitions, newspaper articles...

SUSAN: Which Mr. Greeley buries between the obituaries and the classifieds...

STANTON: I do what I can with pen and brain.

SUSAN: But refuse every invitation to speak.

STANTON: Is there not a sufficient number-- Ernestine Rose, Lucy Stone, yourself...

SUSAN: Lucy has become a baby tender like yourself.

STANTON: Then go pester the dickens out of Lucy instead of me.

SUSAN: Not one of our leaders has the rhetorical flair for discourse as you, Mrs. Stanton.

STANTON: And no one is more relentless than you.

SUSAN: If I must go dragging about from one despicable hotel to another, we can at least have the comfort of doing it together.

STANTON: Susan, I find there is no use saying no to you. And I suppose that if I must be subject to a tyrant, I prefer one of my own sex.

SUSAN: (with feeling) Mrs. Stanton, our work is one, and we should be together.

STANTON: Then let the men press their uniforms and polish their swords, for Lo! Saint Susan hath sounded the mighty trumpet calling forth the women of this mighty nation to march into battle and secure the ballot for themselves and their posterity.

[BLACKOUT-SOUND CUE: A BUGLE CALL TO ARMS FOLLOWED BY A CANNON VOLLEY. THE ENTIRE CAST OF WOMEN ENTERS FROM THE BACK OF THE AUDITORIUM CARRYING SIGNS AND MARCHING DOWN THE AISLES SINGING:] (tune: "The Battle Cry of Freedom.")

Come true loyal hearts, For the cause unite.
Shouting the rally cry of freedom.

From the north, east, and west, come gather in your might.
Shouting the rally cry of freedom.

Our banner forever, Hurrah, girls, hurrah!
Suffrage forever, women unite.
And we'll gather round the flag, and gather night and day,
Shouting the rally cry of freedom

[MUSIC AND SOUND OF DRUMS UNDERSCORE THE FOLLOWING SPEECHES THAT
ARE DELIVERED TO THE AUDIENCE DOWNSTAGE CENTER]

SOJOURNER TRUTH: Folks, There is a great stir about colored men getting their rights, but not a word about the colored women; and if colored men get their rights, and not colored women theirs, you see the colored men will be masters over the women...I calculate to live, so you better get the women votin' soon.

SUSAN: (speaking to the audience) You have heard Mr. Frederick Douglass propose an amendment which guarantees that no citizen can be denied the right to vote based on race, color, or previous condition of servitude. Well, let us say to Mr. Douglass, if you will not give the whole loaf of justice to the entire people, if you are determined to give it to us piece by piece, then give it first to women. As outraged as we are by the hateful prejudice against color, I doubt that you would exchange your sex or color with any of the women sitting here today.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS: I must say that I do not see how any one can pretend that there is the same urgency in giving the ballot to woman as to the Negro. With us, the matter is a question of life and death. When women, because they are women, are objects of insult and outrage, dragged from their houses and hung upon lamp-posts, when their children are not allowed to enter schools but torn from their arms and their brains dashed out upon the pavement, when they are in danger of having their homes burnt down over their heads--then they will have an urgency to obtain the ballot equal to our own.

STANTON: Wendell Phillips says: "One idea for a generation." Horace Greeley bids the women of the nation stand aside and behold the salvation of the Negro. Senator Charles Sumner sets the order of importance: "First, the Negro; second, temperance; and then--woman suffrage--three generations hence. What an insult! For thirty years women have labored to emancipate the slave. These gentlemen believe that they have nothing to fear, that woman will not avenge herself. Woman not avenge herself? Look at your asylums of the deaf, the dumb, the blind, the insane, and there behold the results of this wholesale desecration of the mothers of the race.

[FADE OUT SOUND. CROSSFADE TO MRS.PHELPS DRESSED IN A DARK CLOAK AND HOOD STANDING IN A DIM POOL OF LIGHT]

PHELPS: (softly) Miss Anthony?

SUSAN: (ENTERS & CROSSES TO HER) Yes...I'm right here beside you.

PHELPS: Ssssh...you may have been followed.

SUSAN: Come, sit over here, and tell me how I can help.... (LEADS HER TO A BENCH)

PHELPS: It's a terrible imposition. . .

SUSAN: Not at all...

PHELPS: I'm at my wits end, Miss Anthony. I dare not guess what you must think of me...a rag picker in these garments...

SUSAN: Your speech and manner are those of an educated woman.

PHELPS: I'm married to a state senator, Miss Anthony. We have three lovely children.

SUSAN: You are indeed fortunate.

PHELPS: I considered myself so, until I discovered my husband was having an affair. When I confronted him with it, he became furious, out of control...

SUSAN: What happened?

PHELPS: He abused me... threw me down the stairs...

SUSAN: Dear God!

PHELPS: I was so angry, so humiliated, I threatened to expose him. But the next morning he had me dragged from my bed and committed to an insane asylum.

SUSAN: That's monstrous!

PHELPS: It was a tomb of living horrors. . . each day never ending. . .

SUSAN: For how long?

PHELPS: A year and a half. Had I the choice, I would have gladly marched to the gallows. (beat) My brother finally arranged for my release and brought me to his home.

SUSAN: What of your children?

PHELPS: At first I was not allowed to see them. Then my husband permitted our 13-year-old daughter to visit me for two weeks. I pleaded with him to let her remain with me...but he refused.

SUSAN: Could your brother do nothing on your behalf?

PHELPS: He said that if I caused any more trouble he would send me back to the asylum.

SUSAN: That's inhuman! What did you do?

PHELPS: I took my child and fled. It was the only course left open to me. The Society of Friends sheltered us until my husband's agents discovered our whereabouts. We have been hiding in alleyways, abandoned shacks, begging for food...now, there is a warrant for my arrest.

SUSAN: Will you trust me with your name, Mrs...?

PHELPS: My given name is Phoebe.

SUSAN: Well then, Phoebe, we must find refuge for you and your daughter, someplace your husband would never think to search. Come with me.

[SUSAN AND PHOEBE EXIT. CROSSFADE TO HOOKER SPOTLIGHTED DOWNSTAGE CENTER]

HOOKER: When Abraham Lincoln challenged Stephen Douglas, he said, "I have no purpose to introduce political and social equality between the white and black races..." In his inaugural address, he said that he had no plans to interfere with the institution of slavery. Now, seeing the ravages wrought by fifteen months of war, he reluctantly concedes to a gradual emancipation starting with the border states. This is as abhorrent as the institution of slavery itself. Do not be deceived that this war is being fought to save a nation. It is about the value of man.

VOICE FROM THE AUDIENCE: Mrs. Hooker, if we emancipate the slaves, what shall we do with them...send them back to Africa?

HOOKER: What do we do with the Irish, the Scotch, the Germans? We educate them, welcome them to our schools and churches, to industry and trade. What shall we do with the Negroes? What arrogance to put such a question to a race of people who have fed, clothed, and supported both themselves and their oppressors for centuries.

[STANTON & GARRISON JOIN HOOKER]

GARRISON: Mrs. Stanton, if you know the whereabouts of Phoebe Phelps and her daughter, you must inform the authorities. Your identification with the anti-slavery cause is such that any hasty and ill-judged efforts on your part reflects on it, also.

STANTON: Mr. Garrison, I will reply to your charge in Miss Anthony's own words: What I have done is wholly right. Had I turned my back upon that poor woman and her daughter, I should have scorned myself.

GARRISON: Miss Anthony is a shrewish old mischief-maker! Having failed to secure a husband herself, she is determined to make her more fortunate sisters miserable by creating dissension in their households.

STANTON: Surely you don't place Mrs. Phelps in that society of fortunate sisters, Mr. Garrison?

GARRISON: She had a husband of means, Mrs. Stanton, and a secure position in society. She was fully cognizant of the law that gives the father guardianship and control of his children. By her actions, she brought calamity upon herself.

HOOKER: Doesn't the law give the slaveholder ownership of his slaves? And don't you break it every time you help a slave to Canada?

GARRISON: Yes, I do, Mrs. Hooker.

HOOKER: Then it would seem that your position is one of expediency, not principle.

GARRISON: (Angrily) Madam, we are at war.

HOOKER: If suffrage in a Republic is tantamount to citizenship, I trust that you will endeavor with equal vigilance to release woman from her bondage and extend to her the same rights.

GARRISON: It would be premature, even as a matter of agitation.

STANTON: Mr. Garrison, you were never so cautious in the early days of anti-slavery agitation. If more light was needed, you stirred up a blaze that illuminated the world.

GARRISON: Ladies, why must you persist? This is the hour of the black man!

HOOKER: (emphatically) No! This is the hour of every man and every woman, black and white.

[STANTON & HOOKER EXIT. GARRISON STEPS INTO SPOTLIGHT]

GARRISON: Would that the good women of the Anti-Slavery League abandon their misguided march for woman's rights, and take command of the battlefronts, this war would have been concluded before the first shot was fired. They alone, secured petitions signed by over 300,000 men and women from every corner of this great nation, demanding the abolishment of slavery. These were then carried into the capitol by two able-bodied Negroes, and deposited at the feet of the senators. The ladies have done their job well. Now it is our turn, gentlemen. We must seek to remove by statute law and amended Constitution that crime and curse which alone has brought us to this bloody conflict.

[GARRISON EXITS. STANTON & SUSAN ENTER WITH VALISES]

STANTON: Susan, that public washroom is not for the use of refined ladies. Go, if you must, but don't touch a thing.

SUSAN: I shall pray for continence and wait until we reach Manhattan. I know a little dressmaker there who will patch me together and make me presentable.

STANTON: Why can't a woman be judged by her talent and brains instead of the clothes she wears?

SUSAN: (in jest) If that were so, men would be forced to disavow the myth that they are the superior race.

STANTON: None more so than that enclave of Boston Republicans.

SUSAN: And Mr. Garrison?

STANTON: Mr. Garrison always was as imperious as Caesar toward those who fail to see all things through his spectacles.

SUSAN: He conveniently forgets that the financial freedom he so enjoys comes from his wife's side of the family. Even so, we can not afford to offend someone of his reputation and influence.

STANTON: My dear, we're bound to make a few enemies along the way.

[STANTON & SUSAN EXIT. CROSSFADE TO SPOTLIGHT DOWNSTAGE CENTER ON A WOMAN WEARING A DAR BANNER. SHE SPEAKS TO THE AUDIENCE.]

DAR WOMAN: Daughters of the American Revolution, when we heard Miss Anthony speak a fortnight ago, I knew that I could not rest until I responded to such outspoken heresy. Women vote? Never! Have we not made mistakes enough in the political arena without adding this most pitiful confusion, this arrant folly? If Man is willing to do all the dirty work of political arrangement, then I say, let him do it, his share and mine.

[DAR WOMAN EXITS & DAVIES STEPS INTO THE SPOTLIGHT]

DAVIES: Gentlemen, I recently observed on the streets of New York City, in broad daylight, a gathering of unsexed women propounding the doctrine of woman's suffrage. Needless to say, these women were entirely devoid of personal attraction. Unable to appropriate the breeches of their unlucky lords, they violated all the rules of decency and taste by attiring themselves in eccentric costumes, which hung loosely and inelegantly upon their over-thin forms.

[BLACKOUT. ANGRY CROWD NOISE OFF STAGE. LIGHTS UP CENTERSTAGE ON SUSAN, STANTON, HOOKER & ROSE]

ROSE: A cold hall just chills and kills a meeting, so we must have it thoroughly heated. And look at this floor! It's simply filthy. . .

HOOKER: From some sort of tobacco spitting performance, I believe.

STANTON: Does anyone know what measures have been taken to secure the hall?

ROSE: The police will place deputies at every door. If there is any disturbance the agitators will be promptly arrested. But the Mayor would consider it a personal favor if we adjourn at the close of this evening's session. It's going to be difficult to hold the rabble in check much longer.

STANTON: My head reels from exhaustion, my stomach growls for the want of a decent meal...

SUSAN: Pelted with rotten eggs and cabbages. . .

HOOKER: Meeting halls secured to prevent the rowdies from dousing the gas lamps or throwing pepper into the stoves...

ROSE: And plagued by strangers begging favors, or shouting curses...

SUSAN: Last week I was interrupted in the middle of a speech by some person wanting me to recommend a brand of underwear. Oh! I consider the whole scheme of buying up people's names positively villainous!

STANTON: Did they say how much they would pay you?

SUSAN: Mrs. Stanton! If you want to be bruited about on all the advertising pages of the world, go right ahead. But don't expect me to follow you.

[SOUND OF BREAKING GLASS, SCREAMS FROM THE CROWD OFFSTAGE]

HOOKER: What is it? What happened?

SUSAN: Dear God! Someone has torched the church for the coloreds...

ROSE: (stopping a black woman running away from the scene) Is there anything we can do?

WOMAN: No, ma'am. The police are on their way. Best you stay here...

SUSAN: No! I refuse to let them get away with this. (Adamantly strides off stage)

STANTON: (shouting after her) Don't be a fool, Susan! Susan! Come back here! I shall not stand here and watch your demise... Oh, she never does listen!

[STANTON, SUSAN, & HOOKER EXIT. CROSSFADE TO DOWNSTAGE CENTER AS ROSE SPEAKS TO THE AUDIENCE]

ROSE: The nation rocks with the sound of cannons, and the slave looks to us for liberation. But there is another form of slavery that remains in question--the soul of woman. Man believes that if he sufficiently provides for woman, that if she is fed, clothed and cared for by his generosity, she ought to remain content. But the facts are at war with this assumption. In every city and hamlet across this nation, thousands of young women, with careworn faces and carrying their poor lunch concealed beneath a scanty shawl, are compelled to rely upon their own energies to feed and clothe themselves. The status of woman can not be materially changed if their very subsistence remains in question.

[ROSE EXITS. CROSSFADE TO SUSAN & SMALL GROUP OF POORLY CLAD FACTORY WORKERS SEATED ON THE BENCHES]

1st GIRL: (proudly) I get \$2 a piece for making ladies' cloaks, Miss Anthony.

SUSAN: How long does it take you to make one?

1st GIRL: About a day. It is partly machine and partly hand work.

SUSAN: And you support yourself on two dollars a day?

1st GIRL: Since the fighting commenced, I've gotten two raises.

2nd GIRL: I make lace collars for twenty-two cents a dozen. I can make three dozen in a day, twelve hours' work, that's about sixty-six cents.

3rd GIRL: I make fur collars and muffs--earn 75 cents a day. Forty cents goes for room and board, and the rest I send to my mother.

SUSAN: She has no other means of support?

3rd GIRL: Not since my brother took a cannonball at Gettysburg.

4th GIRL: I used to work fourteen hours a day, six days a week for a total of seven dollars.

SUSAN: At home or in a factory?

4th GIRL: In the factory, 'til I got sick. They told me I'd infect the other workers and discharged me.

SUSAN: What is your condition now?

4th GIRL: The doctor says my lungs are permanently damaged from breathin' the fiber dust.

SUSAN: Do they pay for your treatment?

4th GIRL: (laughing and coughing) Oh, Miss Anthony, they don't pay for nothing. None of them places do.

2nd GIRL: I used to work for a large carpet house, 'til I blistered my hands real bad binding that stiff Brussels carpet. When I asked for time off, I was told to chuck it in.

1st GIRL: Who told you that?

SUSAN: Ladies, it's the system, not the individual that is to blame.

3rd GIRL: Don't matter, 'cause there's nuthin' we can do about it.

SUSAN: You could if you held the ballot.

4th GIRL: Miss Anthony, what we need is bread, not the ballot.

SUSAN: Ladies, there are 50,000 of your sisters right here in New York City supporting themselves on as little as fifty cents a day. The disenfranchised have always been relegated to a degraded class of labor. Beggars cannot be choosers.

1st GIRL: Are you saying we should strike, Miss Anthony?

SUSAN: I have yet to learn of a successful strike by any body of women.

2nd GIRL: I heard about one in Troy. . .

SUSAN: Yes, the women threw down their scissors, their starch pans and flat irons, and for three long months not one returned to the factory.

3rd GIRL: What happened to them?

SUSAN: They were starving, so they were forced to go back. But not at their old wages. Oh, no! Their employer cut their wages by half. (girls react)

4th GIRL: Then, there's nothin' we can do.

SUSAN: We can change the laws. That alone will improve your working conditions and demand of your employers a decent wage.

1st GIRL: Miss Anthony, what you ask is impossible.

SUSAN: No, dear friends. Failure is impossible. Without the ballot, your cries go unheeded in the night.

[SUSAN & GIRLS EXIT. CROSSFADE TO STANTON, ROSE AND HOOKER
CENTER STAGE. HORACE GREELEY ENTERS]

STANTON: Mr. Greeley, how delightful to see you again.

GREELEY: My pleasure, Mrs. Stanton...ladies. Mounting another attack on the body politic?

ROSE: Precisely. Will the Tribune survive without the captain on deck? I'm told that not a single word gets printed without your expressed approval.

GREELEY: True, true.

HOOKER: Then is your loyal reading public to be bereft of all news until you return to the ship?

[SUSAN ENTERS]

GREELEY: I am in the state capitol just for today. I plan to be back on board before the next edition goes to press.

SUSAN: My goodness, you fly back and forth between New York and Albany like the shuttle of the weaver's loom. How tiring it must be.

GREELEY: I would not have wanted to miss your speech, Miss Anthony. A Quaker who preaches revolution? I was taught that Christ was a peacemaker, not an agitator.

SUSAN: (with fire) "I came into the world not to bring peace, but a sword...woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites that devour widow's houses!" Read the new testament, Mr. Greeley, and then say Christ was not an agitator.

GREELEY: You know, of course, that the ballot and bullet go together. If you vote, are you ready to fight?

SUSAN: Yes, Mr. Greeley, just as you do--at the point of a goose-quill pen.
(ladies laugh)

GREELEY: (with controlled anger) Miss Anthony, not one woman in a thousand would exercise the right of suffrage even if it were granted to her. No, I would not degrade woman by giving her the right of suffrage. It would unalterably remove her from that pedestal where she stands today.

ROSE: It is not because women suffer, Mr. Greeley, it is the simple assertion of the fundamental truth of democracy. Suffrage is the inalienable right of all mankind.

GREELEY: Oh...and when should this inalienable right commence, Madam?

ROSE:: If you may vote at twenty-one, then so should I. Your paper could do a great deal to keep this in the public mind.

GREELEY: The Tribune merely reflects popular opinion. The majority of women, the best women I know, do not want to vote.

STANTON: Mr. Greeley, I have with me a petition signed by over 300 of the best women you know, including your wife and daughter.

GREELEY: (boiling with anger) You ladies are the most maneuvering politicians in the state of New York. Could you not have inscribed my wife's maiden name to save me embarrassment?

HOOKER: No, Mr. Greeley. We wanted the world to know that it was the wife of Horace Greeley, publisher of The New York Tribune.

GREELEY: Now that I know the animus of your tactics, I shall give positive instructions that no word of praise shall ever again be awarded you in my paper. Good day. (exits)

HOOKER: Oh, dear! I suppose it was a mistake to get crosswise with the press. We need the great dailies to get our message across.

SUSAN: Maybe it's time we started raising strawberries.

ROSE: Whatever are you talking about?

SUSAN: Mr. Greeley once wrote that women ought not to expect the same pay as men. He advised them to go to New Jersey, buy a parcel of ground, and raise strawberries. Then, when they came to New York with their produce, no one would think of offering them half price. I say that it is high time we were raising strawberries on our own ground.

STANTON: What an absolutely splendid idea. We shall attack Mr. Greeley with a newspaper of our own, written entirely by women, and expressly for women. Ladies, let us draw up a list of supporters whom we might approach for the necessary capital-- shares of stock, as it were--and I shall commence to set the wheels in motion.

[LADIES EXIT. CROSSFADE TO SPOTLIGHT DOWNSTAGE CENTER ON DOUGLASS WHO ADDRESSES THE AUDIENCE.]

DOUGLASS: You say that you are weary of bloodshed, that you pray for the peace and prosperity which existed before the war. I ask you what sort of peace, what sort of prosperity, did we have? Since the first slave ship sailed up the James river, and there, on the banks of the Old Dominion, sold its human cargo to the highest bidder, we have had nothing but war. Oh, no, dear friends, we do not ask for a return to the old conditions. We ask for something better. Wives, mothers, and teachers, assume your God-given responsibility as the educators of the race. Teach your sons and daughters the law of justice to the black man, and demand of our leaders the right of representation and enfranchisement for all citizens, black, white, male...and female.

[DOUGLASS EXITS. CROSSFADE TO STANTON WHO SITS AT THE TEA TABLE READING A NEWSPAPER. SUSAN ENTERS]

SUSAN: (removing her hat, cloak and gloves) Oh, to rest my head on the same pillow two nights in succession... (Stanton appears to ignore her) Mrs. Stanton, what is so engrossing in that news sheet?

STANTON: "Spinster Susan's Suffrage Show."

SUSAN: Another jaded columnist...well?

STANTON: It says here, "a slimy figure, nut-cracker face and store teeth, she goes raiding about the country attempting to teach mothers and wives their duty. As in the yellow fever to the south, the grasshopper to the western plains, and diphtheria to our north, so is Susan B. Anthony..." et cetera, et cetera!

SUSAN: A plague with store teeth! How revolting! Is that from the pen of Mr. Greeley?

STANTON: No. The Liberal Democrat. Pure fol-da-rol!

SUSAN: Men simply will not see how abject a woman is under her present environments. Figs don't come of thorns. It will take centuries to dispossess him of the fancy that he reigns supreme in intellect. And I grow weary of the effort.

STANTON: Then stay with me awhile...regain your strength.

SUSAN: (exasperated) Mrs. Stanton, you retire to the bosom of your family on the slightest provocation. In two days I must leave for Kansas.

STANTON: Susan, you are the most exasperating person to walk the face of the earth. I have scarcely seen my children in three months. . . have followed you from one end of the state to the other, subjected to all manner of insults and at the mercy of mob rule... Now, tell me, what is so urgent that you must dash off to the wilds of Kansas?

SUSAN: My brother, Daniel...

STANTON: Is he ill?

SUSAN: No, but he asks for my help.

STANTON: (incensed) Has he not brains and wit enough to solve his own problems?

SUSAN: Mob rule has overtaken Leavenworth. His office has been vandalized, his life threatened...

STANTON: What can you do?

SUSAN: I don't know. But when life's threads are so brittle, I dare not take my loved ones for granted.

STANTON: They impose upon your good will, expect you to come at their beck and call.

SUSAN: There is nothing pressing to keep me here.

STANTON: My need is not sufficiently pressing?

SUSAN: (indignantly) Mrs. Stanton, you have a husband and seven children. If Mr. Stanton ever had reason to be jealous, it's because of me.

STANTON: Then perhaps you and I should get a divorce.

SUSAN: I shall not allow any such proceedings. I consider our relationship for life, so make the best of it.

STANTON: Then go to your brother, put his life back on course, and return home quickly. (beat) I shall miss you. (they embrace)

[FADE TO BLACK. SUSAN & STANTON EXIT. CIVIL WAR ERA MUSIC UNDERSCORES THE FOLLOWING LETTERS ENDING WITH "NEARER MY GOD TO THEE." EACH SPEAKER IS SPOTLIGHTED IN TURN AS ONE OVERLAPS THE OTHER.]

WOMAN #1: Dear Susan: Why have you deserted us? Our forces are scattered, and grow more isolated every day. It is no doubt missionary ground wherever you are, but we need you here...

GREELEY: Miss Anthony: News of your activities continues to be reported in the press, in spite of my instructions to the contrary. This is a critical period for the Republican party and the life of the nation. It would be wise and magnanimous of you to hold your claims in abeyance until the Negro is safe beyond peradventure...

WOMAN # 2: Oh, Susan, I despair having to write you this disheartening news. Whilst our attention was turned elsewhere, the New York state legislature repealed the law modifying woman's property rights. All of your hard work struck down with the stroke of a pen...

DOUGLASS: Dear Miss Anthony: Please accept my deepest sympathy on the untimely death of your father. A kinder and more gentle man never walked the earth. I had the pleasure of dining with your sisters and mother last evening. They speak highly of the work you are doing, organizing Freedom societies that will educate and find jobs for the Negroes who have moved west. The President's proclamation, so long in coming, has angered the anti-abolitionists to such a degree that it is unsafe for free men and women of color to walk the streets. The clock has been turned back ten years...

PHELPS: My dear Miss Anthony: My health is poor and my future uncertain, but I thank God every day that this bloody conflict is drawing to a close, and pray that lives so shattered in its aftermath will have the courage and strength to rebuild on a foundation of peace.

STANTON: (AT HER TEA TABLE) My dearest Susan: I was reading the President's last speech when the telegram of his assassination reached me. His body will be returned to Illinois for burial, so you will no doubt witness the thousands who are expected to line the route. I am truly devastated by these sad events, and need your practical wisdom to help me find my feet again.

[CROSSFADE TO SUSAN SEATED ON A BENCH PENNING A LETTER, A SUITCAST AT HER FEET.]

SUSAN: Dear friends: I feel that I have accomplished little, but long to return east. . . and home. My brother will not allow his newspaper to be an instrument for woman suffrage and this wounds me deeply. So, I leave Leavenworth and Kansas in his capable, but shaky hands. The nation is in turmoil, a dear friend has been unjustly vilified, and Isabella Hooker is calling a woman's rights convention. . . excluding the

old guard. Like every new convert, she believes she will succeed where we have failed. I wonder if the Apostles, as each came into the ranks, believed he could improve upon Christ's methods?

[REPORTER ENTERS]

REPORTER: Miss Anthony, I'm Nelly Bly, a reporter for the *New York World*. May I have a moment of your time?

SUSAN: I can spare a moment.

REPORTER: Henry Ward Beecher's amorous overtures to his parishioners are common knowledge. He may be a leader in the suffrage movement, but his pious demeanor is pure hypocrisy.

SUSAN: What is your question?

REPORTER: Is it true that your good friend, Mrs. Tilton, is having an affair with the esteemed preacher?

SUSAN: That is absurd!

REPORTER: Then why did Mrs. Tilton lock her husband out of their bedroom?

SUSAN: Where did you hear that?

REPORTER: It was reported in *Woodhull & Clafton's Weekly*.

SUSAN: Well, did Mrs. Wookhull tell you that Mrs. Tilton locked her husband out of the bedroom because he was the one having an affair? And arranged for an abortion when the woman he was seeing became pregnant?

REPORTER: Would you be disposed to enlighten the reading public with the name of this unfortunate woman?

SUSAN: I would not...even if I knew. It's sickening! Simply sickening...the way you reporters constantly emblazon in print the private and personal lives of leaders in the movement. You may report that Miss Anthony refuses to acknowledge any rumors regarding any alleged affairs, and that she's retiring to her home in Rochester... to raise strawberries.

REPORTER: Strawberries?

SUSAN: You heard me.

REPORTER: That's unfortunate. You know how Washington loves a good sex scandal.

[BLACKOUT]

ACT III, Scene 1
1873

[STAGE IS SET AS A COURTROOM— A DEFENSE TABLE WITH TWO CHAIRS, AND THE PROSECUTOR’S TABLE AND CHAIR ARE ANGLED ON ONE SIDE OF THE JUDGES BENCH, THE WITNESS CHAIR AND BENCHES FOR THE JURORS ON THE OTHER. AT RISE SELDEN, CROWLEY, AND ANTHONY ARE IN PLACE. DEPUTY KEENEY CALLS THE JURORS TO THE STAGE--6 TO 12 MEN SELECTED FROM THE AUDIENCE. MEMBERS OF THE CAST MAY SIT WITH THE AUDIENCE FOR THE REENACTMENT OF THE TRIAL]

KEENEY: Hear ye, hear ye, Court is now in session. Justice Ward Hunt presiding.
All rise.

[HUNT ENTERS AND TAKES THE BENCH]

HUNT: Be seated. Mr. Crowley, you may begin.

D.A. CROWLEY: May it please the court and gentlemen of the jury, the defendant, Miss Susan B. Anthony, on the 5th day of November, 1872, voted for a representative to the Congress of the United States, and for a candidate to the office of President of the United States. At that time she was a woman. I suppose there will be no question about that...

SELDEN: The defense concedes that on the 5th day of November, 1872, Miss Anthony was a woman.

HUNT: So stipulated. Continue, Mr. Crowley.

DA: Whatever Miss Anthony's intentions may have been she did not have a right to vote, and if she did vote without having a lawful right to vote, then there is no question but that she is guilty of violating a law of the United States.

HUNT: Call your first witness, Mr. Crowley.

DA: The prosecution calls Mr. Edwin F. Marsh.

(MARSH ENTERS AND CROSSES TO THE BENCH)

HUNT: Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MARSH: I do.

HUNT: Be seated. (MARSH TAKES THE WITNESS CHAIR)

DA: Mr. Marsh, were you present when Miss Anthony presented herself to register to vote.

MARSH: Yes, sir, I was.

DA: In what capacity?

MARSH: As a registrar and inspector for the Republican party.

DA: To the best of your recollection, did Miss Anthony present herself as a female claiming the right to vote?

MARSH: Not exactly.

DA: What exactly did she say?

MARSH: She said she presented herself as a citizen of the United States.

DA: Did you permit her to register?

MARSH: Not at first.

DA: Why not?

MARSH: Well, I talked it over with the other inspectors, and they thought we should have legal counsel before taking another step.

DA: Why did you think that?

MARSH: Well, Miss Anthony kept waving a whole sheaf of legal documents in our faces, then read us the 14th amendment and something from the New York Constitution which contained no sex qualification for voting.

DA: Was that when you decided to register her?

MARSH: Yes, sir. Inspectors Jones and Hall didn't want to take the chance.

DA: Chance for what?

MARSH: That we'd get sued.

DA: Sued by whom?

MARSH: Miss Anthony. To the best of my recollection, she said that if we refused her right as a citizen to cast her ballot, she would bring charges against us for large, exemplary damages.

DA: I see. Then what did you do?

MARSH: We checked with Mr. Van Voorhis, a lawyer, and he told us to register them. He said that would put the entire onus of the affair on them.

DA: How many women are we talking about?

MARSH: I don't recall exactly. Miss Anthony, her three sisters, and some other ladies.

DA: Were you aware that in taking his advice you were breaking the law?

MARSH: I wasn't sure.

DA: Did you check it out before allowing them to register?

MARSH: No, sir. We didn't have a law book handy.

DA: You were also one of the voting inspectors when Miss Anthony cast her ballot, were you not?

MARSH: Yes, sir. I was.

DA: Upon the 5th day of November, 1872, did the defendant, Miss Susan B. Anthony, vote in the first election district of the 8th ward of the city of Rochester?

MARSH: Yes, sir, she did.

DA: Did you see her vote?

MARSH: Yes, sir, I did.

DA: Then you are testifying under oath that Miss Susan B. Anthony did in fact vote on the day in question.

MARSH: Yes, sir.

DA: Your witness, Mr. Selden.

SELDON: Mr. Marsh, you stated earlier that Miss Anthony was challenged on the day she registered.

MARSH: Yes, sir.

SELDON: On what grounds?

MARSH: On the grounds that the Constitution of the state of New York does not allow women to vote.

SELDEN: And her defect?

MARSH: She was not a male citizen.

SELDEN: That she was a woman...

MARSH: Yes, sir.

SELDON: Yet you registered her anyway.

MARSH: Yes, sir.

SELDON: Was Miss Anthony challenged on the day she voted?

MARSH: No, sir, she was not.

SELDON: Thank you, Mr. Marsh.

HUNT: Redirect, Mr. Crowley?

DA: No, your Honor.

HUNT: You're excused. [MARSH EXITS]

DA: I call the defendant, Miss Anthony.

HUNT: It has already been stipulated that Miss Anthony, being a woman, is not qualified to take the stand in her own defense.

DA: With all due respect, your honor, I need to question the defendant in order to clarify that a crime was actually committed.

HUNT: That was done at the preliminary hearing.

DA: I wish to review the testimony taken in Commissioner Storr's office at the time of Miss Anthony's arrest.

HUNT: Then call Commissioner Storr.

DA: He is unavailable, your honor.

HUNT: Mr. Selden, will you take the stand on behalf of your client?

SELDEN: I will. [HE IS SWORN AND TAKES THE WITNESS CHAIR]

HUNT: You may proceed, Mr. Crowley.

DA: Previous to voting at the first district poll in the eighth ward, did Miss Anthony ask the advice of counsel.

SELDEN: Yes, she did.

DA: Who was it she talked with?

SELDON: She consulted with me and my colleague Mr. Van Voorhis.

DA: What did you advise her in reference to her legal right to vote?

SELDEN: I advised her that it was the only way to find out what the law was upon the subject--to bring it to a test case.

DA: Did Miss Anthony have anything to say upon your advice?

SELDEN: She thought it was sound.

DA: Did you give an opinion upon the subject?

SELDEN: I told her that like the rest of you lawyers—I had not studied the question, but that I would thoroughly study the subject of a woman's right to vote, and decide according to the law.

DA: Did she have any doubt herself of her right to vote?

SUSAN: Not a particle. {she is squelched by a look by the judge}

DA: Would Miss Anthony have made the same effort to vote if she had not consulted with you and Mr. Van Voorhis?

SELDEN: Yes, I believe she would. She went into this matter for the sole purpose of testing the question? She told me that she had been resolved for three years to vote at the first election when she had been at home for thirty days before.

DA: What was the result of Miss Anthony being questioned at Commissioner Storr's office?

SELDEN: She was indicted by the grand jury.

DA: Thank you, Mr. Seldon. That will be all.

HUNT: You're excused Mr. Seldon. [SELDON RETURNS TO THE DEFENSE TABLE]

DA: I call Deputy Keeney to the stand. (KEENEY CROSSES TO BENCH, IS SWORN, AND TAKES THE WITNESS CHAIR)

DA: Deputy, did you, on Monday, November 18, 1872, arrest Miss Anthony for attempting to vote?

KEENEY: Yes sir, I did.

DA: How did she respond?

KEENEY: Well, sir...Miss Anthony asked to see the warrant, so I showed it to her.

DA: Did you then escort her to Commissioner Storr's office?

KEENEY: No, sir. She wanted to make some change in her dress, so I told her she could come down later...when she was ready.

DA: Is that your usual method of serving a warrant?

KEENEY: No, sir. But Miss Anthony isn't the usual sort of criminal.

DA: Did she come in later, as you suggested?

KEENEY: No, sir. She refused to take herself to court, so I waited. When she came to the door she stuck out both her arms and told me to handcuff her.

DA: Did you?

KEENEY: No, I couldn't do that to Miss Anthony.

DA: But you did bring her in?

KEENEY: Yes, sir...brought her in on the trolley. She told everybody in a real loud voice that since this trip was the Government's idea, the Government could pay the nickel fare.

DA: Thank you, Deputy. (turns to Selden) Your witness.

SELDEN: No questions, your honor.

HUNT: You're excused. (KEENEY EXITS)

HUNT: Any more witnesses, Mr. Crowley?

DA: No, your honor. The prosecution rests.

HUNT: Mr. Selden, call your first witness.

SELDEN: Since your honor has already stipulated that my client, being a woman, is not competent to take the stand in her own defense, I ask the court's permission to do it for her.

HUNT: Mr. Crowley, do you have any objection?

DA: No objection, your honor.

HUNT: You have already been sworn, Mr. Selden. You may begin.

SELDEN: (Plays before the jury) Gentlemen, it has been conceded that the defendant is a woman and did indeed vote on the day in question. The only alleged illegality of the defendant's vote is that she is a woman. If the same act had been done by her brother, it would be deemed honorable and laudable; but having been done by a woman, it is said to be a crime. Women have been defying the law and voting since 1868. A few have succeeded, but most were turned back by the registrars. Why is it that when Miss Anthony voted, it became a national controversy of such proportion that even ex-president Fillmore is among the spectators today? Fourteen women cast their ballot in that district and were arrested, but only Miss Anthony was arraigned. Is it possible that if she had not stated openly that she had voted a straight Republican ticket, the inspector for the Democrats would not have lodged a complaint?

D.A.: Objection.

HUNT: Sustained. Please refrain from speculation, Mr. Selden.

SELDEN: Gentlemen, there is no greater absurdity than rewarding men and punishing women for the same act without giving women any voice in the question. So, you must ask yourself, was the defendant legally entitled to vote at the election in question? She believed that she was and acted on that belief. That act lacked the indispensable ingredient of a crime, a corrupt intention. She now stands accused as a criminal for taking the only step possible to bring before the tribunals of this country for adjudication, the question: if a woman is a citizen of the United States, is she not entitled to vote, since the Constitution of this great country does not distinguish between male and female citizens regarding the right of suffrage. Miss Anthony's motive was pure, her impulse noble. If you, gentlemen of the jury, decide that she is to be condemned as a criminal, you will be telling the world that women need the ballot to insure their own protection. (SITS IN WITNESS CHAIR)

HUNT: Cross examine, Mr. Crowley?

DA Yes, your honor. Mr. Selden, are you aware that Miss Anthony is an agitator of considerable reputation, and has a history of repeated criminal acts?

SELDEN: She is well known for agitating complacent legislators to effect necessary reforms...

DA: When the place and date of her trial were announced, she went about the county making speeches in order to influence potential jurors...

SELDEN: To enlighten the public regarding the nature of the complaint against her...

DA: Which made it necessary to request a change of venue...

SELDEN: Which was so ordered by the court...

HUNT: I believe we are all aware of her machinations, Mr. Crowley. Please move on.

DA: Mr. Selden, are you familiar with the case, New York versus Phoebe Harris Phelps?

SELDEN: I recall reading about it.

DA: Actually, the case was never brought to trial. Mr. Phelps, state legislator and respected attorney, swore out a warrant for the arrest of his wife because she had abducted and fled with his 13-year-old daughter. His wife, just released from a mental hospital, was allowed to visit with the daughter for two weeks. At the end of that time, she refused to relinquish the girl to the father's legal custody. With Miss Anthony's aid and assistance, Mrs. Phelps evaded all attempts to find and restore the child to her father.

SELDEN: Was there any proof of this conspiracy?

DA: The hiding place of the wife and child went undiscovered for a year, but continued diligence on the part of the father, and the private detectives in his employ, brought a successful conclusion to the affair.

SELDEN: In other words, the child was forced to return to Mr. Phelps' custody.

DA: Mr. Phelps was the child's true and legal guardian. When the child was questioned by authorities, she admitted that it was Miss Anthony who had led them to the distant town and family which sequestered them.

SELDEN: Were any charges filed against Miss Anthony?

DA: Mr. Phelps believed that the child had already suffered enough, so he chose not to pursue further legal action against the parties involved.

SELDEN: If Miss Anthony's alleged participation was based solely on the word of a minor, the charge of criminality is without foundation.

DA: But strong enough to cast doubt on Miss Anthony's pure and noble motives, I believe. Your honor, I have no further questions. (returns to the table and sits)

SELDEN: I'm still waiting for you to ask me one, Mr. Crowley.

HUNT: Mr. Selden, you are excused, unless you have something you wish to add.

SELDEN: No, your Honor. Not at this time. The defense rests. (CROSSES TO THE TABLE AND SITS)

HUNT: In that case I will render the verdict. (reads prepared statement) Miss Anthony's attempt to corrupt the political system which has been upheld and maintained by the wise men of this nation ever since it was established by the founding fathers, is of the gravest nature, and not something to be applauded or encouraged by those who feel she is a step away from sainthood. The defendant was indicted for, and has admitted to, violating the 19th section of the Act of Congress of May 31, 1870, which states that any person who knowingly votes without having the lawful right to vote shall be deemed guilty of a crime. The question then, is one of law, and I have decided, as a question of law, that under the fourteenth amendment, Miss Anthony was not protected in a right to vote. I have also decided that her belief and the advice which she took do not protect her in the act which she committed. I therefore direct the jury to find a verdict of guilty.

SELDEN: Your honor, I must except to the direction of the court that the jury should find a verdict of guilty. That power 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. Deputy Keeney will escort you from the courtroom. (DEPUTY KEENEY ESCORTS THE JURY OFF STAGE) Will the defendant please rise. (Susan stands) 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, and 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.

HUNT: The court will not listen to a rehearsal of argument which the prisoner's counsel has already presented.

SUSAN: May it please your honor, I am not arguing the question, but simply stating the reasons why sentence can not be pronounced against me. Your denial of my citizen's right to vote is the denial of my right of consent as one of the governed, the denial of my right of representation as one of the taxed, and the denial of my right to a trial by a jury of my peers; therefore, the denial of my sacred right to life, liberty, and...

HUNT: The prisoner must sit down. The court can not allow...

SUSAN: 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 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, and in favor of men. Hence, your honor's ordered verdict of guilty simply because that citizen was a woman and not a man.

HUNT: (angrily) Miss Anthony...

SUSAN: Yesterday, man-made law declared it a crime punishable with a \$1,000 fine and six month's imprisonment to give a cup of cold water, a crust of bread, or a night's shelter to a panting fugitive tracking his way to Canada. Yet every man or woman in whose veins coursed a drop of human sympathy violated that wicked law and was justified in so doing. As the slaves got their freedom, so now must women get theirs...

HUNT: (strikes the gavel) The Court orders the prisoner to shut up and sit down. It will not allow another word. (Susan sits) The prisoner will stand up. (Susan stands) The sentence of this Court is that you pay a fine of \$100 and the costs of prosecution.

SUSAN: May it please your honor, I shall never pay a dollar of your unjust penalty. The Constitution of these United States declares that all citizens are equal under its protecting aegis. But as I failed to get justice--failed, 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 your contemptible laws. All the stock in trade I possess is a ten thousand dollar debt incurred while publishing my newspaper, the sole object of which was to educate women to do precisely as I have done-- rebel against your man-made, unjust, unconstitutional laws that tax, fine, imprison, and even hang women, while denying them any representation in the Government that made

those laws. This government is not a democracy. It is the most hateful oligarchy of sex ever established on the face of the globe. I shall work with might and main to pay back every dollar of my honest debt, but not one penny shall go to your unjust claim. And I shall earnestly and persistently continue to urge all women to follow the old revolutionary maxim: resistance to tyranny is obedience to God.

HUNT: Madam, the court will not order you committed until the fine is paid.

SELDEN: (jumping to his feet) Your honor...

HUNT: Mr. Selden, if I should imprison your client until such a time as the fine is paid, you could take this case directly to the Supreme Court by writ of habeas corpus. By refusing to take Miss Anthony into custody, you lose the right of appeal. That is my intention, and it is so ordered.

(BLACKOUT)

ACT III, Scene 2
1890

[SET PIECES FOR THE TRIAL MAY BE LEFT IN PLACE. AT RISE SUSAN SITS DESPONDENTLY ON A BENCH. CATT ENTERS CARRYING A BOX OF ASSORTED PAPERS]

CATT: Miss Anthony, I thought you said there was scant little to write about. There must be hundreds of these boxes full of newspaper clippings, speeches, legislative bills...

SUSAN: Old letters, old scrap books, old diaries, a dirty old job. Mrs. Stanton conceived this appalling idea to write a history of woman's suffrage. So why isn't she here? If I weren't so incapacitated by this wretched cold, I, too, would be delighting in the Tower of London or shopping at Harrods.

CATT: Men have been faithful in noting every heroic act of their half of the race. I think Mrs. Stanton's idea is a splendid one.

SUSAN: You know I'm a convicted felon.

CATT: No, Miss Anthony, you were convicted of being a woman.

SUSAN: Uncle Sam waxes holy indignation at the violation of his laws, yet fourteen women cast their ballots that day, went home, and the world jogged on as before.

CATT: You will be vindicated, just as surely as the criminal charges against Mr. Marsh and Mr. Jones were overturned. Tell me, Aunt Susan, how did it begin? What caused you to become a suffragist?

SUSAN: It was when I first helped organize a temperance convention. At the close they drafted a resolution of thanks to various people, but a man rose and moved that my name be stricken because it was unbecoming to thank a woman, and if she were modest she would be offended by the publicity. I was very young, and went home to my father in tears, resolved to raise the equality of women. That gentle old Quaker placed his hand on my head and said, "if thee must, Susan, thee must."

CATT: Did you ever despair, say to yourself it can't be done, I'm wasting my time?

SUSAN: Despair? Oh, yes...many times. Give up? Never! Frederick Douglass used to tell how, when he was a Maryland slave, he would go into the farthest corner of the tobacco field and pray God to bring him liberty. But God never answered his prayers until he prayed with his heels. Well, the old guard started

this race, but it's up to you to finish it, Catt. You and your generation of young women.

CATT: Don't desert us now, Aunt Susan. Without your guidance we shall never live up to that trust.

SUSAN: Never fear. I shall be with you until the crack of doom. Mrs. Stanton said that we would not reach our prime until age fifty, and although I am a little past that venerable half-century mark, like a snowball, the further I am rolled the more I gain in power. But I will not be chained to a history prison in this musty old attic. Mrs. Stanton knows full well that I am more suited to *making* history than to writing it down.

[SUSAN EXITS AS CATT LAUGHS]

[BLACKOUT]

ACT III, Scene 3
1900

[AT RISE STANTON IS SEATED ON THE BENCH, ANTHONY BESIDE HER, AS IN PROLOGUE]

STANTON: I thought that with an ocean between us, I could enjoy a course of light reading, write no more resolutions or speeches for conventions, when, lo! I come face to face with my Susan on the streets of London---Susan with a new light in her eyes, and new worlds to conquer. I could never say no to you.

SUSAN: (taking Stanton's hand) Little did we dream when we began our work together, that a half a century later we would be compelled to leave the finish to another generation of women. But today there is an army of them, where we were but a handful.

STANTON: Are you pleased with the choice of your successor?

SUSAN: In Catt they have an ideal leader. She's been my right-hand for many years.

STANTON: How are you feeling? Recovered your strength, yet?

SUSAN: A touch of apoplexy, light as the touch of a baby's finger, was all he took to render me unconscious...so humiliating when all my life I've taken such pride in my excellent health.

STANTON: Well, I conjure you to stay close to home and under your sister's good care.

SUSAN: Rest assured, Mary has vowed to keep me firmly under her thumb.

STANTON: A rational idea. We will all sing in chorus, A-men. (beat) I so wanted to be with you at the ceremony...

SUSAN: You were missed by all, and asked about constantly.

STANTON: They will erect a bronze statue of you.

SUSAN: Oh...to stand exposed in a public park, green with mold and covered with pigeon droppings...please God, I hope not!

STANTON: Are you superstitious?

SUSAN: No, never! But, I never see the new moon that I don't stop to notice whether I see it over the right or left shoulder. What a curious question. Why do you ask?

STANTON: Sitting here day after day, I have come to realize that there is still a great deal I don't know about you. What is your favorite hymn?

SUSAN: (laughing) The dickens, Mrs. Stanton! I don't know. I can't tell one tune from another.

STANTON: Your favorite flower?

SUSAN: I like roses first and pinks second. I don't call anything a flower that hasn't a sweet perfume.

STANTON: Are you afraid of death?

SUSAN: Thirteen years ago, when my sister, Hannah, died I was silent in the face of death. Scarcely a day goes by that I have not felt her loss. She was so certain that we would meet in the great beyond, I could not dash her faith with my doubts. But since no particle of matter is ever lost, I feel that no particle of the mind is lost either, and I am just as much in the hands of eternity now as when the breath goes out of my body.

STANTON: It's reassuring to hear you say so, my Susan of much practical wisdom. These young women, the ones taking over for us...will they understand what we tried to do?

SUSAN: We were the seed-sowers, Mrs. Stanton. They will reap the harvest. Each of them is valiant, earnest, and talented. They will manage the ship quite well.

STANTON: There's a lavender scented envelope on the tray, addressed to you. Adulation from one of your nieces, I believe. (Susan removes the stationary from the envelope and reads it silently) Well, what does it say?

SUSAN: Since I know nothing of the merits of poetry, I am unable to pass judgment. I can see that 'reap' and 'deep,' 'prayers' and 'bears,' 'ark and dark,' do rhyme, so I suppose it's a splendid effort, but if it had been written in plain prose I could understand it a great deal better.

STANTON: Susan, you are the most prosaic, matter-of-fact creature that ever drew the breath of life. Do you recall when Mrs. Besant lunched with us? She is a master of the English language. But, in truth, I could no more see through Theosophy than I could any other theory that claims to return the disembodied soul to earth.

SUSAN: Personally, I find it repellant that having entered the higher sphere, I should have to come back and repeat Dame Nature's processes of teething, mumps, measles, and all other similar afflictions. I think we'd better just hang on to the one we have, and work to make it better for the next generation.

STANTON: I truly believe that one day women will dwell with their male counterparts on the same plane of intellectual and spiritual equality. I wish I could live to see it, but my poor old body is worn out. Shortly I will be moving on to the next plane of existence. So, promise me, Susan, no tears. Just get on with the work.

SUSAN: We shall never be separate from one another, Mrs. Stanton. You and I are the perfect team. Haven't you said so many times? (they embrace)

STANTON: Shall I see you again?

SUSAN: You are in my heart, and I in yours...

[FADE TO BLACK]

EPILOGUE
1920

[AT RISE CATT IS SPOTLIGHTED DOWNSTAGE CENTER. SHE SPEAKS TO THE AUDIENCE.]

CATT: On a crisp autumn day in 1902, Aunt Susan received a telegram that said simply: "Mother passed away at three o'clock." It was signed by Mrs. Stanton's daughter. In stoic silence Susan sat beside the open casket gazing upon the one person she loved more than any other. When the casket was closed no one thought it strange that Susan's picture was placed next to it.

Ladies and gentlemen, ours has been a movement with a soul. Women came, served, and passed on, but others came to take their place, an army of them who consecrated their lives to the belief that failure was impossible. We owe a debt of gratitude to these foremothers for the rights we now take for granted--to vote, to enter into contracts, to apply to the college of our choice, to choose a profession, to sue for divorce and retain custody of our children.

Be glad, let your joy be unconfined, for in this year of our Lord, nineteen hundred and twenty, the Cause has been won. Let your voices ring out and into the hearts of every woman who still yearns for the freedoms we now enjoy. But let us not forget that wage equity is still a contention in many forums, women and minorities do not have equal representation in Congress, and in some parts of the world women remain the legal chattel of their fathers and husbands.

So, dear ladies of this new century, gird yourself with armor and go forth into the battle. It is your turn now. Let us all rise and sing together, "My Country, Tis of Thee."

[THE ENTIRE CAST COMES ON STAGE SINGING]

My country 'tis of thee,
Author of liberty,
To thee we sing.
Long may our land be bright,
With freedom's holy light;
Protect us by thy might,
Let freedom ring.

Our fathers' God, to thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing.
Land where my our fathers died,
Land of our mothers' pride,
From every mountainside,
Great God, our King.

[CURTAIN CALL AND FADE TO BLACK]