

Strange Ladies
by
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A Central Works Method Play
November 2017

STRANGE LADIES – MUSIC

Shout the Revolution of Women, lyrics composed by the Suffragists in prison, music *Charlie is My Darling*, traditional Scottish folk song
The lyrics are recorded in *The Story of the Woman's Party* by Inez Haynes Gilmore and *Jailed for Freedom* by Doris Stevens.

Uncle Sam's Daughter, lyrics by Wm. Hussy Macy Esq., music, *Uncle Sam's Farm*, N. Barker

Everybody's Joining It, lyrics Joe Hill, music *Everybody's Doing It*, Irving Berlin

The Women's Marseillaise, lyrics F. E. M. Macaulay, music *La Marseillaise*, CJ Rouget de Lisle

Woody-Wood, lyrics composed by the Suffragists in prison, music, *Captain Kidd*, traditional sea shanty
Lyrics and story about the song's creation from *Jailed for Freedom*, by Doris Stevens, unabridged version.

The Woman's Party Song, lyrics Josephine Preaston Peabody, music, traditional

Dare You Do It?, Chorus, lyrics Henry W. Roby, music, *The Battle Hymn of the Republic* by William Steffe

Shout the Revolution, Reprise

Cast requires a minimum of six women actors -

Characters:

Alice, Leader of National Woman's Party

Lucy, Alice's right hand

Harriet, Matriarch of the Suffrage Movement

Mary, African- American, fighting for woman Suffrage and Civil Rights, Mary and Harriet are the second generation of Suffrage leaders. All the others are in the third generation.

Phyllis, Mary's daughter

Rose, Suffrage and Union organizer, becomes the partner of Vida

Vida, A new recruit, becomes the partner of Rose

With six actors, the characters of Vida and Phyllis are played by the same actor. Splitting the roles of Vida and Phyllis is possible with a seven actor cast. I can also imagine a larger cast with a chorus participating in the singing and the group scenes.

Cast diversely; the play is most relatable and relevant when the cast reflects American diversity. There is room, particularly in the "Solitary" scene to translate a line into a character's mother tongue. In the Central Works production, Lucy's line in the Solitary Scene, "Mother Mary give me courage" was translated into Spanish to give the character a chance to pray in her mother tongue.

Time: 1916-1917

Settings: Traveling across the USA, Trains, Train Stations,

National Woman's Party Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

The White House Gates

Mary and Phyllis's Home in Washington, D.C.

Occoquan Workhouse Prison, Lorton, VA, the workhouse housed inmates from Washington, D.C. Conditions in the prison were notoriously brutal and unsanitary.

Play Structure: The Play is in three parts. The first part takes place traveling across the US, the National Woman's Party headquarters, and on the picket line at the White House Gates. The second part of the play is all intimate scenes: Mary and her daughter Phyllis at their home, Lucy and Alice in Lucy's room, and finally Vida and Rose together contemplating impending arrests. The third portion of the play is primarily set entirely in Occoquan Workhouse Prison.

Costuming- The Suffragists were aware of the power of stylish clothing to command respect and undermine the image of Suffragists as unattractive spinsters.. Women wore their "best" clothing when representing the Movement. The historical prison clothing consisted of smock-like dresses with hems ending around the knee. However, the Central Works production designed costuming in layers of outerwear/winter coats, and some blouses with jackets. The women took off the outer layers and their socks and shoes to indicate the transition into prison. The actor playing Vida and Phyllis had distinct costumes for each role.

Sound and Lighting Design- Sound indicates the presence and mood of a crowd, arrival and departure of trains, strains of popular music and news from radios. The sounds of the prison guards and matrons, suffragists in separate cells singing, praying, and calling out to each other. The Central Works production had no built set pieces and so used the sound and lighting design to set place, time, and mood.

In Performance- Look for the times for actors to laugh out loud, shout out/improvise a "hear, hear," "yes!" or disagree with a hiss or sigh. Singing should arise as naturally as possible from the action.. The characters sing to rally their comrades, comfort, or gather their courage. The singing style should feel open and comfortable for the actors, avoid recreating a historical 19th century soprano "church choir" feel to the singing.

The play runs 70 minutes without intermission.

Play Development: The play was originally commissioned by Custom Made Theatre Co. and presented as a staged reading in its 2013, Studio CMTC, directed by Robert Estes.

Strange Ladies was then developed as a Central Works Method Play through significant workshops and readings with a wonderfully generous, dedicated, and insightful, creative team. Their voices and perspectives enriched the script in terms of structure, narrative clarity, and character development.

The Central Works Workshop & Development Group for *Strange Ladies*:

Jan Zaifler, Director

Gary Graves, Dramaturgy, Lighting design

Milissa Carey, Musical Direction

The Ensemble:

Milissa Carey* - Harriet

Gwen Loeb* - Rose

Leontyne Mbele- Mong - Mary

Regina Morones - Lucy

Radhika Rao - Vida/Phyllis

Renee Rogoff - Alice

Tammy Berlin - Costumes

Vanessa Ramos- Production/Stage Manager

Gregory Scharpen - Sound

Debbie Shelley - Properties

Central Works Theater, Berkeley, CA, produced the *Strange Ladies* world premiere from 10/14/17-11/19/17. The creative and technical team remained the same as listed above.

The original cast included the following ensemble of actors:

Milissa Carey* - Harriet

Nicol Foster* - Mary

Gwen Loeb* - Rose

Regina Morones - Lucy

Radhika Rao - Vida/Phyllis

Renee Rogoff - Alice

* indicates Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Playwright's Note: *Strange Ladies* is a work of historical fiction that tells the story of a courageous group of women fighting for the right to vote. I drew upon original material of the era, including first-person accounts, autobiographies, newspapers, speeches, all the period music in the play and the work of contemporary historians. I also visited Occoquan Workhouse Prison Museum and the former National Woman's Party Headquarters, now the Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument in D.C.

In researching the Suffrage movement, I found myself in awe of these women's commitment to gaining the right to vote. I realized I mistakenly believed that American women were given, or simply suddenly “won,” the vote. I came to understand how hard and unceasingly American women fought to be included in the nation's political life ... and how the Suffragists' political strategies still inform contemporary social justice movements.

Historical Note: Arrests and sentencing of the Suffrage protestors began in June 1917 and continued steadily through November 1917. The ensuing public outcry forces the Wilson administration to release all the suffrage prisoners on November 27 and 28, 1917. Protests and arrests continue, though not consistently and with less harsh prison sentences, from December 1917 through January 1919.

From May- June 4, 1919, Congress finally passes the woman suffrage amendment and Suffragists spend the next fifteen months campaigning for ratification in the required thirty-six states. On August 26, 1920, the 19th amendment was signed into law.

Passage of the 19th amendment brought many women into the electorate, but the work toward universal suffrage was and is far from over.

Lucy in a spotlight, alone, contemplating. She begins humming and then sings the chorus of *Shout the Revolution*.

LUCY

Shout the Revolution
Of Women, of Women
Shout the Revolution of Liberty

SCENE 1: TRAVELERS

Alice in a spotlight.

Alice

Democracy demands the immediate ratification of a Federal Amendment guaranteeing all American women the right to vote.

LUCY

“The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied on account of sex.”

Mary

“Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.”

Lights shift. Lucy has packets with train tickets and travel itineraries to hand out to Harriet, Rose, and Mary, as they meet with Alice and Lucy to get their travel instructions.

ALICE

(to Harriet) Southern route. Five am train out.

HARRIET

What are the sleeping arrangements?

LUCY

On the train

HARRIET

The schedule's too fast.

ALICE

Find hotels where there's time.

LUCY

Muster through.

LUCY

Visit every city, town, every farm, every village, every corner.

HARRIET

(to Alice) Too few women, not enough planning, not enough time.

ALICE

(to Rose), Start in New York, then onto Pennsylvania, Ohio, all the way to Wisconsin.

(to Harriet) Better to recruit a few committed women than hundreds with no action in their souls.

Harriet in spotlight.

Harriet

Sixty-nine long years of women demanding their vote and still women only have full suffrage in eleven Western states.

Rose in a spotlight.

ROSE

Too much blood has been spilled, too many lives lost for working girls and women to ever forget. Give working women our ballots and we'll elect politicians who'll demand safe working conditions in every factory and sweatshop. Our labor unions must stand with suffrage.

Lights shift back to HQ.

ALICE

(to Mary) Eastern Seaboard- Maryland through Maine. Churches, grange halls, public spaces are best though a living room works. Speak on the steps if some official refuses to unlock your venue.

Mary in a spotlight.

MARY

Fifty-three years since emancipation, Colored women have built schools and businesses, are now teachers, lawyers, doctors, journalists, we are citizens and patriots yet we cannot vote.

LUCY

(to Alice) This is Vida, Inez's sister.

Alice greets Vida, dressed in mourning.

ALICE

(to Vida) I am so sorry for your loss. Your words will move even the staunchest opponent.

Project your voice. Do not rush.

Vida in a spotlight.

VIDA

Many of you remember, (composes herself) Forgive me. Many of you heard my sister, Inez, speak publicly for woman suffrage. Now, I carry her banner forward. Join me.

Lights shift

ALICE

(to Lucy) Go west and rally all the voting women and men to aid their disenfranchised American sisters.

Lucy in spotlight.

LUCY

The time is now. We will be voters.

Vida in a spotlight.

VIDA

My sister died of exhaustion, traveling on this very campaign. No more lives should be spent in this struggle. The cause is too reasonable, too just, to require any additional argument.

Lucy in spotlight.

LUCY

Woman can neither live freely nor fully contribute to society, when she has no voice in making laws or electing public officials.

Lights shift, Mary in spotlight, speaking at a rally.

MARY

We are disenfranchised citizens. Colored men and women need the ballot to elect officials who will end both the murdering lynch mobs and Jim Crow segregation.

Lights shift, Rose in a spotlight, speaking at a rally.

ROSE

Girls, as young as twelve, sewing your clothes for pennies, died locked inside a burning factory. All of us are clothed from the sweated trades, we benefit from the warmth and protection of clothes sewn in fire-trap, unregulated buildings. We owe these garment workers the protection of the vote.

Lights shift, Harriet in a spotlight, speaking at a rally.

HARRIET

For sixty-nine years, we spoke on stages and street corners, petitioned, paraded, lobbied, and even appealed to our Supreme court, and - we still do not all have our ballots.

Vida

There is much modern women can contribute to our country and to keeping peace. The ballot by federal amendment must be ratified now.

Lucy in a spotlight.

LUCY

If you fear that politics are too dirty for ladies, then please make way and let us clean up government. We will be voters.

Rose in a spotlight.

ROSE

We need our ballots and our unions.

Mary in a spotlight.

MARY

We need a federal amendment ensuring the vote for all women.

Harriet in a spotlight.

HARRIET

Those with power are not inclined to share, even though justice, and our paid federal taxes demand we have the vote.

Lights shift, Lucy in a spotlight, speaking at a rally.

LUCY

We appeal to President Wilson, move a federal amendment through to ratification.

Lights shift. Vida at a rally.

VIDA

My sister's last spoken words, directed at President Wilson," how long, how long, Mr President, must women wait for liberty?"

Lights shift.

LUCY

We will be voters!

ALICE

How long Mr. President?

MARY

How long?

ROSE

How long?

HARRIET

How long?

ALICE

How long must women wait for liberty?

Lucy starts the singing and then the others join singly and in pairs, singing with fervor. *Shout the Revolution* from Irwin, *Alice Paul and the National Woman's Party*, tune of *Charlie is My Darling*)

Shout the Revolution
Of Women, of Women
Shout the Revolution of Liberty

Rise, glorious women of the earth,
The voiceless and the free,
United Strength assures the birth
Of True Democracy.
Invincible our army,
Forward, forward,
Strong in faith, we're marching
To Victory.

Shout the Revolution
Of Women, of Women
Shout the Revolution of Liberty
Shout the Revolution

Of Women, of Women
Shout the Revolution of Liberty

Beat. Blackout.

SCENE 2: LET'S PICKET

Lights shift. January, 1917. Lucy, Vida, Alice, Mary, Rose, and Harriet at the National Woman's Party Headquarters, Washington, D.C.

ROSE

He just walked out on us.

LUCY

How is he so unmoved?

VIDA

Unmoved even by death...

MARY

A father with three daughters, a father who does not stand up for his own children's equality.

ROSE

He chooses to do nothing.

HARRIET

I thought today finally I would see the President become an ally. I am confounded.

MARY

(imitating Wilson) Ladies, refrain from playing at politics. Women will gain the vote as their education and achievements merit it.

LUCY

Mister President Wilson, Sir, if that were true we would already have the vote.

HARRIET

What effective protest is left?

VIDA

Smash windows.

MARY

You would sincerely regret that.

HARRIET

One shattered window, you tarnish the whole movement.

VIDA

Look to the Pankhursts!

ROSE

The who?

LUCY

We reject their violence.

Lucy quickly whispers to Rose about the Pankhursts.

VIDA

The time has come to blow-up mailboxes.

ALICE

I believe peaceful strategies are going to win us the vote. We harm no people and damage no property. Effective strategy requires rousing sympathy and empathy.

LUCY

Destruction makes people hate us and our cause.

VIDA

We've seen from the British ladies, blowing up mailboxes impacts commerce, disrupts shipping and communication.

LUCY

The British Suffragists dumped ink, acid, and tar into mail boxes and nearly wrecked their cause. People hated them for attacking a postal system that worked for everyone.

VIDA

They got lots of press attention

HARRIET

Negative attention.

ROSE

You talk too casually about blowing things up.

MARY

(to Vida) Your sister was a peace activist.

VIDA

(to Alice) My sister died from exhaustion on your useless campaign.

ALICE

(to Vida) Do not denigrate your sister's death or our cause. (to all) We have only one goal, to peacefully get American women voting through a federal amendment.

VIDA

I'm not here to prove I'm a lady. I have one goal, I mean to get American women voting, right now, however I can.

ALICE

If you mean to pursue our shared mission by destructive means, then leave.

VIDA

Convince me you have a meaningful plan.

ALICE

Keeping pressure on the President is the way forward.

MARY

We did not elect President Wilson; he has no fear of our reprisals.

ALICE

We must stand at the White house gates and remind President Wilson of his debt to half the country's citizens. A debt collector waiting at the door will be paid.

VIDA

Do not tell me of longer parades.

ALICE

Not a parade. A picket, women standing sentry. An ongoing public reminder, that American women are due the vote. Now we make our request to the President in public, every day until we are voters.

LUCY

Yes! A steady march of women to the White House.

ALICE

We stand as Silent Sentinels for justice, eloquent in our presence and numbers. Showing the President and the public, women are silenced without a ballot. Six days a week, two shifts of sentinels a day.

ROSE

So we strike outside the White House six days a week until when?

LUCY

Picket. Until the federal amendment is in the constitution.

VIDA

No one stands in the same place for months at a time.

ROSE

Union women do, striking workers block the factory from scabs.

VIDA

So we are going on strike against the White House?

LUCY

A picket, not a strike.

ALICE

No one has ever picketed the White House .

MARY

White House security will not allow crowds near the President.

ALICE

An orderly line, never a crowd. We have a right to peaceful assembly.

MARY

We may have the legal right but that does not mean they will permit us to gather.
Your ladies will hardly welcome arrest.

ALICE

Any woman who is afraid to picket should not picket.

MARY

We ought to prepare for confrontations with the police.

ROSE

Mary is right. A parade is one day and done. After, the ladies all go home and rest. The picket keeps going on and on until at best a resolution, or worst the police hit us with their sticks and drag girls to jail. The Union girls are accustomed to all of that but (looks toVida.) the society ladies are too tender.

LUCY

Then the (Lucy looks to Vida.) society ladies must learn from the (Lucy looks to Rose) working women.

VIDA

Who are you calling a society lady?

Beat

They all laugh, except Alice. Vida looks Rose right in the eyes.

VIDA

If Rose is in then I'm in.

Beat.

ROSE

(to Vida) I'm in.

ALICE

Lucy is with me. Rose is with me. Vida is with me. Who else is with me?

MARY

The police may decide not to treat all the ladies as ladies. Even when our actions are legal.

ALICE

This is not the deep South.

MARY

Our capital is a Southern city. We do not all share the same risk.

ALICE

When our Colored sisters are on the line we will surround them with friendly neighbors. Are you with me?

MARY

(to Alice) I need your promise that you and this organization will maintain the text of the amendment as written. Ensuring the vote for all women.

ALICE

This organization means to ratify the amendment, exactly as originally written.

MARY

Let us see how far we travel together.

ALICE

Yes, Harriet?

HARRIET

We cannot picket if America enters the war.

VIDA

Wilson promised to keep us out of war.

HARRIET

Do you really believe that?

ALICE

I will not be constrained by concerns about a war my country has yet to join.

HARRIET

It will be seen as treason to picket a sitting president in wartime.

ALICE

Whatever happens, whatever comes, we must do as much as we can right now.

LUCY

We are ready.

MARY

Dear Harriet, what do you propose if not this picket?

Beat.

ALICE

We picket in the morning.

Alice begins singing *Uncle Sam's Daughter* with Lucy quickly joining in followed by the others.

Uncle Sam's Daughter, lyrics by Wm. Hussy Macy, tune *Uncle Sam's Farm*

ALICE

Sisters, let us rouse the nation.

ALL

Let our words all hearts inspire,
Until tardy legislation grant us all we may desire.
Proclaim the truth by day and night.

Alice calls out over the singing and the women quickly respond.

ALICE

Form a line!

ALL

Deny it if you can,
That every woman has the right
To vote as well as man.

Chorus

Come along, come along
Speak, write, and sing.
Keep the music rising with a swell on every note,
Til Uncle Sam is wise enough to give us all a vote.

The women exit together singing.

SCENE 3: STANDING AT THE GATES

The women picket in front of the White House with a large banner reading, "Votes for Women." Sound of traffic.

Vida yawns.

VIDA

I expected exhilaration at least. I'm cold, I wore the wrong shoes, and I'm desperate for another cup of coffee.

LUCY

We just arrived.

VIDA

Over two hours ago. How do the Union girls stand on their picket lines for weeks on end?

ROSE

Stretch, sing, chant, anything to keep warm.

ALICE

We are silent sentinels. Eyes forward with vigorous attention.

ROSE

Our Alice changes from Quaker pacifist to martinet.

ALICE

Solemn and silent, thank you.

HARRIET

No one expects a performance.

MARY

Just standing right here, we are spectacle enough.

The ladies struggle to be silent and still.

ROSE

(to Vida) Never have I done so much nothing in my whole life.

Rose hums, begins singing (*Everybody's Joining It*, Joe Hill's lyrics set to Irving Berlin's music for *Everybody's Doing It*, with Vida.

Vida isn't familiar with the tune but is game to sing along/hum along as best she can. Rose and Vida begin dancing, possibly a two-step. This should be flirtatious, playful, and fun.

ROSE (WITH VIDA JOINING IN)

Everybody's joining it, joining what? Joining it!
Everybody's joining it, joining what? Joining it!
One Big Union, that's the workers' choice,
One Big Union, that's the only choice,
One Big Union, shout with all your voice;
2X

Rose and Vida eventually notice Alice giving them a "stop now" look. They stop dancing, and get back in the line.
Beat. Sound of a car.

HARRIET

Look, look, its him!

VIDA

Where?

MARY

In the car, right there.

ALICE

Raise the banner.

ROSE

(yells out) Mr President, What will you do for woman suffrage?

VIDA

He tipped his hat.

MARY

What did he say?

ROSE

Nothing. Didn't even have the driver slow down.

LUCY

He smiled.

ROSE

More of a smirk than a smile.

MARY

He's gone.

LUCY

I saw a real smile.

ROSE

Then he's amused to see women playing citizens.

VIDA

(to Rose) Don't be upset yet, so far, so grand.

ROSE

We'll see what happens when sleet's coming down.

VIDA

(to Mary) Next time, do you think he'll stop and listen?-

ALICE

This is much, too much talking on the line.

MARY

(to Alice) About the talking, we need to reconsider. It is too difficult to be quiet when people approach us with earnest and polite questions.

LUCY

(to Alice) I agree.

HARRIET

(to Alice) I strongly agree.

ALICE

We can debate this but not while we are on the line.

The ladies continue to stand.

Blackout.

SCENE 4: THE WAR

Headquarters. April, 1917. Morning. War is declared.
Sound of “Over There” playing on the radio.

Alice on stage, thinking. Lucy enters.

LUCY

Have you heard?

There is a moment of despair about the war. Alice looks to the banner indicating, “Get the banner. We’re still picketing.” Mary enters, seeing Lucy preparing the banner and looks to Alice for a moment. Mary is ready to picket. Harriet rushes in.

HARRIET

We are at war. Stop the pickets.

ALICE

The pickets are working. We have to keep the pressure on Wilson.

HARRIET

He’s under enough pressure from Imperial Germany. Americans will see treason in your picket line.

LUCY

(to Harriet) They will see determination.

HARRIET

We must win the vote by mobilizing women for the war effort.

ALICE

The President brought us into this war without our vote. Moving forward is our only possible position.

HARRIET

I disagree.

Rose and Vida enter together, laughing, happy in each other’s company. Everyone looks at them.

ALICE

I trust you two slept well.

ROSE

What's going on?

ALICE

(to Rose and Vida) War is declared. And Harriet is overly concerned about public opinion. Harriet proposes retreat. Stand down. Stop the pickets. But we are not cowards who run from a winning plan!

MARY

Harriet, my dear friend, I stand with you in assisting our allies in Europe. But I won't set my banner down.

HARRIET

Traitors, the people will say.

ROSE

I am called an anarchist for my union work. Factory owners were already pushing to remove any limits on hours and days worked by women in war manufacturing. Industry uses war as the excuse to stop every labor protection. I'll join no official war effort.

VIDA

My sister, above all, was a peace activist.

HARRIET

Picketing gives ammunition to those who already call us radical, militant, even stupid. Now add: seditious. Continue the picket and you destroy the work of generations of women.

ALICE

Continuing the picket, even in the face of opposition, is the best demonstration that our demand does not stop.

HARRIET

You will set the cause back for decades to come.

ALICE

I will not use the war to gain the vote.

HARRIET

You twist my words.

MARY

This organization may not serve the war effort but each of us still can.

LUCY

Please don't advocate splitting our focus. No one can effectively serve two causes.

MARY

I have never had the luxury of fighting for one cause at a time.

HARRIET

What is the sailor in uniform or the newly enlisted officer going to feel when he sees the White House surrounded by his mother and sisters and sweethearts?

VIDA

People are going to hate us now.

HARRIET

Be honest, you can already feel the change.

MARY

We are all patriots. We would serve the country better if we were voters.

HARRIET

You want woman suffrage passed? Be a patriot first.

MARY

I will find a way to serve the war effort too. Right now, I am committed to picketing on the next shift.

HARRIET

Half my family is in England. I have two nephews at the Western front, my niece is a nurse at a field hospital. She sees soldier after soldier blown apart by mortar fire. One after another, day and night the young men are carried in.

LUCY

Then why send over more young men to die?

HARRIET

How are you so heartless?

Come to my home and read every letter, every postcard with a picture of a decimated town after the battle moves on. My niece is one young woman in one field hospital, multiply her experience by the known map of the war. She writes that young men come in with shattered bodies and minds.

You stand outside the White House gates picketing President Wilson while Europe becomes a continent of widows and orphans. The time for standing in the street is past.

ALICE

We must agree to lovingly disagree.

HARRIET

The Kaiser will take great comfort in photos of the American ladies denouncing their own President.

Harriet exits. Everyone left behind looks at each other.

Blackout.

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SCENE 5: RIOT

On the picket line, just before sunset. Sounds of a gathering, angry crowd. We hear the women's thoughts.

The crowd gathers fast.
MARY

Hissing.
VIDA

Booing.
LUCY

Federal clerks just off work.
ROSE

Enlisted men in new uniforms.
ALICE

Commuters heading home.
MARY

All stop to glare.
ALICE

What did you just call me?
MARY

Go away!
LUCY

Eye to eye with faces full of revulsion.
MARY

This is nothing. I've led parades eight thousand strong
ALICE

A man in a new suit spits on me.
LUCY

A shiver through the line.
ROSE

Fear. MARY

I stand. ROSE

I don't run. LUCY

I look for any path out. None VIDA

A young man lunges. ROSE

Tugs hard on the banner. MARY

Hold fast. ALICE

Rose yells out.

Back off, scab. ROSE

He slinks away. VIDA

Pressed right against the gates. MARY

I wish I stayed home. VIDA

I believe in the rule of law. I have the right to stand here. ALICE

Three more charge. LUCY

And another two. ALICE

Grabbing.	VIDA
Tearing the banner.	ROSE
Shoving.	MARY
Right at me.	LUCY
Get away.	MARY
The mob surges	ROSE
Sounds of rending cloth.	VIDA
Our line breaks.	LUCY
Scatter.	ALICE
Defeat.	LUCY
Lucy falls. Catches herself. Tumbles.	ROSE
Mary.	VIDA
Knocked over. Banner remnant in my hands.	MARY
I'm down.	ALICE
Grab Rose's hand.	VIDA

Running ROSE

Police. VIDA

Calling out. MARY

No one helps us. LUCY

Men paying out five dollars for every stolen banner. ROSE

Rose! VIDA

Where's Vida? ROSE

Our picket's done in. ALICE

Around us a broken line of women. LUCY

Get up. Make more banners. Come back tomorrow. ALICE

Lights change.

SCENE 6: WARNING

Lights up. Harriet “writes” a letter to Alice. Alice on stage
“reading” the letter

HARRIET

My dear Alice: I cannot stay silent. Given the rising tensions between picketers and the public, President Wilson will no longer tolerate your presence at the White House gates. Stop the pickets or risk arrest. Look to our British sisters, they were arrested and gained nothing. Arrests, even wrongful ones, will not win our cause. Now only women working with government can accomplish our goals.

Please, let us refrain from fighting to the last ditch, as it were, over a single strategy. I place my trust in your wisdom. Harriet.

Harriet exits. Alice crumples the letter. Blackout.

PART 2: FRIENDS AND FAMILY

SCENE 7: MARY & PHYLLIS

Mary's home in Washington D.C. Lights up on Phyllis.
Mary enters.

MARY

Phyllis, we should go.

PHYLLIS

Mama, I'm not going and neither should you.

MARY

Why not?

PHYLLIS

I don't want you arrested.

MARY

The police haven't arrested anyone.

PHYLLIS

Last night you came home and said there was a scuffle on the line. This morning's paper says there was a riot.

MARY

I doubt the same rabble rousers will come back today.

PHYLLIS

Why do you think today will be any safer?

MARY

The right question to ask ourselves is suppose no one pickets?

PHYLLIS

The right question is what's safe for you and me? I've seen the mood of the crowd for myself, even before any scuffles or riots. Felt the contempt of the police. Arrests are coming.

MARY

We have to continue.

PHYLLIS

I saw you limping last night; you're hurt.

MARY

I'm fine. I just bruised my ankle.

PHYLLIS

I care for your well being, so should you.

MARY

I do and I care about your well being. I care enough to get the ballot and end Jim Crow. So come with me today.

PHYLLIS

I want to see you safe and well. Please stay home with me.

MARY

Staying home never won the vote.

PHYLLIS

I would come with you, if I thought that women gaining the vote, meant all of us getting to vote. That somehow women winning the vote swept away poll taxes and un-passable literacy tests for us. But that's not true.

Mary puts down the coat.

MARY

Oh Phyllis, do you mean to lecture your weary mother on the hurdles between her and the polling place? Once the ladies get the vote, then we go through the courts to overturn the wrongful ways we're denied the ballot. But first we need the right.

PHYLLIS

So spend your energy with the Colored women fighting for the vote.

MARY

I have to stand everywhere women are fighting for the vote. I am willing to risk arrest for the ballot.

PHYLLIS

However harsh the sentences for the white ladies, yours will be harsher still.

MARY

Getting the vote is important enough to take that risk. Without the vote we will never end segregation.

PHYLLIS

You're risking jail for white ladies who don't give a damn about ending segregation.

Beat.

Mama, please don't go.

Phyllis reaches after Mary.

MARY

There's no safety in hiding out at home.

Mary exits. Phyllis watches her leave. Blackout.

SCENE 8: ALICE & LUCY

Lights up. Lucy enters, rushing dressed for traveling and carrying a carpetbag. Alice enters after her.

ALICE

Lucy?

Where are you going?

Are you crying?

Beat.

What's wrong?

LUCY

My sister died. They couldn't stop the bleeding. The baby is fine; as fine as she can be without her mother.

ALICE

I'm sorry.

Alice reaches for Lucy's hand.

LUCY

My train's in twenty minutes.

ALICE

When will you be back?

LUCY

I don't know.

ALICE

Take some time with your family. Grieve. Then come back.

LUCY

I don't even know who is going to raise this child.

ALICE

Her father.

LUCY

Her father's never had a baby before. He doesn't even know how to hold a baby!

ALICE

He'll learn.

LUCY

She's my niece. She has no mother.

ALICE

I have never seen you show the slightest interest in any baby.

LUCY

That's not true.

ALICE

You look right into the mother's eyes and pretend the baby isn't there.

LUCY

Right, I treat the mother like she is actually there. Not cooing and waving at babies too little to understand.

ALICE

They will put that baby in your arms and walk away. You will be trapped.

LUCY

She's my sister's child.

ALICE

Harriet's gone. How can you leave me alone to do our work, the work we started together?

LUCY

Trust me. I'll be back if I can come back.

ALICE

Don't go at all. Your sister is dead whether you go to the funeral or mourn here.

LUCY

Listen to yourself.

ALICE

I only meant you can't help her now.

LUCY

I'll be there to say good-bye, smooth my sister's hair, she liked the part a certain way. Pray at her funeral mass. Take care of her by caring for the living people she left behind.

Meet my new niece. Kiss her and comfort her, see her baptized. Show her we've all come together for her. Help figure out a plan. I won't know what they need until I'm there.

ALICE

I can't do this without you.

Alice tears up.

You help me be braver than I am. Be honest, is it the fear of being sent to jail that makes you want to run away?

LUCY

I'm not running away. I can't risk jail when this baby needs me.

ALICE

How will you feel when that baby is a woman grown and still fighting for the vote?

Beat.

LUCY

Sometimes, at night, memories of Holloway come over me.

ALICE

Holloway Prison is an ocean away, all the way in London. Nothing there can touch us here.

LUCY

Some part of me, when I'm sleeping, if there is a a scritch-scratch, a crinkle, the wind....I jump awake, looking for rats.

ALICE

Are there rats here?

LUCY

Only my memories of Holloway. I hate rats. My dreams are full of prison: the stomping matrons, women crying out, London going on outside without me, the smell of sick and piss. I wake up and can't breathe. Even praying doesn't lift those memories.

ALICE

Don't think about it.

LUCY

I'm scared of being trapped in jail

ALICE

Then be scared and we can deal with that. But don't use this baby as an excuse to quit with dignity.

LUCY

If I wanted to leave I would already be gone.

ALICE

Every women here looks to you for how to be brave.

LUCY

Then they're fools.

ALICE

When I'm afraid, I see myself standing with you.
All of us have fears to set aside.

LUCY

How can I, in clear conscience, lead women to risk prison?

ALICE

You respect other women enough to let them choose.

LUCY

Respect me enough to let me choose my path.

Lucy picks up her carpet bag. Beat.

Grant me some damn understanding.

Lucy waits a moment but Alice has turned away. Lucy leaves and then Alice looks after her.

Blackout.

SCENE 9: VIDA & ROSE

Lights up. Morning. Vida and Rose, together in a quiet corner of Headquarters.

VIDA

Getting arrested is taking this all too far. My parents already lost one daughter.

ROSE

You're the best person out of all of us to get arrested.

VIDA

What does that mean?

ROSE

Look at you, all your time is your own, you have no children-

VIDA

Neither do you.

ROSE

And I'm getting ready to be arrested. No one counts on your wages for their bread and roof.

VIDA

Well...

ROSE

You can't think of what to say because it's true.

VIDA

I was going to say, what about your mother?

ROSE

My mother? She'll be the first one in line at the polls when women get the vote.

VIDA

You're responsible for her.

ROSE

She's responsible for herself.

VIDA

Then who will pay her rent?

ROSE

I'm not running away and using my mother as an excuse.

VIDA

You talk so much about family responsibility, about loyalty.

ROSE

You talk so much about honoring your sister's legacy.

VIDA

Let's join the National Association, win the vote in New York. Double the number of women voting in the whole country through one state referendum.

ROSE

The whole point is to get women voting everywhere, not state by state.

VIDA

I don't want to get arrested. I don't want to see you arrested either. So let's leave for New York, work with the Nationals, not get arrested, rent a place near your mother.

ROSE

No one wants to get arrested. No one. The question is who is willing?

VIDA

What if someone finds out we're together in prison?

Beat.

Let's go to New York.

ROSE

I mean to stay here and see this through.

VIDA

I can't understand your loyalty. I hear what the ladies on the line say.

ROSE

What do they say?

VIDA

"I won't stand on the line with Jews."

ROSE

Who said that?

VIDA

That fund-raising director. We should go where they don't talk that way.

ROSE

Where exactly?

You said yourself, we're here to win the vote, not make friends.

VIDA

Why do you even want to go to jail with these women?

ROSE

They're the ones working hardest for the vote. Flaws and all, these ladies win the ballot.

VIDA

Alice plays at Caesar. Lucy's in New York.

ROSE

Alice knows, Americans will be outraged when we are wrongfully arrested simply for asking to vote.

Beat

I love you, even if you go to New York and I stay here. Tell me, what do you want?

VIDA

I want to go to my sister's grave and tell her we won; women are voting. Be peaceful now. Then I'll feel restful. Then, let's be two ladies in our own Brooklyn apartment. The war over, everyone home, and everyone safe.

Rose

A step at a time, one foot forward by one foot forward.

Rose starts singing *The Women's Marseillaise*, (sung to the tune of the Marseillaise) Rose begins preparing to go out on the picket line with Vida quickly joining her. They put on winter coats and help each other with coat buttons, hats, and fixing collars.

Arise! ye daughters of a land
That vaunts its liberty!
May restless rulers understand

Vida joins the singing.

That women must be free

That women will be free.
Hark! hark! the trumpet's calling!
Who'd be a laggard in the fight?
With vict'ry even now in sight
And stubborn foemen backward falling.

Mary and Alice enter with the banner and begin forming the picket line, joined by Vida and Rose, all four are singing on "To Freedom's cause till death."

To Freedom's cause till death
We swear our fealty.
March on! March on! Face to the dawn

Lucy enters with her carpet bag, all stop singing and welcome her.

Lucy!

ALICE

You're back.

ROSE

I belong here.

LUCY

Lucy starts the singing again and takes her place on the picket line. The group, without Harriet, finishes the singing with great energy and resolve.

ALL
March on! March on! Face to the dawn
The dawn of liberty.
March on! March on! Face to the dawn
The dawn of liberty.

The sounds of police sirens.

ALICE
Don't resist. Civility and restraint! This is a peaceful protest.

Lights change. Alice takes the banner off stage. Lucy, Mary, Rose, and Vida wait together to be processed into prison. Then, one at a time, they take off their shoes and remove their outdoor layers, winter coats and hats and then light jackets. The prison clothing is the dress or the blouse and skirt under these two layers of coats. Harriet enters with a second letter to Alice.

SCENE 10: HARRIET'S SECOND LETTER

Lucy, Mary, Rose, and Vida, continue getting processed into prison and taking off their shoes and coats. Harriet reads her letter to Alice.

HARRIET

Dear Alice,

Remember when we first sat under my banner inscribed, "Come, let us reason together."

Alice enters and listens /"reads" Harriet's letter

Keep that sentiment in mind and consider, how terrible when sisters lead one another into harm's way.

I see in every paper our comrades are sent for seven months to Occoquan, Virginia's notorious work house. Either you do not know the truth of the place or you ignore the reality. I would not want my worst enemy sent to that barbaric prison of forced labor in the guise of rehabilitation. Dogs are sent howling after women attempting escape. Harsh punishments meted out for the most minor infractions. The basic conditions for nutrition and health are purposely ignored.

I hear that as punishment, women prisoners are moved into the solitary confinement cells in the men's prison, and left intentionally vulnerable to assault. You have long held we should not expect other women to carry burdens we are unwilling to carry.

Will you with a clear mind and easy heart leave friends vulnerable to rape? I entreat you, pay the fines, and quickly bring them home. If money is the obstacle, then I will get you any amount necessary.

Alice exits at some point before Harriet finishes reading the letter.

I will support you publicly and say you did what any good leader would do by bringing these women home. I will refrain from publicly asking you how you live with yourself, when you are free of prison and others are locked away, how you sleep soundly at night when you are safe at home, in a familiar bed with clean sheets, the door locked against any unexpected intruder. There is no true victory in abandoning friends we love to rot in prison.

See reason.
Harriet.

Harriet exits.

PART 3: PRISON

SCENE 11: THE LETTER/POLITICAL PRISONERS

Lights up. Lucy, Vida, Mary, and Rose, in prison. No one has shoes. Beat.

VIDA

Have you seen any of the others?

Head shakes “no.”

Why did they suddenly put us back together?

Beat. No one knows.

Why did they separate us out?

MARY

They don't like us talking to the other prisoners.

ROSE

Their afraid we'll organize them.

VIDA

I'm not organizing anything. I've spent the last two weeks scrubbing the Colored women's toilets.

MARY

Are you saying scrubbing out the Colored women's toilets is somehow worse than scrubbing any other toilets?

Beat.

You disappoint me. I thought we were standing together.

LUCY

We do stand together.

Mary to Vida.

MARY

Do not fight for your liberty without mine.

LUCY

We need to put aside disagreement and get them to recognize us as political prisoners

VIDA

We were arrested for blocking the sidewalk.

MARY

No one gets arrested and sent to prison for blocking the sidewalk.

ROSE

(to Vida) We were arrested for saying we want to vote! We were sent to prison to break the movement. Its a political crime, in the government's eyes, but they pretend its a traffic offense.

LUCY

Wilson doesn't believe in the right of assembly and free speech. We need to be sure the public understands that.

MARY

And let them know how we're treated here.

VIDA

They treat us worse than dogs. They hit me.

ROSE

Who?

VIDA

The redhead with a long braid.

ROSE

Hatchet?

VIDA

She hits me every time she sees me talking to someone else.

MARY

They're afraid we'll turn all the women here into suffragists.

ROSE

The Warden calls us those Strange Ladies.

They laugh. Vida stops laughing first.

LUCY

They chained me up with my hands over my head and left me that way. All night. I wanted to die.

VIDA

What happened?

Lucy does not answer. Beat.

ROSE

They want to shut us up.

VIDA

People need to know this.

LUCY

We need to get a letter out.

ROSE

Demanding the status of political prisoners.

VIDA

How? They cut off our mail.

MARY

There's a women I work with in the laundry, she can get a letter out for a nickel.

ROSE

I can get us a pencil in the sewing shop.

VIDA

I can get us paper, from the toilets. But, a nickel.....

MARY

I've got the nickel.

LUCY

All right, who do we send it to?

MARY

The Commissioners of the District of Columbia.

VIDA

Who?

ROSE

They run this hell-hole. They supervise Whittaker.

VIDA

The warden?

ROSE

The head crook. He lines his pockets from this place. Here we have a whole working farm and all the prisoners are starving for decent food.

LUCY

Listen, when we get out of here we'll go all over the country together and turn every harm we suffer, even every worm in our food, into another reason why women need the vote now. Americans will rally for us when they hear how we're treated.

VIDA

So, what do we say?

Lights change. Mary in spotlight.

MARY

Respectfully submitted to Commissioners of the District of Columbia.

Rose in spotlight.

ROSE

We, the undersigned, demand the status of political prisoners.

Vida in spotlight.

VIDA

We demand access to legal counsel, medical care, and our mail.

Lucy in spotlight.

LUCY

When our country is fighting for democracy overseas, you cannot make it a crime to ask for the vote at home.

Lights shift. Rose begins whistling the tune for *Woody-Wood*. Lucy taps out the beat and then begins singing. Lucy leads *Woody-wood*, to the tune of the sea shanty *Captain Kidd*. Verse two adapted, Gary Graves & Milissa Carey.

LUCY

We worried Woody-wood,
As we stood, as we stood,

Lucy brings the others into the song, staggered their entrances. The women use the floor, the wall or, clapping their hands and tapping their feet to mark the beat.

We worried Woody-wood,
As we stood.
We worried Woody-wood,
And we worried him right good;
We worried him right good as we stood.

Lights shift. Rose calls out. "Louder! Are you listening Mr. President?"

ALL

We'll not get out on bail,
Go to jail, go to jail-
We prefer to go to jail
We prefer to go to jail-we're not frail.

Lucy invents and teaches a new verse.

LUCY

We asked him for the vote,

ALL

As we stood, as we stood,
We asked him for the vote
As we stood,

LUCY

We asked him for the vote,
But he just ignored our note,

ALL

He just ignored our note so we stood.

ALL

We'll not get out on bail,
Go to jail, go to jail-
We'll not get out on bail, go to jail, go to jail.
We prefer to go to jail
We prefer to go to jail-we're not frail.

The song ends with big energy. Then the women are still in jail. Beat. Rose sighs. Blackout

SCENE 12: ALICE & HARRIET

Lights shift. Headquarters at night, Harriet waits. Alice enters carrying a large can of fuel. Alice is surprised to see Harriet.

ALICE

Harriet, why are you here?

HARRIET

I read in the Post today that our friends have been on hunger strike for a week.

ALICE

If you read that I believe it.

HARRIET

This has to stop.

ALICE

I'm confident the women in prison are adults making wise choices for themselves.

HARRIET

Women we both call friends are choosing to do themselves the most terrible self-harm. You risk lives.

ALICE

When every other means of protest is denied women, then we hunger strike.

HARRIET

You're their leader. Care for their well-being. You risk their lives for publicity.

ALICE

We must keep pressure on President Wilson. The women in prison petitioned for the status of political prisoners and were harshly denied. They hunger strike in protest.

HARRIET

How does a peaceful movement justify advocating self-harm?

Beat.

The costs for standing with you grow dear.

ALICE

I have pressing matters.

HARRIET

You do everything except what needs to be done.

ALICE

We are doing everything possible to have the charges overturned and the women released.

Harriet points to the fuel can.

HARRIET

What part of your legal strategy is that?

ALICE

Picketing by day is no longer enough. We protest at night.

HARRIET

What is that?

ALICE

Kerosene.

HARRIET

What are you burning?

ALICE

Watchfires. Outside the White House gates.

HARRIET

This is not your silent sentinels.

ALICE

Watchfires for justice. Its dark at night. We need the fire.

HARRIET

You rouse a mob.

ALICE

Do not be so alarmed.

HARRIET

You've confused spectacle with effective action.

ALICE

We are making the final push to get the federal amendment ratified.

HARRIET

You are off the track. Lighting fires is not effective political action, there is no benefit to women, only spectacle and publicity and a great cost to our sisters in prison and the women who get arrested for this. The sentences get harsher and harsher.

Inez is dead. One martyr is already too many. I beg you-- pay the fines, bring everyone home, stop any further spectacle with risk of arrest.

ALICE

Get out of my way.

HARRIET

Please listen. If you continue with this course Wilson will have you arrested and committed.

ALICE

Don't credit rumors.

HARRIET

There are places worse than prison. Trust me, they're waiting for you to put one foot on the picket line, the smallest infraction. They're planning to put you in St Elizabeths Hospital for the Insane. And leave you there.

ALICE

They know where to find me.

Alice exits with Harriet looking after her. Blackout.

SCENE 13: HUNGER STRIKE/ TEMPTATION

Lights up. Night in the prison. Lucy, Mary, Rose, and Vida around a tray of food.

VIDA

The chicken looks good.

ROSE

Care was taken with our meal.

MARY

To tempt us.

LUCY

Rats can eat that chicken before I will.

Beat.

VIDA

How does anyone even know we're hunger striking?

LUCY

Word is getting out.

ROSE

How?

LUCY

This prison is too big, has too many people coming in and going out to keep any secrets. Five women I worked with at the dairy got released. I asked them all to talk to Alice.

ROSE

Just because you asked doesn't mean even one of them went to Alice.

MARY

Women getting out have their own priorities. Even sympathetic women.

LUCY

We've all answered questions from the regular prisoners, about stopping work, about stopping eating. Word must be getting out. Why else were the Marines called in?

VIDA

I have no idea.

ROSE

Especially while we're at war.

MARY

To keep order in the prison.

VIDA

What are they so afraid of?

MARY

Whittaker is scared the whole prison will stop working.

LUCY

Or join our hunger strike.

MARY

He's afraid of our ideas, of what we're doing.

LUCY

The Marines showed up after our letter got out.

Beat.

ROSE

Whittaker didn't bring in the Marines to keep us from writing anymore letters. He's afraid the prison is going to riot.

LUCY

The marines are here to prevent us from having contact with the outside and the outside having contact with us, which means news is getting to the press, enough to alarm Whittaker.

ROSE

And Wilson.

LUCY

As long as Whittaker is scared of us, we must be doing something right.

ROSE

They don't want one of us dying in here.

VIDA

From the hunger strike? I don't want anyone dying in here either.

ROSE

They're afraid it'll spread. The whole prison will go on strike. All the work stops. Cows un milked. Crops go rotten in the fields. Their sweatshop goes dark. Nothing grown. Nothing made. Nothing sold. The warden's pockets left empty.

VIDA

We do no one any good if we die in here.

LUCY

I've been through this before. The body heals.

VIDA

What is the point of this?

LUCY

Keep fighting.

Beat.

VIDA

That smell. Humans need to eat.

LUCY

(to Vida) Don't be won over by a piece of fried chicken.

VIDA

The war is causing food shortages all over the country. Who's sympathetic to anyone refusing to eat?

MARY

Each of us must make her own choice. Eat if you need to.

Beat. Vida lunges, grabs an apple and eats quickly.

ROSE

Slowly. Slowly.

Vida gags, gets up, and goes to the waste bucket, and spits out the apple. Rose comforts Vida.

VIDA

I'm ashamed.

ROSE

Don't be. You were hungry.

Mary prays.

MARY

God, be our refuge,
Our help and redeemer.

When enemies surround us.

Lead us through adversity to safe waters.

Lucy

The hunger goes away. Clarity will come and focus. Stay strong.

Lucy sings the first verse of *The Woman's Party Song*
and the others join in.

Verse 1

The walls that hold us from our onward sweeping.
Walls barring woman ever from the reaping,
These walls must fall.
Standing together, woman shall take
Their lives in their own keeping.

Blackout.

SCENE 14: FORCE

Lights up, Harriet addressing Congress

HARRIET

Gentlemen of the Congress, There are still twenty-five states where women do not have the right to vote.

Lights shift to Alice in the light of a bonfire. She reads from President Wilson's speech on entering the war.

ALICE

President Wilson says, "The world must be made safe for democracy."

Lights shift to Lucy in prison.

LUCY

The sound of cracking eggs and the whisk scraping the edge of a metal bowl. Raw eggs with milk.

The lights continue shifting, following whoever is speaking.

HARRIET

Women pay federal taxes, yet our Federal Government does nothing to guarantee our vote.

LUCY

Four holding me down and one sitting on me.

ALICE

He says, "Liberty is the Fundamental Demand of the Human Spirit."

LUCY

They shove the feeding tube up my nose.

HARRIET

Justice and our democratic ideals demand action now.

LUCY

I choke.

ALICE

He says, "We go to war to protect the thing we hold most dear to our hearts, democracy."

LUCY

I gag.

HARRIET

We ask you for our political liberty so our country may better lead the world into democracy.

LUCY

My nose bleeds and bleeds.

ALICE

Mr. President, twenty million American women demand democracy now.

LUCY

I do not break.

Blackout.

SCENE 15: SOLITARY

Lights up on the four women each in solitary confinement.
Occoquan Workhouse Prison, Virginia.

VIDA

So, this is solitary.

Beat. Mary sings *Dare to Do It* to the tune of *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*

MARY

There's a wave of indignation
Rolling round and round the land
And its meaning is so mighty
And its mission is so grand
That none but naves and cowards
Dare deny its just demand
As we go marching on.

Rose in solitary.

ROSE

Vida and I, a grand table full of family and friends. Plates of food finished and everyone's satisfied.

Lucy prays.

LUCY

Mother Mary give me courage.

MARY

I am not bowed. I am not daunted. I am not swayed.

LUCY

Help me.

VIDA

I'm not alone. My friends are here somewhere.

LUCY

I have done all I can. Now other women must do their part.

ROSE

Vida and I take hands, free of this place.

Lights shift.

SCENE 16: BREAKING, THEN SHOUT THE REVOLUTION

Lights shift, back in the group cell. Occoquan Workhouse Prison, Virginia. Vida, Mary, Rose and Lucy together.

Beat.

MARY

We look like death.

Vida is unsteady on her feet.

ROSE

(to Vida) Let me see you.....They force fed me. (beat) You too?

Vida nods. Rose and Mary help Vida get seated. Rose comforts and supports Vida.

ROSE

Gently, gently.

Vida indicates Lucy.

VIDA

She watched.

LUCY

They made me. Each one of you. I begged them to stop. Anything. Just stop.

ROSE

(to Lucy) That's how they mean to break us. By forcing us see friends suffer.

LUCY

I can't watch them hurt you. I'm sorry.

Beat.

MARY

Its not your fault.

ROSE

We make our own choices.

Rose comforts Vida.

Beat. Lucy calls out.

LUCY

Whittaker! Guard? We're done. You win. We're finished. Whittaker? Guard? Can you hear me? Anyone?

ROSE

What are you doing?!

LUCY

I want to arrange to have our fines paid and get us out of here. All of us. Right now

VIDA

What about the vote?

LUCY

(to all) I won't watch you die.

Lucy breaks.

Beat.

Vida goes to comfort Lucy. Vida sings.

VIDA

Shout the Revolution
of Women, of Women,
Shout the Revolution
of Liberty.

Rose and Mary go to join Vida in
comforting Lucy. They sing.

MARY

Men's revolutions born in blood

ROSE

But our's conceived in peace.

Rose and Mary offer to help Lucy rise. Lucy refuses and
rises, on her own, while singing.

LUCY

We hold a banner for a sword,
Til all oppression cease,

Singing strong.

ALL

Prison, death defying,
Onward, onward,
Triumphant daughters marching to Victory.

Shout the Revolution
Of Women, of Women,
Shout the Revolution
Of Liberty

Lights shift, any lights indicating prison bars fade away. A new moment and a new day. The women sing to the audience.

Shout the Revolution
Of Women, of Women,

Alice enters and then Harriet enters, they join the singing.

Shout the Revolution
Of Liberty

The women call out their spoken lines over the continued singing.

ALICE

Use the Vote!

ALL

Rise, glorious women of the earth,
The voiceless and the free,

HARRIET

Carry forward the work

ALL

United Strength assures the birth
Of True Democracy.

MARY

Still standing!

ALL

Invincible our army,
Forward, forward,

Still singing!
VIDA

Strong in faith, we're marching
To Victory.
ALL

Still Marching!
ROSE

Shout the Revolution
Of Women, of Women,
Shout the Revolution
Of Liberty
ALL

Lucy calls out at the end of the singing.

Still fighting!
LUCY

Blackout. End of play

*