

THE WICKEDEST WOMAN IN NEW YORK

Based on the Life and Career of Ann Trow

1 OVER BLACK: 1

SUPER: BASED ON A TRUE STORY.

1 EXT. CLARK'S PHARMACY, NEW YORK CITY - DUSK 1

SUPER: NEW YORK CITY, NOVEMBER 1831.

It's a busy fall night in the city. Gentlemen keep their wool coats and hats pulled close against the wind as black carriages speed by.

JOSEPH TROW (22), English pharmacy clerk with a flair for fashion, locks up shop, tucks a bottle of medicine into his jacket and strikes off down the street.

2 EXT. STREETS OF NEW YORK - CONTINUOUS 2

Joseph whistles a jaunty tune as he strolls briskly. He doffs his hat to the SHOPKEEPERS sweeping their stoops.

He passes a rowdy tavern as a SERVING GIRL struggles to serve ale to grabby customers. A DRUNK MAN tries to pull her into his lap and she swats him away.

Joseph frowns on her behalf and quickens his pace.

Further down the sidewalk, a PAPER BOY, loading up his wares for the evening, snaps to attention and brandishes a NEW YORK HERALD. Joseph hands the boy a coin, grabs the paper, and continues on.

He cuts through a narrow alley. The buildings loom and cover him in shadow.

3 EXT. ALLEYWAY - CONTINUOUS 3

Joseph keeps up his pace through the alleyway. He opens the paper to avoid eye contact with a GOOD TIME GIRL who leans against the back door of a Parlor House. A gaudy sign above the door says "LAVINIA'S."

GOOD TIME GIRL  
What's your hurry?

But he's already gone.

4 EXT. CATHEDRAL - CONTINUOUS 4

Joseph shakes his head in disgust at the morbid headlines as he passes by St. Patrick's Cathedral:

"NAT TURNER HANGED FOR BLOODY SLAVE REBELLION."

A destitute MOTHER begs on the cathedral steps with her two children. A MARRIED COUPLE pass by, going the opposite direction.

BEGGING MOTHER  
Anything to keep Death from the  
door, sir. For my daughters.

The woman tugs on the man's arm. He produces some coin.

BEGGING MOTHER (CONT'D)  
Bless you, sir. Bless you, ma'am.

5 EXT. TENEMENT HOUSE - DARK 5

Joseph arrives at a run-down Tenement House. The sound of infants WAILING can be heard from multiple floors.

Joseph carefully avoids filthy spots on his route as he approaches a street-side apartment which bears a small sign on the door: HENRY SOMMERS, TAILOR.

6 EXT. TAILOR SHOP - CONTINUOUS 6

Joseph hesitates at the door of the tailor shop. He walks to the front window and tries to peek inside but the curtains are drawn. He sighs and returns to the door.

He knocks very quietly. No response.

He knocks at a reasonable volume. A baby WAILS inside. He cringes.

A moment later, the door swings open. Joseph's sister ANN TROW SOMMERS (19) has a pair of trousers slung over one shoulder and her crying baby CAROLINE slung over the opposite hip.

Joseph holds up the medicine bottle, an olive branch for waking the baby.

ANN  
What would I do without you,  
brother?

She ushers him inside.

7 INT. TAILOR SHOP - CONTINUOUS

7

The workshop is meager and shabby. There's a rough-hewn table and bench, a mannequin, a cradle, and a pile of clothing waiting to be mended. A couple of candles on the table suffice for light.

Caroline calms down; Ann lowers her into the cradle and starts again on the trousers.

JOSEPH

How is he?

ANN

This morning he sat up and read the paper, but he couldn't keep his breakfast down or anything since.

JOSEPH

(producing the paper)

I brought another, in case he is restless.

Ann continues to mend the trousers. Joseph walks to the back of the room, where a long curtain separates the Sommers' living quarters from the tailor shop.

ANN

Don't bother him: he's only been asleep for a half hour.

Joseph sticks his head through the curtains anyway. Ragged snores drift through the dark. Joseph pulls back.

JOSEPH

Well, give him two spoonfuls when he wakes. I'll come back in the morning.

ANN

Could you bring some bread and milk? I can pay you once I visit Mr. Spillers.

JOSEPH

Of course.

He kisses Ann on her forehead and departs. A gust of wind from the opening door blows out the candles, plunging the room into darkness.

Ann sighs and gets up to find a match. Caroline CRIES out.

ANN  
You're alright, little lamb.

Ann stumbles over her own dress in the dark. Caroline cries louder. Ann gathers her hems and finds the matchbox. She relights the candles as a NEIGHBOR pounds on their shared wall.

NEIGHBOR (O.C.)  
Shut up!

Ann huffs as she finishes lighting the candles. Caroline quiets down again. The neighbor relents.

Ann waits a beat, listening. She looks back at the bedroom curtain. No more snores.

8 INT. ANN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

8

Ann peeks through the curtain, holding a candle, the medicine bottle, and a spoon.

ANN  
Henry?

She tiptoes inside.

ANN (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry for the noise. Joe brought you some medicine.

She places the candle on a small bedside table and sits beside Henry. She pours the medicine into the spoon, turns to administer it- and finally takes a good look at her man:

Henry is dead. Eyes rolled back, vomit trickling from his mouth.

Ann spills the medicine and runs out of the house, screaming.

ANN (O.C.) (CONT'D)  
JOSEPH!

Neighbors' dogs BARK in the streets.

NEIGHBOR (O.C.)  
Shut up!!

9 INT. ANN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

9

One week later. Ann pours dried oats from a clay jar into a bowl. There's not enough left for her morning porridge.

She casts about the room for a bright idea. Her eyes land on the CEDAR CHEST at the foot of the bed.

She kneels and opens the chest. She reaches past stacked linens and blankets to the very bottom and produces a small PAINTED BOX.

She opens the box: it's empty, save for a few pieces of modest jewelry, family heirlooms from a family that never had much.

She empties the contents of the box into her hand and shoves them into her dress pocket.

Sharp KNOCKS on the tailor shop door. Caroline starts to cry, of course.

10 EXT. TAILOR SHOP - MORNING

10

A garishly dressed businessman bangs on the door. Ann answers. In the daylight she looks truly bedraggled. Caroline's CRIES echo from the bedroom.

MR. SPILLERS

Where is that wastrel Henry  
Sommers? He's three weeks late with  
my suits.

ANN

Mr. Spillers, my apologies, sir.  
Your suits are ready.

She opens the door and he bowls her over. The suits are laid out on the table. He examines a few pieces.

ANN (CONT'D)

One dollar, twenty cents.

MR. SPILLERS

Madame, I won't be paying a dime  
for this dreadful service. You can  
tell him that when he dries out.

He takes his clothes and exits. Ann grabs a pair of scissors from the table and brandishes them.

ANN

You'll pay me for my work or leave  
empty-handed.

Mr. Spillers scoffs and carries on.

11 EXT. TENEMENT HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

11

Ann runs after him waving her scissors. He hops in his carriage and the driver cracks the whip. They flee.

ANN

Thief! You're no better than a pick-  
pocket!

Ann's NEIGHBORS, working at various chores and vocations outside, witness the spectacle: just another day in the neighborhood.

ANN (CONT'D)

You're stealing from a baby's  
mouth, you are! Stealing from a  
*widow!*

The word catches in her throat. She looks around at her neighbors for support; they turn away. No-one has enough of anything to share.

12 EXT. FRONT DOOR, RICH NEIGHBORHOOD - MORNING

12

Ann trots down the street, toting her sewing kit. The public sphere is a sea of men in black wool and top hats. She is the only unaccompanied, *un-hatted* woman in sight.

Ann stops at the nicest looking house she can see and knocks on the door. A BUTLER opens it.

ANN

Hello sir, my name is Ann Sommers  
and my husband Henry recently  
passed away. I'm here to inquire  
whether your household has-

A voice from inside calls out.

HOMEOWNER (O.C.)

Who is it, James?

BUTLER

A beggar woman, sir.

HOMEOWNER (O.C.)  
Send her away.

ANN  
I'm not a beggar! I'm a seamstress!

BUTLER  
If you're looking for charity, try  
Saint Patrick's.

He shuts the door in Ann's face.

13 EXT. FRONT STOOP, THE SECOND MANSION - DAY: 13

Ann tries again at another sumptuous home. This time, a YOUNG MAID opens the door.

ANN  
Good morning, miss, is your  
employer home?

YOUNG MAID  
Who are you?

ANN  
I'm a seamstress. My name is An-

YOUNG MAID  
She's already got a sewing girl.

She swings the door closed in Ann's face.

14 EXT. VARIOUS NEW YORK HOMES - DAY 14

Ann knocks at three more doors with three more servants:  
Each one shakes their head 'No,' and slams the door.  
Each time Ann tries to keep smiling, but it gets harder.

15 EXT. FRONT STOOP, BRICK HOUSE - DAY 15

Ann is flagging when she approaches a large brick home. She pulls herself together one more time and knocks.

A HANDSOME MAN in his thirties answers. He looks at Ann as if waiting for someone else to appear.

HANDSOME MAN  
May I help you?



ANN

(tired)

Good morning, sir, my name is Ann Sommers and I'm a widow. I was hoping to offer my services as a seamstress to you or the lady of the house.

HANDSOME MAN

Oh! Do come in.

Finally! He ushers her inside.

ANN

Thank you, sir!

16 INT. DRAWING ROOM, BRICK HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

16

The man leads her into the drawing room of his lavish home.

HANDSOME MAN

I'm afraid there is no lady of the house.

ANN

That's alright sir. Menswear is no trouble. My husband was a tailor and taught me everything he knew.

The man strolls over to a couch and sprawls out comfortably.

ANN (CONT'D)

I could even make you a custom suit, like you see in the French magazines.

The man nods encouragingly, but something's off. Ann waits for him to comment; he does not.

ANN (CONT'D)

If you would stand, I can take your measurements.

HANDSOME MAN

Whatever you prefer.

Ann takes out measuring tape and a pocket notebook. She kneels before him. He unbuttons his trousers.

ANN

Excuse me!

HANDSOME MAN  
 Everyone knows how seamstresses  
 make their real money.

He continues to disrobe. Ann is up and out of there before he can go further.

17 EXT. BRICK HOUSE, SIDEWALK- DAY 17

Ann storms out onto the busy street. Surprised bystanders make a path.

18 EXT. PARK - DAY 18

Ann runs out of steam near a city park. She stops at a bench to catch her breath.

On the road in front of her, a fine carriage halts and a DRIVER dismounts to open the door for a young woman in an elaborate dress (MARIA PURDY, 17.)

On the other side of the carriage, a FOOTMAN opens the door for a stately older gentleman (DR. FREDERICK PURDY, 57).

Suddenly, the young woman CRIES out. Her DRESS has caught on the carriage door and begun to rip. The men rush to her aid.

MARIA  
 Don't pull it! You're making it worse!

Ann looks up as the men back away and the young lady tries to free the dress herself, but she falls backwards into the arms of the footman and the dress tears apart.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
 You ruined it! I could have done it if you weren't grabbing me!

DR. PURDY  
 Come now, Maria. It was an accident.

Ann sees her opportunity.

19 EXT. MRS. PURDY'S CARRIAGE - CONTINUOUS 19

Ann approaches the ill-tempered woman and her escorts.

ANN  
 Pardon me, miss.

They look at her like she's got two heads.

ANN (CONT'D)  
 Might I be of assistance?

20 INT. TAILOR SHOP - MORNING

20

Ann mends Maria's dress by window light. The bedroom curtain is pulled aside so Ann can watch Caroline sleeping in her crib in the room beyond.

The stitch is challenging: Ann pricks herself. A dot of blood. Ann sucks her finger and reaches for a thimble.

Light floods in as Joseph enters with his arms full of groceries. He sets them on the table.

JOSEPH  
 The baker had your favorite today.

He produces a handsome loaf of bread.

ANN  
 Rosemary?

JOSEPH  
 And Garlic.

Ann lights up in spite of herself.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)  
 Go on, have some.

ANN  
 (taking the loaf)  
 I just want to smell it.

Ann happily inhales, but her expression turns sour. She shoves the bread back into Joseph's hands and runs to the bedroom. Joseph cautiously sniffs the loaf but detects nothing foul.

From the bedroom comes a terrible RETCH: through the open curtain, Joseph sees Ann kneeling over a chamber pot.

21 INT. ANN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

21

Joseph bends over Ann and sweeps her hair from her face. After a moment, she collects herself and sits up.

JOSEPH

If I had known that would happen,  
I'd have bought the cinnamon loaf  
instead.

ANN

Joe, I think I'm pregnant.

22 INT. CLARK'S PHARMACY - MID-MORNING

22

Joseph helps a DAPPER GENT select a SHAVING TONIC from the cosmetics counter.

JOSEPH

This is our most popular brand. It  
comes in citrus clove, bay musk,  
and cedar violet.

The Dapper Gent puts a hand on the sample bottle Joseph is holding, grazing his fingers.

DAPPER GENT

Which one do you prefer?

JOSEPH

Citrus clove is our best seller,  
but I prefer cedar violet.

DAPPER GENT

Are you wearing it now?

The gent leans in to smell Joseph's neck. Joseph sputters and blushes.

JOSEPH

Y-yes, actually.

The gent smiles coyly as the shop BELL rings and Ann sweeps in. She grabs a shopping basket and beelines to the back of the store, toward long rows of glass jars filled with dried herbs and powders.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Excuse me.

Joseph zips over to Ann; she is deep in contemplation of the ingredients.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

I thought we were going to talk  
about this.

ANN  
I've decided.

JOSEPH  
But we have months to plan. I can  
move in with you and Caroline. Soon  
I'll be head pharmacist and I can  
support y-

Ann turns and braces Joseph's shoulders.

ANN  
Joseph, that's not fair! You came  
here to live your *own* life.

She glances at the Dapper Gent, who is pretending not to  
listen to them as he waits at the register. She smooths  
Joseph's collar and hair.

ANN (CONT'D)  
You're a bachelor. I won't hold you  
back.

She turns back to her shopping. Joseph chews his lip. The  
Dapper Gent clears his throat and gently taps the service  
BELL.

23

INT. CLARK'S PHARMACY - MOMENTS LATER

23

Joseph smiles shyly as the Dapper Gent leaves with his  
shaving tonic. Ann approaches the front counter.

Behind them MR. CLARK (70s), head pharmacist and business  
owner, shuffles out of the stockroom with his nose buried in  
an inventory list and checks the merchandise on a nearby  
shelf.

Joseph tallies Ann's items while she counts out coins.

JOSEPH  
I thought you couldn't afford  
bread.

ANN  
I sold Mother's broach. And  
Father's ring.

Joseph winces as Ann pushes the coins into his hands.

JOSEPH  
You're still ten cents short.

ANN

I had to pay the rent. I can pay  
you back when I finish the dre-

Joseph waves her off and digs in his pockets for a dime.

Mr. Clark's ears prick up; he squints up from his list as Joseph reluctantly bags Ann's goods. Ann takes them, embarrassed, and hurries off.

Joseph tosses his dime into the till. Mr. Clark sets aside his list, and heads toward Joseph.

24 INT. ANN'S BEDROOM - EVENING 24

Ann sits in front of the hearth with her pharmacy ingredients. A pot of water boils on a small fire.

A dusty old book lays open beside her, displaying an old recipe with many handwritten notes scrawled in the margins. The title reads: "TEA TO REMOVE OBSTRUCTIONS."

Ann mixes dried herbs with a pestle and mortar. She pours bottles of herbal extracts into the pot. There's a FLASK waiting nearby.

25 INT. MARIA PURDY'S BEDROOM - MORNING 25

Ann drinks from her FLASK in the opulent bedroom of Maria Purdy, while Maria changes behind a dressing screen.

MARIA (O.C.)

Of course, I *do* sew myself but I  
could never do anything like this.  
I host a regular sewing circle, but  
it's mostly to avoid Frederick  
turning my stomach with his tales  
from that awful cadaver laboratory.

Maria steps out to reveal the formerly torn dress, now masterfully mended. Ann lays the flask beside her sewing kit.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Do you know what goes on at these  
so-called Medical Schools? They  
chop up dead bodies! And Freddie  
says *all* doctors will have to do it  
soon.

She twirls with delight.

MARIA (CONT'D)

(Re: the dress)

Better than new.

(a sudden frown)

Should we shorten the hem? I worry  
history may repeat itself.

ANN

Of course, miss.

MARIA

You're a saint.

Ann opens the sewing kit; Maria notices the flask.

Ann proceeds to pin the dress hem. She drops a pin and  
struggles to find it in the thick carpet.

Behind her, Maria reaches to examine the flask.

By the time Ann finds the pin and places it properly in the  
dress, Maria is taking a hearty chug. The sound of SWALLOWING  
makes Ann look up. Ann gasps and swipes the flask.

ANN

What are ya doin!?

MARIA

(startled but cheeky)

What is this? I expected wine.

ANN

It's not wine, it's- tea, and you  
shouldn't take things without  
asking.

She tucks the flask away and returns to pinning the hem.

MARIA

(pouty)

Well it isn't very good. Haven't  
you heard of sugar?

ANN

It's not supposed to taste good.

MARIA

Why not??

ANN

Because it's medicine! You're not  
expecting are you?

MARIA  
I beg your pardon?

ANN  
Are you pregnant?

MARIA  
No! Well, I don't think so. Why?

ANN  
Because that tea is for women who  
are and do not wish to be.

MARIA  
Oh!  
(as it sinks in)  
Oooh! Am I going to be ill??

ANN  
(serves you right)  
You may.

MARIA  
Why would you leave such a thing in  
plain sight??

ANN  
Why would you drink from a  
stranger's flask?? Just because a  
thing is within your grasp does not  
mean it belongs to you!

MARIA  
(obstinate)  
I'm sorry!!  
(changing tack)  
What will happen to me?

ANN  
(eye roll)  
You'll be alright. It will bring  
your monthly courses; you may have  
stomach pain.

MARIA  
Oh.

Ann shakes her head and goes back to pinning the dress. After  
a moment:

MARIA (CONT'D)  
Would you say this tea is... quite  
reliable as a restorative of  
women's courses?



ANN  
Heaven help me if it isn't.

MARIA  
(gears turning)  
And where did you buy it?

Ann pauses, suddenly alert.

ANN  
I didn't.

Maria looks disappointed. Ann observes the abundant signs of gratuitous wealth surrounding her: jewelry, perfume, silks, furs, ivory. Gilded mirrors. Luxury.

ANN (CONT'D)  
(Seductive, revolutionary)  
But you can.

26 INT. ANN'S BEDROOM - THAT EVENING 26

Caroline bounces in her crib while Ann sits in front of the hearth and fills up a bottle of tea for Maria.

She drinks the last of her own tea from the flask and rubs her cramping stomach.

27 INT. MARIA PURDY'S PARLOR - AFTERNOON 27

The next day. A dozen upper-class women recline on chaise lounges, couches, and settees in a comfortable parlor, idly chatting.

LADY 1  
He refused to look at the samples  
and told me it was a women's  
matter.

LADY 2  
Well, of course, but he has to live  
with it too.

LADY 1  
He seems content to let me decide,  
as long as he can complain about it  
for the rest of our lives.

Hostess Maria Purdy wears an elaborate dress and mingles with stylish women of obvious means. They sew casually amid plates of tea cakes, finger sandwiches, and dainty cups of coffee.

OLD WOMAN  
 (biting into a tea cake)  
 Oh, Maria, you've outdone yourself.

The parlor door swings open and a dowdy maid, ERNESTINE (30's), presents Ann:

ERNESTINE  
 Mrs. Ann Sommers.

The ladies stare: Ann is underdressed and uninvited. She totes a grubby carpet bag and looks surprised to see the crowd.

MARIA  
 Oh Ann, what a pleasant surprise!  
 Did we forget something yesterday?

ANN  
 I didn't realize you were  
 entertaining. I'll come back  
 another time.

MARIA  
 Not at all. Please.

She indicates an empty seat beside her. Ann sits. Maria gestures at a tray of tea cakes. Ann sets her bag down and helps herself.

She takes a bite and closes her eyes in culinary ecstasy. She MOANS softly in spite of herself. A few ladies GIGGLE.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
 What may I do to be of service to  
 you, Ann?

ANN  
 I brought you a bottle of tea, so  
 you can see for yourself that it  
 works.

MARIA  
 (sitting up with interest)  
 Did you really?

ANN  
 Yes, miss.

Ann wipes her hands on her dress, prompting a cringe from the Old Lady, and opens up the carpet bag. She hands over the bottle and a hand-written PAMPHLET:

ANN (CONT'D)

And here are the instructions.

Maria uncorks the bottle and gives it a whiff.

OLD LADY

What have you got there, Maria?

MARIA

It's tea, Auntie.

OLD WOMAN

How nice. I'd like to try some.

MARIA

I'm sorry, Auntie, it's medicinal.

OLD WOMAN

Now, what kind of medicine could a young thing like you need?

MARIA

(smirking)

Well...

Some of the ladies catch on. LADY 2 snatches the pamphlet: "TEA TO REMOVE OBSTRUCTIONS" is written clearly at the top.

LADY 2

Maria! Does Frederick know?

MARIA

What do you think?

OLD LADY

What is it?

LADY 2

It's a women's "Regulator."

OLD LADY

(to Maria)

I thought you wanted children!

MARIA

I do! Just not yet.

OLD LADY

Why wait? Your husband is no spring chicken.

MARIA

I believe the marriage bed should be a place of *love*, not of *duty*.

OLD LADY

Pish posh! Who told you that?

(to Ann)

Do you even know what's in it?

ANN

Old family recipe. Patent pending.

OLD LADY

Is it safe?

ANN

When used correctly.

OLD LADY

How can you be sure?

ANN

I use it myself.

LADY 2

(reading the instructions)

You drink the whole bottle?

ANN

One bottle will last a month- if used as a preventative.

The ladies judgmental glares turn inquisitive. Ann projects, confidence increasing.

ANN (CONT'D)

In the case of an acute obstruction, one bottle over the course of three days will remove it and return the woman to her regular courses.

LADY 2

And what is the price?

Ann pauses. The afternoon light glints off the ladies' JEWELRY and SILKY DRESSES. She smiles like a sphinx.

ANN

Ladies, what is more valuable than your peace of mind?

28

INT. MARIA PURDY'S FOYER - LATE AFTERNOON

28

Ann struts out of the parlor, barely able to contain her elation or carry her carpet bag, now lead-like with JINGLING coins.

Ernestine the maid hurries to keep up.

ERNESTINE

Miss Sommers?

Ann turns around, shifting the heavy carpet bag in her arms. Ernestine leans in confidentially.

ERNESTINE (CONT'D)

I heard you talking to the ladies,  
and I-

(She looks around for  
eavesdroppers.)

I don't ever ask other working  
women for favors, I know how hard  
it is to get by, but- Miss Purdy  
will put me on the streets if I  
ever fall pregnant.

(self-righteous aside)

Now, d'ya call that fair?

Ann shakes her head 'No,' while losing her grip on the carpet bag.

ERNESTINE (CONT'D)

Please. I can't pay as much as she  
can, but I'm not asking for  
anything free. I'm an honest  
customer.

Ann sees the panic in the woman's eyes.

ANN

Of course.

ERNESTINE

Oh, thank you! Thank you! You're a  
godsend. I promise I'll make it  
worth your while. I can spread the  
word.

ANN

(struggling)

Thank you. What was your name?

ERNESTINE

Ernestine! Really, anything I can do, just let me know. At your service!

ANN

Wonderful.

ERNESTINE

You've really unburdened me.

She finally opens the door for Ann and waves her out.

29 EXT. MARIA PURDY'S FRONT STOOP - CONTINUOUS

29

As soon as the door shuts, Ann drops the carpet bag with a groan and massages her arms in agony. A COUPLE OF PEDESTRIANS turn their heads.

She sits down beside the bag, winded. The bag is so old that it's coming apart at the seams. In fact, there's a HOLE in one corner and Ann can see SILVER COINS peeking through.

Her welcome turn of fortune makes her laugh out loud. A knee-slapping guffaw, in fact, which she instantly regrets due to her recent strain. The PEDESTRIANS glance back in confusion.

30 INT. CLARK'S PHARMACY - EARLY EVENING

30

Ann marches through the aisles, loading up on ingredients for more Anti-Obstruction Tea. Joseph enters from the stockroom and does a double-take when he sees her.

JOSEPH

Listen, if you're going to steal, can you at least do it when I'm not around?

ANN

(joking)

How dare you? I'm an honest customer.

JOSEPH

Oh really? Have you been weaving flax into gold since I last saw you, Rumpelstiltskin?

Ann laughs and continues to shop. Joseph stops her.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Really, Ann. I can't afford your daily bulk orders.

Ann tosses a fat bag of coins at him.

ANN

That's for my standing tab, the purchase at hand, the bread and milk, and for watching Caroline.

She marches off, humming.

Joseph gawks at the money, then jogs after her, nearly knocking over MR. CLARK, who shuffles out of the stockroom laden with boxes.

31 INT. ANN'S BEDROOM - LATE THAT NIGHT 31

Ann wakes in bed, drenched in sweat. Her pharmacy supplies are stacked around the hearth.

She grimaces in pain for a moment, then throws off the covers. Dark BLOOD stains her sheets and nightgown.

She sighs in relief and gathers the sheets to clean them.

32 INT. TAILOR SHOP - MORNING 32

CHURCH BELLS ring in the distance. Ann corks a bottle and places it on the table alongside three dozen others, all labeled and sealed with wax.

Boxes, empty bottles, and envelopes line the walls. Joseph enters from the bedroom, bouncing Caroline on his hip.

ANN

Did the shipment of pennyroyal come in yesterday?

JOSEPH

Mr. Clark forgot to order it.

ANN

What about the peppermint oil?

Joseph shakes his head.

ANN (CONT'D)

Old dotard.

JOSEPH  
 (dismissive)  
 We should be lucky to see as many  
 days.

Joseph coos over Caroline. Ann scans over a stack of handwritten labels on the bench, and puts the stopper back on a bottle of ink.

ANN  
 You're right, but in the meantime  
 he should hurry up and make you  
 head pharmacist, so he can retire  
 and enjoy his remaining faculties,  
 and I can do business with a well-  
 stocked supplier.

Joseph examines a labelled bottle. It looks clean and precise. Ann waggles a piece of paper under his nose.

ANN (CONT'D)  
 Speaking of Mr. Clark, I've made a  
 list of his books that I'd like you  
 to borrow for me.

JOSEPH  
 (examining the list)  
 I can't take all of these.

ANN  
 What do you mean? He'll give you  
 whatever you need for your exams.

JOSEPH  
 He uses some of these every day.

ANN  
 Well choose three then, and I'll  
 trade them out when I'm finished. I  
 need to supplement Mama's recipe.

Joseph considers the list, brow furrowed.

JOSEPH  
 I'll do you one better.

Joseph and Ann push Caroline's stroller away from the thoroughfare to a quiet street where a small bookstore is tucked away.



JOSEPH

They've been soliciting us for months, but Mr. Clark deems them too radical.

POSTERS and ADVERTISEMENTS hang in the windows:

"ALL MANNER OF EDUCATIONAL TEXTS, TECHNICAL MANUALS, AND PHILOSOPHICAL TREATISES SOLD HERE IN SEVEN LANGUAGES."

"LECTURE TODAY AT 3 O' CLOCK. HENRY WARD BEECHER: "TURNER'S REBELLION AND THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT"

Ann examines the posters. Joseph hangs back with the stroller.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Take your time. We'll be here.

Ann smiles gratefully and goes inside.

34

INT. BREWSTER'S BOOKS - CONTINUOUS

34

The store owner, MR. BREWSTER (mid-30s), greets Ann with mild surprise.

MR. BREWSTER

May I help you, miss?

ANN

I have a list.

She hands it over. He skims it. He looks back at her, appraisingly.

MR. BREWSTER

A budding chemist, I see.

He busies himself pulling her selections from the shelves. The shop BELL rings as two WORKING MEN (20s) enter, engaged in affable conversation.

WORKING MAN

I don't see how you do it, Charles.  
Hunched over in that little room,  
locked up all day with no fresh  
air.

Charles looks lively; he talks with his hands and with a thick Russian accent.

CHARLES

Well, the air on the docks is not so fresh either if you ask me.

WORKING MAN

To each his own.

They approach Mr. Brewster where he squats gathering Ann's books. Ann watches covertly from another aisle.

CHARLES

Good afternoon, Mr. Brewster!

MR. BREWSTER

Ah, Charles!

(flaunting his Russian)

*Dobryy den'!*

(gesturing to a door in the back)

Go on back! They're just getting started.

CHARLES

*Spasibo.*

The men head to the back door, and while Mr. Brewster is distracted with Ann's list, so does Ann.

35

INT. BOOKSTORE STOCKROOM - CONTINUOUS

35

Ann enters discretely. The stockroom is surprisingly full. An impassioned man with collar-length, wheat colored hair orates from a wooden shipping pallet. This is HENRY WARD BEECHER.

BEECHER

They dismissed my ideas at Amherst,  
and I rocked the boat at Lane  
Seminary, and goodness knows I made  
enemies at Lawrenceburg  
Presbyterian, but I'll say it  
again! God's Love Above All Else.

Scattered applause.

BEECHER (CONT'D)

Anything done in the spirit of love  
is sacred. Anything counter to it  
is surely a sin. It's that simple.

Ann checks the crowds' reactions. They are transfixed.

BEECHER (CONT'D)

There is no love in callous domination. How can there be? And yes, that means there is no God in war, no God in the confinement of our women to the private sphere, no God in the stripping of freedom. And, YES, that means there is NO GOD in slavery!

Thunderous applause.

36

EXT. BREWSTER'S BOOKS - AN HOUR LATER

36

Joseph bounces a WAILING Caroline as the lecture-goers file out, including Charles Lohman and Henry Beecher.

Ann exits last, tucking away a receipt, looking satisfied.

JOSEPH

What happened? You were gone an hour!

He deposits Caroline in her arms. Ann soothes her baby.

ANN

You told me to take my time.

JOSEPH

Well, was it well spent? You don't have any books.

ANN

I have so many books that I'm having them delivered.

JOSEPH

Ah, and that's what took so long?

ANN

No.

BEECHER(O.C.)

Excuse me, sister.

Joseph and Ann turn to see the lecturer, Henry Beecher. His reverent followers hover around him.

BEECHER (CONT'D)

Thank you for your attendance. I have been pushing to bring more women into events like these that are held outside the church, but it is an uphill battle.

ANN

I can imagine.

BEECHER

I hate to put you on the spot, but since I have so few opportunities to ask- do you labor outside the home?

ANN

How could you tell?

BEECHER

(awkward laugh)

I mean no offense, I only wish to survey working women about their opinions on the public sphere.

Charles Lohman takes a few steps closer to listen.

ANN

I'm an open book.

BEECHER

Wonderful. First of all, what is your profession?

Ann looks at Joseph, who looks just as interested in her answer as anyone.

ANN

I-

(Hesitant)

I produce herbal health remedies for women.

BEECHER

Indeed? What kind of remedies?

ANN

Tonics, sir, to maintain- a woman's regularity.

Murmurs from the crowd. Ann ignores them.

ANN (CONT'D)

But I have a mind to expand, which is the reason for my visit today. I'm studying new, scientific methods and I appreciate what you said about women's freedom.

BEECHER

And aren't you a marvelous example of that?

ANN

Not as much as I plan to be.

Beecher smiles at her gumption; so does Charles Lohman.

BEECHER

And do you find that you are treated fairly by your male counterparts?

ANN

Well, aside from Joseph, I only do business with women. Women's health is women's business, after all.

BEECHER

Oh but that's where you're wrong! We are in community: the health of one is the health of all.

Ann snorts. Mr. Beecher stifles his shock. Charles Lohman looks positively charmed.

ANN

When my husband passed, the only ones who came to call were his debt collectors.

BEECHER

(solemn, empathetic)

So you're a widow.

(exuberant)

All the more reason we need you in the public sphere!

(to the crowd)

Despite cruel obstacles, this woman is carving a way for herself and helping others. May she be an example to us all!

(back to Ann)

I'd like to be of service to you.

CHARLES  
So would I!

Charles steps forward and shakes Beecher's hand.

CHARLES (CONT'D)  
Brother Beecher, Miss-

ANN  
Ann Sommers.

CHARLES  
Missus Sommers, my name is Charles Lohman. I work for the New York Herald. Have you considered print advertisements? You could cast a much wider net.

ANN  
That is tempting, but my purse is a little light presently. I seem to have invested all of my capital in our friend Mr. Brewster.

BEECHER  
(to the crowd)  
An investment in literature is the road to education and the condition of an enlightened society.  
(to Ann)  
Allow me to invest in you. I'd like to pay for your first advertisement in the Herald.

CHARLES  
And it would be my pleasure to design it, free of charge.

Ann looks at Joseph. There must be a catch. Joseph shrugs.

ANN  
I wasn't asking for charity-

BEECHER  
Oh, no!

CHARLES  
Not at all.

ANN  
But- I would be a fool to refuse.

Applause from the crowd. Beecher and Charles shake on it. Everyone looks pleased with their luck.

37 INT. PRESS ROOM, NEW YORK HERALD - NIGHT

37

Ann enters the Herald press room as two aging PRINTERS are leaving work for the day. They look at her with confusion.

PRINTER 1  
May I help you, miss?

Charles strides out of a hallway office and puts a hand on Ann's shoulder. The printers stand down.

CHARLES  
Ms. Sommers, so good to see you.  
Are you without your brother?

ANN  
He's keeping Caroline for me.

CHARLES  
Ah.  
(to the printers)  
Ms. Sommers is a new client. Quite  
the enterprising spirit.  
(ushering Ann along)  
Right this way.

The old men go on their way, looking sour.

PRINTER 2  
I'll wager he's the new client.

The other man laughs. Ann and Charles pretend not to hear.

38 INT. PRESS ROOM, CHARLES' DESK - MOMENTS LATER

38

Charles leads Ann deeper into the press room past type setting machines, printing presses, stacks of newspaper, and bottles of shining ink.

Charles reaches for a form on his desk.

CHARLES  
Many of our advertisers choose the  
convenience of our custom template.

Ann counters with a handwritten letter.

ANN  
I spent a little time on it. I have  
more than a few thoughts on the  
subject.

Charles examines the letter.

CHARLES  
To Married Women...

39 INT. PRESS ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

39

MONTAGE:

Charles and Ann collaborate to create Ann's advertisement. She's endlessly curious in the technical process, which Charles adores.

ANN (V.O.)

Is it not too well known that the families of the married often increase beyond the happiness of those who give them birth?

Charles sets the type on a printing press, then lets Ann try it. She's a dab hand.

ANN (V.O.)

In how many instances does the hard working father, and more especially the mother, of a poor family, remain slaves throughout their lives when they might have enjoyed comfort and comparative affluence?

Charles and Ann add ink to the machine.

40 INT. ANN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

40

Meanwhile, Joseph plays with Caroline surrounded by a mounting hoard of bottles, herbs, receipts, and books. A fire burns in the hearth, boiling a pot of Ann's tea.

ANN (V.O.)

And if care and toil have at last broken the health of the father, how often is the widow left unable to save her offspring from becoming degraded objects of charity or vice?

Joseph checks his pocket watch. It's late. He picks up Caroline and carries her to the crib.



41 INT. PRESS ROOM - CONTINUOUS 41

Back at The Herald, Charles loads paper into the press and steps back so Ann can pull the start lever. She does so with gusto.

ANN (V.O.)

Is it desirable then, is it *moral*  
for parents to increase their  
families, regardless of  
consequences to themselves or their  
offspring, when a simple and  
CERTAIN remedy is within our  
control?

Paper rolls through the spinning cylinders, wet with ink.

42 INT. PRESS ROOM - MOMENTS LATER 42

Charles unfolds a finished newspaper and turns the page to Ann's advertisement. He hands it to an excited Ann.

She beams at him and kisses him on the cheek. Charles grins.

CHARLES

I've never met anyone like you.

Ann drops the newspaper and kisses Charles on the lips.

As they canoodle, the paper lays open with Ann's advertisement in plain view:

"The advertiser, celebrated midwife and female physician MADAME RESTELL, has made this subject her special study.

Mrs. R. recommends her FAMOUS MONTHLY TONICS.

PRICE Five Dollars a package, accompanied with full directions for personal convenience."

JOSEPH (V.O. PRELAP)

Madame Restell??

END MONTAGE.

MATCH CUT TO:

43 INT. TAILOR SHOP - THE NEXT MORNING 43

Joseph slaps the paper on the table in what used to be the tailor shop. It now looks more like an apothecary.

ANN

It has a nice ring to it, don't you think?

JOSEPH

I suppose, but why lie?

ANN

It's not lying, it's marketing. Trust me. It's important to craft a persona for the public eye and this city goes mad for anything French.

She looks at the advertisement proudly.

JOSEPH

(not entirely convinced)  
You seem to have a plan.

ANN

Big plans.

JOSEPH

(shaking his head)  
I wish I could bottle your confidence. *That* would make you a fortune.

ANN

Peace of mind is confidence, Joseph, and that's what we're selling.

44 EXT. HOME OF MARIA PURDY, SERVANT ENTRANCE - EARLY MORNING 44

Ann delivers Maria Purdy's most recent order to a quiet side of the house, away from the main street.

Ernestine greets her at the back door; Ann hands her a milk crate of six tea bottles as well as one extra bottle from her coat pocket. Ernestine gratefully stows the extra bottle in her apron.

ERNESTINE

I get my wages on Friday, can I pay you then?

ANN

Why don't we trade instead?

Ernestine looks eager to please.

ANN (CONT'D)  
Do you know any good seamstresses?

45 INT. TAILOR SHOP - EARLY MORNING

45

Ann perfects her hair with a tortoise shell pin before her work day begins.

She draws back the front window curtains and flips over the OPEN sign.

The morning light reveals that Ann has upgraded her look from head to toe. It's not the latest from Paris, but it's new and firmly middle class. She wears it with pride.

Ann crosses to the table, now covered in medical textbooks. She sits and opens a particularly large tome to a marked page.

Joseph enters through the front door. Ann looks up.

ANN  
Nothing?

JOSEPH  
To be fair, the neighbor said he hasn't received any post at all for the past week.

ANN  
That's because no one ever writes him, due to him being horrible.

Ann frowns and makes a note in the margins of her book.

JOSEPH  
Maybe we counted our chickens too soon.

ANN  
What do you mean? Mrs. Purdy told everyone in her circle to buy the paper and tell three friends.

JOSEPH  
I know, but-

ANN  
These are Doctor's wives, Joseph; they're educated, influential. I know they want what I have to offer.

JOSEPH

They may want it, but they may not  
be so bold as you in their pursuit  
of *liberty*.

Ann sighs in frustration, then changes focus: she hands  
Joseph an INVENTORY LIST.

ANN

As soon as the tansy and cotton  
root come in, I want everything you  
have. Don't bother putting it on  
the shelves.

JOSEPH

(sarcastic)

Mr. Clark couldn't possibly take  
issue with that.

ANN

As long as it's selling, why should  
he?

Ann dots an 'i' with particular force.

46 INT. CLARK'S PHARMACY STOCK ROOM - MORNING

46

Joseph unboxes Mr. Clark's new inventory.

He finds the TANSY and COTTON ROOT. He sets these packages  
aside in one of the many empty boxes that surround him, then  
places that box in a corner.

He stacks some other empty boxes on top of it for camouflage,  
then exits to stock the shelves with the remaining  
merchandise.

47 INT. CLARK'S PHARMACY - NIGHT

47

Joseph closes up shop. He adds a generous stack of coins to  
the till on Ann's behalf for the tansy and cotton root.

MR. CLARK (O.C.)

Goodnight, Joseph.

JOSEPH

Goodnight Mr. Clark.

Joseph marks the tansy and cotton root as SOLD OUT on the  
inventory list as the SHOP BELL tings Mr. Clark's exit.

48

INT. CLARK'S PHARMACY STOCK ROOM- A FEW MINUTES LATER

48

Joseph hangs his apron and dons his coat. He grabs the box containing the tansy and cotton root and heads for the door, but:

MR. CLARK (O.C.)  
Forgot my almanac.

JOSEPH  
(playing it cool)  
Ah.

Mr. Clark retrieves his apron and pockets a small paperback. Joseph tries to exit without notice.

MR. CLARK  
What have you got there?

JOSEPH  
It's an order for my sister.

Mr. Clark inspects the boxes.

MR. CLARK  
Is that the cotton root? I've been looking for that all day.

JOSEPH  
I'm sorry, sir. Ann ordered the entire stock.

Mr. Clark scratches his chin.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)  
She's an herbalist, sir.

Mr. Clark scoffs.

MR. CLARK  
She doesn't need six dozen bottles to make potpourri.

JOSEPH  
You're right; she's studying women's health, midwifery.

MR. CLARK  
A midwife? Come now. Civilized women in this city go to hospitals. We have the best surgeons in the country. You could be working for them one day, if you apply yourself.

Mr. Clark puts a fatherly hand on Joseph's shoulder.

MR. CLARK (CONT'D)

Take my advice: encourage your sister to spend more time at home with her daughter. St. Patrick's takes up a collection for widows with children. I know you feel sorry for her, but you should be studying, not playing wet nurse.

(He claps Joseph's shoulder.)

Fate has already dealt its hand to your sister, but you still have potential. Don't waste it on someone who will always need a handout.

He walks out. Joseph chews his tongue and swallows his response.

49 EXT. TENEMENT HOUSE - THE NEXT MORNING 49

Joseph treads through morning mist towards Ann's apartment, carrying the boxes of supplies.

An unusual sight obscures her front door:

Three U.S. POSTAL WORKER are team-lifting bulging canvas sacks of mail out of a parked wagon and carrying them--

into Ann's apartment.

50 INT. TAILOR SHOP - CONTINUOUS 50

Joseph enters as two postal workers empty a mail bag onto the table, where it joins a MOUNTAIN of envelopes.

ANN

JOSEPH!!!

Ann comes running, clutching an open envelope. She practically tackles him. She dances around, squealing with delight.

The postal workers empty the last of the bags onto the table and disappear. The envelopes spill onto the floor.

Ann pulls a folded up MADAME RESTELL AD out of the envelope, now inscribed with a hopeful customer's order. She tips the envelope into her palm: thick silver dollars pour out.

ANN (CONT'D)  
Joseph, there's ten dollars in this envelope alone!

JOSEPH  
Why did it all come at once??

ANN  
They told me the entire office got the Cholera and had to shut down for two weeks!

JOSEPH  
Oh!  
(He suppresses an unexpected laugh.)  
That's terrible!

He starts to giggle. Ann cackles. They can't help it.

ANN  
I know! Absolutely dreadful!

They fall over each other like children, giddy with relief.

ANN (CONT'D)  
(catching her breath)  
But wait, why aren't you at the pharmacy?

JOSEPH  
I quit!

ANN  
(sobering up)  
You what??

JOSEPH  
I quit!

ANN  
But, I need you there!

JOSEPH  
We don't need Mr. Clark.

ANN  
No, we need everything he has! We could have *bought* the pharmacy with this if you had stayed in his good graces!

JOSEPH

We'll buy directly from his suppliers. They like me better, anyway. I'll start first thing in the morning, if you like. What do you say, are we in business?

ANN

(surveying the shop)  
First thing's first. We need new headquarters.

51 INT. THIRD STORY OFFICE - DAY

51

A grim looking LANDLORD leads Ann and Joseph through the halls of a cramped third story office in the city.

Ann scrutinizes every inch of the property.

ANN

(to the landlord)  
Who else operates on the premises?

Despite the fact that Ann is looking directly at him, the landlord ignores her. Ann looks to Joseph for mediation.

JOSEPH

(clearing his throat)  
Could you tell us about your other tenants?

LANDLORD

We have a barber, a cobbler, and a tailor on the first floor. There's a notary public and a physician on the second.

Joseph nods, trying his best to look musing and thoughtful. Ann looks out the window at the street below.

ANN

Quiet out there. A bit lonely, don't you think, Joseph?

JOSEPH

I- suppose?

ANN

And three flights of stairs, every single day, that's a tiresome prospect.



JOSEPH  
 (catching on)  
 Ah, yes. That may be an obstacle to  
 suppliers, and our less vigorous  
 patrons -

ANN  
 -those who need us most of all!

JOSEPH  
 Indeed.

ANN  
 Come to think of it, I was reading  
 just this morning that the average  
 weekly rent on Broadway is only  
 seven dollars.

LANDLORD  
 (not a compliment:)  
 Your sister is remarkably well-  
 read, Mr. Trow.

JOSEPH  
 I won't sign anything without her.

The landlord grunts his disapproval.

52 EXT. GREENWICH STREET OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

52

The front door SLAMS as Ann and Joseph get the boot.

Ann remains indignant as she trots down the sidewalk. Joseph follows.

JOSEPH  
 Maybe next time, I'll go in alone.

ANN  
 I have to see inside to make sure  
 it's suitable!

JOSEPH  
 Just, please let me do the talking.

Ann pretends not to hear.

ANN  
 Let's shake a leg. I want to pick  
 up Caroline from the neighbors  
 before they give her lice.

53 INT. GREENWICH STREET OFFICE - THAT EVENING

53

A wizened old man wearing thick spectacles unrolls a LEASE in a clean, spacious building. Ann and Joseph have both lost a little steam from the day's hunt.

JOSEPH

It's perfect. Well worth the search.

The old man withholds the lease.

OLD MAN

Before I forgot - what kind of business is this? I don't allow anything immoral. No saloons, no parlor houses, no shady ladies, you understand?

Ann tries to keep her benign smile.

JOSEPH

Of course. I'm a pharmacist who specializes in herbal remedies: I intend to open a private practice.

The old man ponders.

OLD MAN

And is this your wife?

JOSEPH

Sister.

OLD MAN

So you're a bachelor.

JOSEPH

(laughing it off)  
Alas.

The Old Man sizes him up, looking for clues to his character. Joseph starts to look uncomfortable.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Did I mention I can pay for the whole year up front?

Sold.

54 INT. GREENWICH STREET OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

54

Joseph shakes hands with the old man and bids him adieu. He shuts the office door and turns to Ann.

JOSEPH  
(handing over the keys)  
Welcome to your clinic, Madame  
Restell.

Ann surveys her kingdom, imagining the possibilities, and smiles like a woman who is going to take over the world.

**END OF ACT I.**

55 INT. RESTELL CLINIC, LOBBY - DAY

55

SUPER: 1836. FIVE YEARS LATER.

The Greenwich Street Office has been transformed. Madame Restell's Clinic and Mail Order Pharmacy is in full swing.

The front room features an elegant lobby where couples of all stations wait patiently. It looks more like a parlor room at the Astor House than a sterile medical office.

Joseph sweeps through in a dapper uniform, carrying crates full of mail orders. 5 YEAR OLD CAROLINE chases after him in a colorful frock, dragging a doll by the leg.

Joseph hands the crates to a friendly POSTMAN who stands in the doorway, then takes Caroline's hand so she doesn't get under foot.

ANN (O.C.)  
Just remember three-three-three.

Ann ushers a young couple out of her office into the lobby. Like everything around her, Ann's hair and wardrobe are more stylish and refined than ever.

ANN (CONT'D)  
Three pills, three times a day, for  
three days. You'll be right as  
rain.

YOUNG HUSBAND  
Thank you, Mrs. R.

ANN  
My pleasure, dear. Joseph will take  
care of you now.

JOSEPH  
 Caroline, do you remember where we  
 keep the green tablets?

Caroline dashes off to the supply closet.

ANN  
 Don't run!

Ann approaches a miserable looking young woman (COLLETTE, 17) with big anxious eyes and a mass of tangled curls. The woman is so lost in thought that she doesn't see Ann hovering.

ANN (CONT'D)  
 Ready, Miss?

56 INT. ANN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

56

Ann sits at a gleaming desk of dark wood and waits for her new client to speak. The woman stares at the ground like a whipped dog.

ANN  
 (gentle)  
 I take it you're unwed.

The woman nods. Ann makes a note.

ANN (CONT'D)  
 When's the last time you had your  
 monthly courses?

COLLETTE  
 (barely audible)  
 Eight weeks.

ANN  
 Do your parents know?

COLLETTE  
 They want me to drop out of school.

ANN  
 Ah.  
 (understanding)  
 Certainly a troubling prospect.

COLLETTE  
 It's not that. They want me to stay  
 home and raise the baby, but, I  
 can't stay there.

ANN

Well, don't underestimate the power of familial support. Most girls that come to me don't have any at all.

Collette burst into tears.

COLLETTE

It's my stepfather. I have to get out or he'll never leave me alone.

Suddenly, Caroline throws open the door and runs inside. Collette struggles to pull herself together. Caroline careens into Ann and dumps her doll in Ann's lap.

CAROLINE

Mummy, can you fix my doll?

Its leg is ripping at the seams. Ann whispers to her child:

ANN

Yes, love, but not right now. Ask Joseph to help you.

Caroline takes back her doll, then notices Collette.

CAROLINE

Why are you crying??

Joseph dashes in.

JOSEPH

So sorry! I was walking Mrs. Thomas to her carriage.

He sweeps Caroline out and closes the door. Ann locks it behind them for good measure.

ANN

(with a wink)  
Little angel.

She returns to her seat and takes a long look at Collette before proceeding.

ANN (CONT'D)

Now, I can prescribe you a fast-acting powder that will take effect straight away. But I'm afraid that won't solve your domestic problem.

(A beat.)

Tell me, when do you finish school?

COLLETTE

I have two more years.

ANN

And what is it that you would like to do with your education?

COLLETTE

I wanted- I *want* to be a nurse.

Ann hears the determination in Collette's voice.

ANN

You know, that's quite an extraordinary coincidence, because I've been looking high and low for an apprentice.

Collette's eyes bulge.

ANN (CONT'D)

(casually)

Of course we're very busy, so I need someone who's willing to board here on the premises.

Collette starts to snifle again.

ANN (CONT'D)

You'll have a room, hot meals, and an allowance - as long as you can look after Caroline during business hours.

Collette manages to nod 'yes' through copious sobs.

ANN (CONT'D)

(rising from the desk)

Well then! That settles it. You just take a moment to collect yourself and I'll tell Joseph to give you the tour when you're ready.

Ann crosses to the door.

COLLETTE

Wait.

Collette springs from the chair and hugs Ann hard. Ann is surprised, but only for a second.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Ann folds Collette into her arms. She has the distinct feeling that it's the first time anyone has hugged her since her troubles began.

57 EXT. CLINIC - DAY 57

Collette wears a snappy uniform like Joseph's and leads a happy Caroline back to the clinic after an afternoon stroll.

58 INT. CLINIC LOBBY - DAY 58

COLLETTE  
Go pick out a book.

Caroline skips off.

YMCA MEMBER (O.C.)  
I beg your pardon, miss-

Collette turns to see three straight-laced gentlemen with their hats respectfully in their hands.

YMCA MEMBER (CONT'D)  
We're with the Young Men's  
Christian Association and we were  
hoping to have a word with your  
proprietor.

59 INT. ANN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER 59

The men cluster awkwardly around Ann's desk while she observes them. The leader of the group reads from a card.

YMCA MEMBER  
We're on a mission to save  
America's sons from the perils of  
sin and vice. We offer an  
alternative to gang violence,  
drinking, and--  
(He blushes.)  
Other licentious activities.

YMCA MEMBER 2  
(trying to be helpful)  
Like whorin'.

Ann arches an eyebrow.

YMCA MEMBER

(still reading the card)

It is also our goal to affect nationwide change by electing fellow YMCA members to political office.

(looks up proudly)

One of the first goals of our local chapter is to ban Lavinia's, the Barrow Street Brothel. Can we count on your support?

ANN

(polite)

I'm afraid that's quite impossible. Lavinia sends me some of my best customers!

The men look at each other nervously.

ANN (CONT'D)

I mean, really, have you been there? Incredible customer service.

The men shuffle their feet and back away.

YMCA MEMBER

We're sorry to have bothered you.

ANN

(tickled)

Not at all! Here! Take something for your time.

She pulls three packages of CONDOMS out of a filing cabinet and distributes them to the tongue-tied men. Two of them pocket the packages but the leader slaps their arms.

YMCA MEMBER

(hissing under his breath)

Give those back!

They give them back.

ANN

Are you sure? They're on the house!

The men file out, embarrassed. Ann follows them to the door.

ANN (CONT'D)

Come back after your first trip to Lavinia's!



YMCA MEMBER 3 (O.C.)  
 Forgot my pen!

The third young man comes running back, breathless.

YMCA MEMBER 3 (CONT'D)  
 Actually, do you mind if I-

He points to the condoms.

YMCA MEMBER (O.C.)  
 George!

GEORGE (YMCA MEMBER 3)  
 Coming!!

Ann shoves the condoms in his hands. He pockets them.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
 Thank you!

He runs off.

60 INT. CLINIC, VARIOUS - DAY

60

Madame Restell's Clinic and Mail Order Pharmacy becomes an indispensable fixture of the city. Ann, Joseph, and Collette make a formidable team.

MONTAGE:

In the stockroom, the local POSTMAN dumps envelopes on the table and moves on to his next task: the towers of boxes lined up against the walls, waiting for delivery. Joseph still can't believe his eyes.

In Ann's office, Ann places her hand on the stomach of a woman with silver streaks in her red hair (MARTHA MCFADDEN, 50.) Collette observes and takes notes. Ann feels around in a few spots then shakes her head as if to say "I'll be damned."

In the operating room, Collette holds Martha's hands and leans her back on the operating table. Martha is covered from the waist down with a white sheet. Her knees are bent, her feet on the table.

Ann stands by her feet with a tray of surgical instruments. The atmosphere is compassionate and precise.

ANN  
 Take a deep breath.

Martha does. She gives Collette's hand a squeeze.

Back in her office, Ann keeps a serious demeanor while she cranes her neck awkwardly to maintain eye contact with a VERY TALL MAN who talks with his hands while his VERY SHORT WIFE avoids getting accidentally smacked. Collette takes notes.

In the lobby, Joseph reaches up to hand a full carton of Anti-Obstruction Teas to the very tall man, then bows to the man's very short, curtsying wife.

In her office, Ann is dutifully keeping the books when there's a KNOCK on the door. She looks up from her accounts to see George from the YMCA peeking in bashfully. She smiles to see him, thoroughly unsurprised.

In the lobby, Joseph presents George with a hearty stock of condoms.

In the stockroom, Ann and Collette grind herbs with a pestle and mortar.

Collette pours a white powder into a beaker of greenish liquid and stirs it up. Ann supervises approvingly.

Caroline appears, tugging at Ann's hem.

CAROLINE

Momma, can we have a picnic for lunch?

ANN

Not today, darling. Collette needs to study.

Caroline watches the women work for a moment, waiting for Ann's attention; not receiving it, she wanders away.

61 INT. COLLETTE'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

61

Collette lays on her stomach in bed, poring over a medical textbook while snacking on bread and cheese. Caroline plays with dolls on the rug.

A growing COMMOTION outside draws their attention. Caroline toddles to the window. Collette looks over her shoulder.

COLLETTE

What's going on out there?

CAROLINE

There are lots of people! Is it a parade?

Collette marks her page and joins Caroline at the window. Just as she reaches it, a shadow covers the girls:

There's someone standing just outside, waving a sign that says 'NO MORE DEAD CHILDREN.'

The man BANGS on the window.

PROTESTER 1  
Bring out Madame Restell!

Other protesters notice and join him. They shake their signs at the window, menacing:

MADAME RESTELL: SATAN'S HELPER.

SAVE OUR CHILDREN. SAVE OUR FAMILIES.

CAROLINE  
What do they say??

Collette snaps the curtains shut and pulls Caroline away from the window.

COLLETTE  
Stay here. I'll be back.

CAROLINE  
Where's mama??

Collette rushes out and locks the door behind her.

62 INT. CLINIC LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

62

Collette runs into the lobby. There's POUNDING on the front door, but Joseph has already locked it and is standing guard. The half dozen CLIENTS inside fret and mumble nervously.

JOSEPH  
Collette!

She runs to him. They whisper frantically:

COLLETTE  
Where's Ann?

JOSEPH  
She went to lunch with Charles!

COLLETTE  
What do we do?

JOSEPH  
Pray they don't break the windows!?

A voice booms from beyond the door.

SAMUEL JENKS SMITH (O.C.)  
Bring out Madame Restell!

63 EXT. CLINIC - CONTINUOUS

63

SAMUEL JENKS SMITH  
We'd like a word with the wickedest  
woman in New York!

SAMUEL JENKS SMITH (45,) a potato of a man with wild  
sideburns, slicked back hair, and wiry eyebrows hollers at  
the door, flinging spittle.

The crowd cheers him on. The group is mostly single white  
men, though a few have brought their wives and children.

As they rabble-rouse, an elegant carriage approaches.

64 INT. ANN'S CARRIAGE - CONTINUOUS

64

Ann and Charles kiss passionately until they notice the  
YELLING.

Ann is the first to hear it: she unglues herself from Charles  
and sticks her head out the window.

65 EXT. ANN'S CARRIAGE WINDOW - CONTINUOUS

65

Ann is shocked and furious to see protesters circling the  
clinic and blocking the door.

66 EXT. CLINIC - CONTINUOUS

66

Ann storms out of the carriage, ready for battle. Charles  
bids the driver stay and hustles after her.

PROTESTER 2  
There she is!

The crowd turns on Ann. Charles steps in front of her,  
protectively, but she barges on.

The crowd boos and hisses as Ann elbows her way to the clinic  
door, unflinching.

The crowd parts easily for Samuel Jenks Smith, however, who steps toward Ann with the air of a showdown. He is flanked by three familiar faces: the YMCA solicitors, including George.

Charles pulls at Ann's wrist.

CHARLES

Uh oh, I know him.

SAMUEL JENKS SMITH

Madame Restell, in the flesh,  
ladies and gentlemen!

ANN

And who are you?

SAMUEL JENKS SMITH

Samuel Jenks Smith, editor of the  
New York Sunday Morning Post.

ANN

Well I'm not taking interviews  
today, Mr. Smith, and my office  
hours are by appointment only.

SAMUEL JENKS SMITH

That's alright, I only have one  
thing to say to one such as  
yourself: *your days are numbered!*

Cheers from the crowd.

SAMUEL JENKS SMITH (CONT'D)

The people of New York will no  
longer tolerate dens of squalor and  
vice, those who profit from and  
contribute to the total degradation  
of our Christian wives and mothers!

More cheers from the crowd. Ann glares at them, memorizing their repugnant faces.

Charles attempts to escort Ann to the door. Instead she makes a U-turn, stomping back through the crowd to the carriage.

67

EXT. ANN'S CARRIAGE - CONTINUOUS

67

She climbs up beside the driver, grabs his whip, and SNAPS it in the air to quiet the crowd. It works like a charm, but it scares the horses. Ann steadies herself as the carriage rocks and the driver grips the reins. When she gains her footing, she exclaims:

ANN

Who are you to speak of defending mothers? I am a mother! You are terrorizing my daughter this very moment!

(gesturing fiercely with the whip)

The vast majority of my clientele is married with children. If you revere mothers so much, then you should accept the decisions they make for their families!

(chest heaving)

You say that women are the rulers of the private sphere, but you condemn the deeply personal decisions they make in private! And I have something to say to you too, Mr. Smith!

She locks eyes with him. The crowd is dead quiet.

ANN (CONT'D)

I am not a sinner! I am a business woman. If anyone can prove that any product of mine has ever done anyone harm of any kind, I will pay them one hundred dollars!

The crowd is shocked. Smith's scandalized look says, "*This means war.*"

Ann dismounts and blazes through the crowd, who scatter to avoid her whip. She is an absolute force of nature.

ANN (CONT'D)

Now get out of my way and don't come back unless you're buying something!

68

INT. ANN'S MIDDLE-CLASS APARTMENT - MORNING

68

Ann flips through a newspaper while Joseph finishes cooking his eggs. They now reside in a comfortable, upper middle-class apartment.

ANN

Aha!

She finds what she was looking for. She leans in close to read; her face disappears behind the pages. She scoffs.

Joseph looks up but says nothing. Ann continues to read the paper like her life depends on it. She huffs again. Joseph sighs.

ANN (CONT'D)  
The utter nerve of some people!

JOSEPH  
(giving in)  
I told you not to buy it.

ANN  
I have a right to know what's being  
said about me!

JOSEPH  
But what good does it do you?

ANN  
Knowledge is power.

JOSEPH  
(eyes on his eggs)  
Your clients don't read the Sunday  
Morning Post.  
(a beat)  
Why do you take it to heart?

ANN  
(violently)  
Because it is slander!

Joseph flinches.

JOSEPH  
(back to his eggs)  
It's one man's opinion.

ANN  
Delivered to an audience of  
thousands! He wants to ruin me! It  
would be absurd to dismiss him.

Joseph reaches over and swipes at the paper. Ann yanks it  
away.

JOSEPH  
Give it to Collette! Let her  
paraphrase the finer points.

Ann pulls out the page bearing the smear article and tosses  
aside the rest of the paper.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)  
Why keep it??

ANN  
So I can craft a fitting response.

JOSEPH  
For your diary?

Ann gets up and marches off.

69 NEWSPAPER MONTAGE:

69

Headlines roll:

THE DAILY GAZETTE: ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS TO THE MAN, WOMAN, OR CHILD WHO CAN BRING DOWN 'THE DEVIL'S MIDWIFE!'

THE GOTHAM INQUIRER: FAMILY MORALITY UNDERMINED, UNDERNEATH YOUR NOSE!

N.Y. SPORTING PRESS: JOIN THE CRUSADE AGAINST MADAME RESTELL AND WIN A HUNDRED DOLLARS!

70 INT. WHOLESALE MERCHANT'S OFFICE - MORNING

70

Joseph meets with a supplier. He wears his best suit and looks grave. The man across from him looks embarrassed.

JOSEPH  
I don't understand. We've always paid in full, we've never been a day late, and we are as regular as the tides.

The supplier nods and stares at his folded hands.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)  
Is there anything we can do to change your mind?

SUPPLIER  
Unfortunately, it has recently come to light that the -  
(he drums his fingers nervously)  
- nature of your enterprise is politically extreme, and it is our policy to remain neutral and refuse endorsement of any political party or candidate.



JOSEPH  
 Political party? We're a privately  
 owned business.

SUPPLIER  
 (struggling)  
 Yes, but, you see, the issue of -  
 (furtively)  
 - abortion is campaign fodder now,  
 and I'm afraid your sister is at  
 the center of the debate.

He pulls out a copy of the SUNDAY MORNING POST. It bears a  
 malicious illustration of Ann, surrounded by winged devils  
 who feast on cherubic children, titled: THE WICKEDEST WOMAN  
 IN NEW YORK.

71 EXT. CLINIC - DAY

71

Nevertheless, business roars on at the Restell Clinic.  
 Clients queue up around the block waiting for a seat in the  
 lobby.

Postmen pushing dollies wheel out boxes of mail order teas  
 and tablets.

Across the street, however, a growing group of PICKETERS  
 chants.

PICKETERS  
 Her house is built on babies'  
 blood! Haul her out! Hang her up!

This group is much more well-dressed than the previous bunch  
 of protesters, and there are far more women involved. They  
 circle around a platform they've erected.

A white haired CATHOLIC PRIEST ascends the platform,  
 accompanied by the YMCA group leader who once visited Ann.

YMCA MEMBER  
 Thank you, brothers and sisters! We  
 are joined today by Father John  
 Hughes!

He steps down as Hughes pulls a bible from his shirt pocket.  
 He bellows above the fray of chanting and rumbling carriages:

FATHER JOHN HUGHES  
 "Do you not know that you are God's  
 temple and that God's spirit dwells  
 in you? If anyone destroys God's  
 temple, God will destroy him."

72

INT. ANN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

72

Ann finishes up a hushed conversation with a pampered-looking DEBUTANTE(22, F), who is chaperoned by a well-heeled PERSONAL ASSISTANT (30, M), while Collette takes notes.

Even through closed doors, the faint CHANT of the picketers underscores their words. The assistant looks especially uneasy.

DEBUTANTE

It's really a shame because all the women in my family have sons and he says he's always dreamed of having a son.

ASSISTANT

He already has three daughters.

The debutante looks sad.

ASSISTANT (CONT'D)

(jaded)  
And a wife.

Both women cut their eyes at the assistant. He looks defensive.

ASSISTANT (CONT'D)

I'm just giving context.

Ann ignores him and addresses the debutante.

ANN

You're too far along for tea or tablets. We'll need to schedule surgery.

The young woman looks frightened. The assistant is unsympathetic.

ANN (CONT'D)

Don't be afraid, it's similar to a trying day during "that time of the month." Have a lie-in for a few days and you'll be back on your feet in no time.

The woman nods. The CHANTS outside continue to distract.

ASSISTANT

Is it always like this?

ANN  
We're currently seeking a new  
location.

ASSISTANT  
(ruffled)  
Rightly so.

73 INT. STOCKROOM HALLWAY - A LITTLE WHILE LATER

73

Joseph leads the debutante and assistant down a bare utility hallway.

JOSEPH  
We're looking at a Brownstone on  
5th Avenue that will be much more  
accommodating.

ASSISTANT  
Good luck to you, but I hope we  
don't need to visit again, no  
matter where you are.

Joseph nods. Fair enough. The young woman looks depressed. At the end of the hall, they reach a door.

Joseph KNOCKS, steps back, and suppresses an involuntary grin as GIDEON FIELDS (32), FLORIST, opens the door:

He's a chipper dandy with curly hair and beard, who wears a splashy blue suit with a fresh flower boutonniere. He smiles and waves the couple into his adjoining stockroom.

DEBUTANTE  
Ooh, it smells amazing in here!

JOSEPH  
Gideon will walk you down the back.  
No-one will be the wiser!

DEBUTANTE  
Thank you so much.

ASSISTANT  
(Shaking Joseph's hand)  
The senator owes you a large favor.  
It's not the worst card to have in  
your deck.

They disappear into the Florist's stockroom. Joseph and Gideon smile at each other one more time before Gideon shuts the door.

Joseph lingers for a moment, smile still etched into the corners of his mouth. It fades into worry.

74

EXT. 5TH AVENUE BROWNSTONE - LATE AFTERNOON

74

CHURCH BELLS chime four o'clock as Ann's carriage arrives outside a newly constructed, multi-story apartment building.

Ann and Joseph exit the carriage, dressed to kill. They are greeted by a squat man with a thick moustache (GROVER MCFADDEN, 50s) who welcomes them inside.

Ann takes her time admiring the exterior. The building is at an undeveloped end of 5th Avenue. It's peaceful. Ann takes a deep breath.

Her gaze falls on a bare plot of land across the street that appears to have been cleared for imminent construction.

MR. MCFADDEN

This neighborhood is projected to grow exponentially over the next decade, so it's very wise to invest now.

(He admires the vista.)

It won't stay this quiet forever.

ANN

(to Mr. McFadden)

Who owns the plot across the street?

MR. MCFADDEN

(proudly)

Oh that'll be our new cathedral! St. Patrick's, that is. When our Father John Hughes became Archbishop, they commissioned it in his honor. It'll be a thing of beauty, I guarantee.

Joseph nods politely. Ann looks devilishly amused. Joseph notices and shakes his head prohibitively. Mr. McFadden doesn't notice; he's too busy imagining the stained glass windows.

MR. MCFADDEN (CONT'D)

Well, shall we?

Ann smirks and follows the men inside.

As soon as the door closes, the sound of HOOFBEATS clatter across the otherwise empty street.

75 EXT. ANN'S CARRIAGE - A MOMENT LATER 75

Ann's CARRIAGE DRIVER looks up from his paper as another carriage rolls to a halt in front of him.

He waits for them to move along. They don't.

He narrows his eyes in suspicion as CARRIAGE DOORS open and FOUR BOOTS hit the ground with a thud.

76 INT. 5TH AVENUE BROWNSTONE - CONTINUOUS 76

Ann and Joseph stroll benignly through the entryway, lagging behind so they can gossip.

JOSEPH

I know what you're thinking.

ANN

Do you?

JOSEPH

You want to poke the bear.

ANN

(innocent)

What do you mean?

JOSEPH

Perhaps next door to the Catholic Church isn't the best place for an abortion clinic.

ANN

I didn't see any church around here, did you? I saw an empty lot.

Joseph sighs.

ANN (CONT'D)

A nice, quiet, empty lot.

They catch up with their guide and follow him upstairs.

77 INT. 5TH AVENUE BROWNSTONE, FOYER - DUSK 77

Mr. McFadden leads Ann and Joseph back downstairs after giving them the full tour.

MR. MCFADDEN

Well, do you like what you see?

Joseph looks to Ann for confirmation. She nods. Joseph looks resigned, then plasters on a smile.

JOSEPH  
Very much, sir.

MR. MCFADDEN  
I think you would make a wonderful addition to the neighborhood. My wife and I take a special interest in charitable causes like yours. She'll be so pleased. A Women's Boarding Home could do a world of good in our community. I'm sure Martha will want to volunteer.

JOSEPH  
You're too kind. We're very much looking forward to a more welcoming atmosphere.

The phrasing strikes Mr. McFadden as odd. He pauses in contemplation as the siblings wander ahead.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)  
(looking back)  
So, we'll make everything official on the first?

MR. MCFADDEN  
(snapping to)  
Ah, yes.  
(jovially)  
Come back with a pen and two thousand dollars and she's all yours.

ANN  
(under her breath)  
For two thousand dollars I should be able to forget my pen.

Joseph chuckles. His hand is on the door when someone KNOCKS on the other side. He opens it, curious.

78

EXT. 5TH AVENUE BROWNSTONE, FRONT STEPS - CONTINUOUS

78

It's none other than Samuel Jenks Smith of the New York Sunday Morning Post. He looks incredibly smug.

SAMUEL JENKS SMITH  
That's her.

Standing beside Smith with a more somber expression is the local CONSTABLE. He steps forward.

CONSTABLE

Ann Sommers, you are under arrest for procurement of abortion after the time of quickening.

ANN

What??

SAMUEL JENKS SMITH

It seems that someone has a compelling case for that big cash prize!

CONSTABLE

(taking her by the arm)  
Please come with me.

Smith strolls along with the Constable and writhing Ann, looking content.

ANN

I never sell to a quickened woman!  
I have done nothing wrong!

Joseph follows them closely. Ann blurts out orders.

ANN (CONT'D)

Joseph, cancel our dinner with the new supplier tonight, obviously. Actually, pay for their dinner but reschedule negotiations. And Caroline wanted to read Mother Goose tonight! Bring Collette over to do it, she can sleep in my bed.

JOSEPH

You'll sleep in your own bed tonight, Ann!

The Constable pushes her into the carriage. Samuel Jenks Smith smiles triumphantly. The carriage speeds away.

Joseph can't believe his eyes. Suddenly he remembers Mr. McFadden, still standing at the door.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

I- I can explain.

Mr. McFadden shakes his head and shuts the door. The LOCKS CLICK closed.

79

INT. COUNTY JAIL - MIDNIGHT

79

Ann sits in her cell, maintaining her composure, determined not to give any satisfaction to the bored JAILER on patrol.

The door to the hallway behind him CREAKS open: Joseph and Charles rush in, pushing past their disgruntled escort (JAILER 2).

Ann's eyes go wide with joy for a split second before she resumes her defiant stoicism. She calmly approaches the cell bars while the two jailers watch from the doorway.

Charles reaches for Ann's hands through the bars. She takes them; it comforts him more than it comforts her.

CHARLES

(adorably fired up)

My darling, this is outrageous! It won't possibly stand in court. Smith is throwing his weight around, but he's not the only one who knows people: Charles Lohman knows people, too!

Ann permits herself a half-smile and gives his hands a little squeeze.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

We've already paid a visit to an attorney, Orlando Stewart; he advertises with The Herald and says he'll stake his reputation on getting the case thrown out.

ANN

And my bail?

The men cringe.

JOSEPH

Yes. They have set your bail.

ANN

And?

JOSEPH

Two thousand dollars.

ANN

(at the first syllable of "thousand")

Not a chance!



Joseph nods in grim acceptance. Charles throws up his hands.

CHARLES

Ann, you'll make it back in a month!

ANN

I'll sit here and rot before I give them that money. It's already spoken for.

JOSEPH

(sorry to disappoint)

Ann, I think we're back to square one with the boarding house. Besides, they haven't set your trial date yet. It could be weeks.

ANN

You and Collette can handle the clinic. I have faith in you.

Joseph looks less than certain. Charles looks crushed.

JOSEPH

(guilty)

I told Caroline that you had to go back to work for an emergency surgery, but I don't have a long-term plan.

Ann looks up at the ceiling and swallows the lump in her throat.

ANN

Tell her that some nasty old men are trying to scare us, but they're going to have to try a lot harder.

80 INT. CLINIC, LOBBY - MORNING 80

Joseph prepares the quiet lobby for business. He hears a soft KNOCK at the door.

81 EXT. CLINIC - CONTINUOUS 81

Maria Purdy stands on the doorstep, wearing a traveling cloak. *She looks ill.*

MARIA

May I speak with Ann?

JOSEPH  
I'm sorry, she's away on business.

MARIA  
When will she ret-

Maria pulls out a handkerchief as she is overtaken by a rattling cough.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
Excuse me. When will she return?

JOSEPH  
If this is about a clinical matter,  
we open to the public at nine.  
(generously)  
If you'll tell me your name, I'll  
make sure you're at the top of the  
list.

MARIA  
Please, I can't stay. My husband is  
expecting me.

Joseph looks uncomfortable, but motions her inside.

82

INT. ANN'S OFFICE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

82

Collette sits at Ann's desk and consults with Maria. Despite her youth, Collette emits a calming demeanor of professionalism and expertise.

MARIA  
It didn't occur to me to bring any  
of the tea with me while I was  
overseas. I-

Maria coughs hard. Collette leans back in her chair.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
Pardon me. I didn't think I'd be  
there that long. Of course no one  
plans to fall madly in love during  
their mother's funeral.

She shakes her head, chastising herself. She looks exhausted.

COLLETTE  
So, you were on the ship home when  
you realized you hadn't had your  
courses.

MARIA  
Since the summer.

Collette nods and consults a calendar on the desk. She bites her lip.

COLLETTE  
You should still be within your window for the tablets. But if you don't see results within a week, you'll need surgery.

Maria nods and clears her throat. She doesn't sound good. Collette rises from the desk and opens the office door for Maria.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)  
And, this isn't my area of expertise, but I find that honey and lemon tea with a little *whiskey* works wonders for a cough.

MARIA  
(a tired smile)  
I'll have to try that.

COLLETTE  
Do take care, Mrs. Purdy.

Collette closes the door, but she can still hear Maria COUGHING in the hall.

83 INT. JAIL CELL - MORNING 83

Ann sits on her cot and stares at the remains of her meager bowl of porridge. A few days have passed and she's starting to wilt.

The cell door opens. Hope has arrived.

84 INT. CELL BLOCK HALL - CONTINUOUS 84

The jailer leads Ann silently down the hall towards freedom, scowling like it's his least favorite part of the job.

85 EXT. COUNTY JAIL - CONTINUOUS 85

Ann blinks in the morning sun. Charles is waiting with her carriage. He runs to her, embraces her, and steps back to admire her.

CHARLES  
You're the bravest woman I know.

He hugs her again.

ANN  
Did they set the date for my trial?

CHARLES  
They dropped the charges.

ANN  
What?

CHARLES  
It was all lies and hearsay, just  
as we suspected.

Ann looks troubled.

CHARLES (CONT'D)  
The important thing is, you're  
free.

He guides her toward the carriage.

ANN  
(a mirthless laugh)  
Until the next baseless accusation.

Charles stops and holds Ann's hands at the foot of the carriage.

CHARLES  
The thought of you alone in that  
cell every night drove me mad.  
(slowly)  
It made me see the world  
differently.  
(profound)  
I love you, Ann. Will you marry me?

Finally, Ann's whole body relaxes. They kiss - a kiss so all-consuming that it basically marries them right then and there.

In the love-hazed aftermath:

ANN  
(mischievous)  
How do I know you're not after me  
for my money?

They giggle and kiss some more.

CHARLES

Because I still want to sweep you  
off your feet right now, even  
though you really need a bath.

Ann guffaws and smacks him on the arm. They climb into the carriage and make haste for that bath.

86 INT. CLINIC, LOBBY - A FEW HOURS LATER

86

A freshly washed and dressed Ann returns to work with her head held high.

The lobby is full but there's no one at the front desk. A few POLITE CLIENTS nod and tip their hats to her, but she doesn't see Joseph or Collette.

Soon she knows why. Muffled yells are coming from her office:

DR. PURDY (O.C.)  
You poisoned her!

JOSEPH (O.C.)  
Sir, please be reasonable!

Ann hurries that way.

87 INT. ANN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

87

Dr. Frederick Purdy is raging at Collette, who cowers behind Ann's desk. Joseph stands in front of the desk, shielding her.

DR. PURDY  
Do you even know the base  
ingredients of what you're selling?

JOSEPH  
Of course, we compound in house!

Ann throws open the door.

COLLETTE  
Ann!

DR. PURDY  
(whipping around)  
You!  
(disgusted)  
This is Madame Restell?? You're  
that seamstress from the park!

ANN  
Collette, please go look in on  
Caroline. Tell her I'm home.

Collette obeys; Joseph continues to play bodyguard.

DR. PURDY  
This is quack medicine!  
(to Ann)  
How can you be qualified to  
practice??

JOSEPH  
I'm a trained pharmacist, sir!

ANN  
Mr. Purdy-

DR. PURDY  
*Doctor Purdy! I'm a founding member  
of the American Medical  
Association!*

Ann takes her rightful place behind the desk.

ANN  
Right. Dr. Purdy, *please* tell me  
why you are threatening my  
employees in a manner *so*  
*ungentlemanly.*

DR. PURDY  
*Because you killed my wife!*

88 INT. COURTROOM - MORNING

88

Ann sits beside attorney ORLANDO STEWART, mourning Maria Purdy and her own fate, as Dr. Purdy testifies against her.

The courtroom is packed with TABLOID JOURNALISTS and RELIGIOUS PROTESTORS, including Samuel Jenks Smith, Father John Hughes, and the three YMCA solicitors. Joseph and Charles sit together, as near to Ann as they can manage. Ann is the only woman.

DR. PURDY  
The night she died, she had taken a turn for the worse and I think she knew her time was near. Being Catholic, we called for our priest, Father Hughes.

Dr. Purdy nods to Father Hughes, who nods back,  
performatively morose.

DR. PURDY (CONT'D)  
Maria asked me to stay in the room  
while she confessed. She told me  
she had had an affair while  
visiting her sick mother and became  
pregnant. Apparently she visited  
Madame Restell immediately upon her  
return.

All eyes on Ann.

DR. PURDY (CONT'D)  
Three days later she was dead.

89 EXT. CLINIC - MORNING

89

A PAPER BOY cries out the headlines of the NATIONAL POLICE  
GAZETTE as the city streets come to life.

PAPER BOY  
Madame Restell found GUILTY of  
manslaughter! Could this be the end  
of her notorious career??

90 INT. CLINIC, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

90

Ann leads Caroline to Collette's room. Caroline drags her  
favorite doll.

ANN  
What are you going to learn today?

CAROLINE  
I dunno.

ANN  
You don't remember what we said at  
bedtime?

CAROLINE  
No.

ANN  
About sheep?

CAROLINE  
Oh! Counting.

Caroline seems far away. Ann knocks on Collette's door.

Collette opens it, still finishing the last button on her uniform collar.

91 INT. COLLETTE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

91

Caroline walks past her to the shelf and pulls out her favorite picture book. Collette steps into the hall and shuts the door.

COLLETTE  
How was it?

ANN  
You didn't read the Police Gazette?

COLLETTE  
I don't waste time on that rag.

ANN  
I'm guilty.

Collette goes sheet white. Ann stays calm.

ANN (CONT'D)  
We're appealing.

COLLETTE  
Oh Ann, she was already sick, I swear!

Collette starts to cry. Ann is hardly in the mood for this.

CAROLINE(O.C.)  
You're guilty, mama?

Ann looks down to see Caroline peeking out of the slightest crack in the door. Collette stifles her tears. Ann kneels down.

ANN  
We didn't do anything wrong.

CAROLINE  
Are you going back to jail?

ANN  
No.

Caroline's lip starts to quiver anyway. Ann reaches for Caroline's doll.



ANN (CONT'D)  
 What they really want is my money,  
 but they can't have it, because I  
 need it to buy *lots* of new friends  
 for Dolly. I think she's lonely.

Caroline resists distraction, barely.

ANN (CONT'D)  
 (doubling down)  
 I also need it to buy your favorite  
 sweet rolls. Do you think you could  
 point them out to Collette at the  
 bakery?

CAROLINE  
 (excited)  
 Can we all go together??

ANN  
 Well, *someone* needs to stay and run  
 the clinic.

CAROLINE  
 Uncle Joe can do it!

The women giggle. Ann gets up, petting Caroline's hair on her way out.

ANN  
 Uncle Joe doesn't like to be left  
 in charge.

92 EXT. CLINIC - 10:30 PM

92

Ann locks up while Joseph lifts Caroline into the carriage. A couple of STREET URCHINS run by.

URCHINS  
 Yer house is built on babies'  
 blood!

They throw BOTTLES - Ann ducks, but they're aiming at the clinic windows. The bottles SMASH; thankfully, they don't break the windows. The urchins sprint away, laughing.

Ann trudges over to the windows and starts cleaning up the bottles. Joseph hops out of the carriage to help.

93 INT. ANN'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - AN HOUR LATER 93

Ann reads Mother Goose Tales to Caroline in bed.

ANN

"Grandmama, what long teeth you have!' 'The better to eat thee!'"

Ann looks for Caroline's reaction. She's already asleep. Ann shuts the book and puts it on the bedside table. She kisses Caroline's forehead and tiptoes out.

94 INT. ANN'S APARTMENT, HALLWAY/FOYER - CONTINUOUS 94

Ann hears a knock on the door. Joseph answers before she can reach it. It's her attorney, Orlando Stewart:

ORLANDO

Burning the midnight oil?

JOSEPH

No rest for the wicked.

Ann pads into the foyer.

ORLANDO

Well, this won't take long.

A woman in a cloak and bonnet shuffles in behind Orlando as he steps inside to greet Ann.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

I believe you've already met Ernestine?

95 INT. ANN'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER 95

Ernestine shares her story with everyone at the breakfast table.

ERNESTINE

I heard everything. They threatened her with Hell! She was drunk on cough medicine! Her final hours were *miserable*. She only wanted to be forgiven.

ORLANDO

If you'll swear to it, we can have Maria's confession stricken from the evidence.

(to Ann)

(MORE)

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

If that happens I can all but guarantee your innocence.

ERNESTINE

I think it's dead wrong what they did, but Dr. Purdy will have me drawn and quartered for this.

(apologetic)

I can't do it for free.

ANN

Ernestine, *name your price.*

96 INT. COURTROOM - MORNING

96

A JURY of stone-faced men sit like statues in the courtroom.

All is quiet as the representative JUROR prepares to read the verdict.

Ann waits with bated breath. So do her enemies: Dr. Purdy, Father John Hughes, Samuel Jenks Smith, and their followers.

Ann reaches back behind her with both hands. Joseph and Charles each reach out from the row behind her and grab a hand. A squeeze for good luck.

JUROR

In the Case of Purdy Versus  
Sommers, we the jury find Ann  
Sommers,

Ann stops breathing.

JUROR (CONT'D)

-alias Madame Restell,

Ann squeezes her loved ones' hands hard.

JUROR (CONT'D)

*Not Guilty.*

Ann nearly collapses in sheer relief. Orlando rises and shakes hands with Joseph and Charles. Dr. Purdy storms out.

97 INT. ANN'S OFFICE - THE NEXT DAY

97

Ann does paperwork at her desk looking regal and poised. Ernestine sits in the chair in front of her, pleasantly peering around the office, hands in her lap.

Collette enters. Ann looks up and smiles.

ANN  
Ernestine, this is Collette.

Collette nods politely.

ERNESTINE  
A pleasure, miss.

ANN  
Collette, Ernestine is our newest employee.

COLLETTE  
Oh! I didn't know we were hiring.

ANN  
I want you to show her the ropes. Walk her through everything you do in a day.

COLLETTE  
Of course.  
(to Ernestine, casually)  
Are you training for a particular position?

ERNESTINE  
I'll do whatever I'm told, miss.

ANN  
She'll be replacing you.

Collette is mortified.

ANN (CONT'D)  
It's overdue, really. But after yesterday's verdict, I'm more convinced than ever.

Collette hangs her head in shame. Ann hides her smile. Ernestine is in on it, too.

ANN (CONT'D)  
I need you to run the clinic *in Boston*.

Collette almost gives herself whiplash looking up at Ann.

BOSTON MONTAGE:

98 EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY 98

Ann, Charles, and Collette board a first class train to Boston. Joseph and Caroline wave 'Goodbye' from the platform.

ANN (V.O.)  
We've been getting mail from Boston  
for years now. It's high time we  
expand.

99 EXT. HAYMARKET SQUARE OFFICE - DAY 99

Outside an empty office in the heart of Boston, Charles hands over a SIGNED LEASE to a BURLY LANDLORD. The men shake hands and the landlord hands him the KEYS.

ANN (V.O.)  
I need someone I can trust, who  
knows how I like to operate.

Ann and Collette stand a few paces behind them, pretending not to be in charge. The landlord glances their way and they look away demurely.

100 EXT. HAYMARKET SQUARE OFFICE - A WEEK LATER 100

Collette stands in front of the same office, now FURNISHED, with her back to the street, directing two HANDYMEN as they level the NEW SIGN above the door:

ANN (V.O.)  
Of course, it's a lot of  
responsibility, and you're allowed  
to refuse, but I believe you're a  
perfect fit.

They nail down the sign. Now it's official:

"MADAME COSTELLO, FEMALE PHYSICIAN."

Collette turns around to face the city, revealing her own transformation: she has become MADAME COSTELLO and looks every inch the part. She is as well-dressed, polished, and ready for an empire of her own.

ANN (V.O.)  
Meanwhile, I'll be busy with the  
boarding house.

END BOSTON MONTAGE.

101 INT. ANN'S OFFICE - DAY

101

Collette peers at Ann, who leans back in her chair.

COLLETTE

You're really going through with it?

ANN

Oh yes, because the funniest thing happened on the way to the courthouse.

CUT TO:

102 EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAWN

102

Ann, Charles, and Joseph ascend the vast stone steps on the morning of her trial.

MARTHA MCFADDEN (O.C.)

Madame Restell?

Ann and company turn, expecting to see some paparazzo. Instead they see Martha McFadden, Ann's 50 year old former surgical patient, leaning out of her carriage window. Ann descends to greet her.

ANN

How are you, Martha?

MARTHA

I came to wish you luck-

ANN

Thank you-

MARTHA

-and to tell you that when you are finished with this ordeal, we'll sign the papers on the apartment.

Ann looks confused.

MARTHA (CONT'D)

Isn't that right, Grover?

Ann peers into the carriage to see an ashen-faced Grover McFadden. He nods.

MARTHA (CONT'D)

I had to remind my husband what our family believes, and that even though the property is in his name, it belonged to my father who gave it to me-

Grover clears his throat in tight-lipped discomfort. Ann is wide-eyed.

MARTHA (CONT'D)

-and I think a boarding house is a marvelous idea.

103 EXT. 5TH AVENUE - MORNING, 1845 103

SUPER: MARCH, 1845.

Almost a decade has passed. CHURCH BELLS strike 7 o'clock.

Ann looks positively ostentatious in a flashy FOUR-HORSE CARRIAGE that hurtles down Fifth Avenue.

She wears an ermine robe, silk and diamonds, and no hat. To put it plainly: she's got "*Fuck You* money" and an attitude to match.

104 EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 104

Ann's carriage pulls around to the back of the 5th Avenue brownstone apartment, now home of the Restell Boarding House for Women.

ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL looms in what was once the empty lot across the street.

105 EXT. BOARDING HOUSE, BACK DOOR - CONTINUOUS 105

Ann greets a YOUNG WOMAN sweeping by the back door, who stops her work to let Ann inside.

106 INT. BOARDING HOUSE, VARIOUS - CONTINUOUS 106

BOARDING HOUSE MONTAGE:

Ann makes her daily rounds. She runs a tight ship. The house is full of women of all ages and stations that have come to board.

Some are visibly pregnant and have come to give birth: they lounge in the apartment's multiple parlors and drawing rooms, reading Godey's Lady's Books, snacking, and resting their feet.

Some are here for medicinal abortions: they take their Three Times Three pills and convalesce in their bedrooms.

Some are discreetly recuperating from surgical abortions; they doze and sip cider in front of the fires.

Despite these women's predicaments, the atmosphere is cheerful, tranquil, and harmonious.

END BOARDING HOUSE MONTAGE.

107 INT. BOARDING HOUSE, ANN'S QUARTERS - NIGHT 107

Ann enters her private suite. She has spared no expense on her own comfort.

Charles is reading a newspaper in a shiny leather armchair. Like Ann, he is dressed to match the upper-crust décor.

CHARLES  
Well, it passed.

He passes Ann the paper:

"VICTORY FOR MORAL ORDER: ABORTION OUTLAWED IN NEW YORK: Abortion seekers and providers alike face large fines and up to 12 months in prison."

Ann squints at the fine print, scoffs, and tosses it aside.

108 EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - AFTERNOON 108

Ann's carriage rolls to a halt. The Driver leaps from his seat and hurries to open the door for 15 YEAR OLD CAROLINE. She's the spitting image of YOUNG ANN.

She sports a fine dress but it is ruined with mud. Her books are muddy too. She has clearly been crying.

The Driver extends his arm but she blows past him, distraught. She hikes up the steps and pulls off her shoes before going inside.



109 INT. BOARDING HOUSE, FIRST FLOOR - CONTINUOUS 109

Caroline hurries upstairs, already unbuttoning the delicate fastenings on her grimy dress, past the dining room where a dozen women sit knitting, reading, and snacking.

Matronly Martha McFadden, now sixty, looks up from her book.

MARTHA

Welcome home, Caroline!

Caroline is halfway up the stairs and does not reply. Martha takes off her reading glasses and gets up.

110 INT. ANN'S QUARTERS, MASTER BATHROOM 110

Following the sound of STOMPS and trail of flung-open doors, Martha enters Ann's private bathroom. She steps over Caroline's dirty dress.

Caroline has stripped down to her underwear and is scrubbing off the mud at the wash basin.

MARTHA

My dove, what happened?

CAROLINE

Everyone hates me! Eleanor Whitehall pushed me into a puddle after class and the entire school laughed!

Martha gathers up the dirty dress.

CAROLINE (CONT'D)

I had told Sarah Davies that my birthday was this Friday, and Eleanor said it was a mystery that I was ever even born. Then, Thomas Kilgore said it must have been raising me that made my mother want to kill babies!

MARTHA

Oh, sweet pet, you know that's not true.

CAROLINE

I hate being her daughter!

Caroline dries her face and hands on an embroidered towel.

MARTHA

Now Caroline, it wasn't your mother  
who pushed you in the mud.

CAROLINE

Yes she did, before I was old  
enough to speak, and I'll never be  
rid of the stain!

111 INT. CLINIC, LOBBY - NIGHT

111

Ernestine tidies up the front desk after a long day. Ann  
enters, pulling on her coat.

ANN

Thank you for your excellent work  
today.

Ernestine draws the curtains and dims the lights. Joseph  
locks up the storage room. He wears his hair differently now:  
it's longer and wavy, parted to the side.

ERNESTINE

(pensive)

Do you think we'll soon see the end  
of these busy days?

ANN

Because of the new law?

Ernestine nods, looking worried.

ANN (CONT'D)

I have no intentions of adjusting  
our practices, and there's not a  
law on earth that will decrease  
demand for our services.

ERNESTINE

But they're going after the  
patients too, now. You don't think  
they'll be scared off?

Just then, a desperate KNOCK at the door. Ann looks at  
Ernestine as if to say, "You have your answer."

112 EXT. CLINIC - CONTINUOUS

112

Joseph answers the door. Ann and Ernestine peer over his  
shoulders.

A barrel-chested, middle-aged man (CHESTER BODINE, 48) wearing a greatcoat stands at the door. Cowering behind him is a young Black woman (BETHANY, 20) whose thin overcoat looks insufficient for the cold.

MR. BODINE  
I know you're closed, but I came  
all the way from Albany.

Joseph looks back at Ann and Ernestine; they look deeply skeptical.

113 INT. ANN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

113

Ann feels Bethany's abdomen while Ernestine takes notes. Mr. Bodine leans on Ann's desk and pulls a flask from his waistcoat.

MR. BODINE  
(swigging the flask)  
Of course, money is no object.

Ann ignores him.

MR. BODINE (CONT'D)  
But I have to be back in Albany on  
Monday.

Ann continues to focus on Bethany.

ANN  
You're too far along for surgery,  
I'm afraid.

MR. BODINE  
Nonsense! She's barely showing!

ANN  
(calmly)  
I own and operate a private  
establishment where Bethany can  
board until she delivers. For an  
additional fee I can facilitate an  
adoption-

MR. BODINE  
No, no, no. I don't want an  
adoption, I want an abortion.

ANN  
Abortion is illegal in the state of  
New York, sir.

MR. BODINE

Don't toy with me. The whole country knows what you do here!

ANN

Be that as it may, it is too late in Bethany's pregnancy for any medical procedure besides delivery.

MR. BODINE

Delivery is not an option. She's my wife's favorite house girl. She's gotta be fixed up and ready to work Monday morning.

ANN

Perhaps your wife will be more understanding than you surmise, good help being so hard to find.

Mr. Bodine grips the arms of the chair.

MR. BODINE

It's out of the question. Besides, why in God's name would I pay for her to luxuriate for six months?

ANN

I thought you said money was no object.

MR. BODINE

That's not the point!

Ann opens the office door to reveal Joseph standing guard in the hall.

ANN

Mr. Bodine, I've explained the situation and listed your available options. If they are not to your liking I recommend you return to Albany.

Mr. Bodine steams and grits his teeth.

ANN (CONT'D)

Joseph, please escort Mr. Bodine to his carriage.

Joseph steps inside the office. Mr. Bodine grabs his hat and gets up. He yanks Bethany roughly by the elbow and drags her to the door. Everyone but him looks affronted.

ANN (CONT'D)  
Mr. Bodine!

He whips around in the doorway.

ANN (CONT'D)  
I'll take her off your hands right  
now. Money is no object.

This surprises everyone.

MR. BODINE  
(a moment's consideration)  
Her contract is non-negotiable.

He drags Bethany off. Everyone is entirely discontent.

114 INT. BOARDING HOUSE, ANN'S QUARTERS - NIGHT 114

Ann takes a late dinner alone by candlelight in Charles' favorite armchair.

She reads the paper that she tossed aside earlier, looking weary and burdened.

In the background, Charles sleeps peacefully in their bed.

115 INT. ANN'S QUARTERS - THE NEXT MORNING 115

Ann rises in the pre-dawn blue while Charles continues to sleep like a rock.

116 I/E CAROLINE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS 116

Ann pads down the hallway to Caroline's room and knocks on the door. No answer. She opens it.

The room is empty. Ann looks perplexed: Caroline isn't normally an early riser.

117 INT. BOARDING HOUSE, FIRST FLOOR - CONTINUOUS 117

Ann looks for Caroline downstairs. A rosy-cheeked COOK is setting the dining table for breakfast.

COOK  
Good morning, Madame.

ANN  
 Good morning, have you seen  
 Caroline?

COOK  
 Hmm, no, not since she went to  
 church.

Ann's expression contorts. Caroline doesn't normally go to church.

118 EXT. ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL - MID-MORNING

118

A swarm of CATHOLICS fills the street after morning mass.

Among them is Caroline, walking with schoolmate SARAH DAVIES (16), Sarah's mother and father (mid-30s), and Sarah's brother IRA (18).

MRS. DAVIES  
 Please extend the invitation to  
 your parents, as well.

CAROLINE  
 Mother is working, but I'll invite  
 Charles.

MRS. DAVIES  
 Oh dear, your mother is working on  
 a Sunday?

CAROLINE  
 She works every day. It's  
 impossible to stop her.

IRA DAVIES  
 No wonder, then, that you have the  
 finest of everything.

CAROLINE  
 That's what she tells me.

SARAH  
 I caught Ira peeking in your  
 windows after Mass last week,  
 trying to see what you were having  
 for lunch.

IRA  
 (embarrassed)  
 I was not! I was trying to stop  
 Todd Bellows from throwing stones  
 at the glass!

Caroline looks across the street and sees none other than her mother, waiting on the front steps of the boarding house, arms crossed. Caroline gulps.

CAROLINE  
I'll meet you at the carriage.

Ann is already storming over, eyes blazing. Caroline intercepts her before she can confront the Davies.

ANN  
Get inside right now.

CAROLINE  
I was only across the street with Sarah!

ANN  
That isn't important. You know better.

CAROLINE  
I'm the only one at school who doesn't go to church! Why??

Caroline's raised voice attracts attention. Ann growls:

ANN  
You know why! Those people want to destroy me! They would rather you be an orphan than my heir! Why would you ever break bread with them?

CAROLINE  
Because I don't want to be like you!!

Caroline runs back through the crowd to the supportive, pitying arms of the Davies family. Ann looks livid.

119 INT. BOARDING HOUSE, DINING ROOM - NOON

119

Ann and Charles eat lunch with their guests.

CHARLES  
It's the third time this year, my love. It's simply the last straw.

ANN  
We discussed it after the last incident! She had no desire for private tutors.

(MORE)

ANN (CONT'D)

She wanted to be with the other children, despite their beastly ignorance.

CHARLES

I think her feelings have changed.

Ann broods.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

(shrugging)

And you know how I feel about religion-

ANN

But?

CHARLES

But it pains me to see her struggle, and Sarah is her only friend.

ANN

She has other friends!

Charles is not convinced.

ANN (CONT'D)

She has Ernestine, and Martha! She has *us!*

Charles cocks his head. Ann huffs.

CHARLES

Perhaps her attendance at St. Patrick's is a worthwhile compromise.

ANN

What makes you think she will be accepted in the very seat of judgment when she is already a pariah in the schoolyard?

Charles doesn't answer. He rises from the table and takes their empty lunch plates to the kitchen.

120

EXT. GREENWICH STREET - AFTERNOON

120

Ann takes an open-air carriage ride back to work after lunch, enjoying the rare cloudless sky. Her ermine robe gives her the look of royalty, but people on the street dismiss her with scorn.



To them, with her hair blowing freely and colorful silk dress flashing under her furs, she looks gaudy, even scandalous.

121 EXT. CLINIC - CONTINUOUS 121

Ann arrives at the clinic. There's a group of PROTESTERS blocking the door. That's not uncommon, but these are unusually quiet. She stares them down.

122 INT. CLINIC, LOBBY - LATE AFTERNOON 122

Ernestine introduces a GERMAN COUPLE to Joseph for their prescriptions. They all freeze when they hear SOUNDS OF STRUGGLE outside, and SCREAMS that sound like Ann.

Ernestine is on the verge of investigating when the door bursts open and Ann barges in, covered in ROTTEN EGGS and clutching the HORSE WHIP. She blazes through the lobby to her office and slams the door.

123 INT. ANN'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON 123

Ann sits at her desk pulling eggshells out of her hair, ruined coat slung over the chair behind her. A soft KNOCK. She checks her hair one last time.

ANN

Come in.

Joseph opens the door for Mr. Bodine and Bethany, followed by Ernestine. Mr. Bodine slides toward the chair in front of Ann's desk, but Ann hold out a hand to stop him.

ANN (CONT'D)

Please sit down, Bethany.

Bethany looks at Mr. Bodine. Mr. Bodine looks furious, but nods curtly and steps back so Bethany can sit down. Ernestine takes her place behind Ann and stands at attention.

ANN (CONT'D)

I take it you've changed your mind about adoption?

Mr. Bodine says nothing but hands Ann a folded piece of paper. She unfolds it and stares at it, expressionless. Ernestine cranes her neck to see. Her eyes bulge.

124 INT. OPERATING ROOM - EVENING

124

Ann washes her hands at a basin; the water turns pink. Beside her lays a tray of surgical instruments, wet with blood. The procedure is finished.

Behind Ann, Ernestine helps Bethany sit up on the operating table. Joseph stands by with a wheelchair.

125 INT. LOBBY - MINUTES LATER

125

Ann advises Mr. Bodine as Joseph wheels Bethany out. He parks the chair and joins Ernestine behind the front desk.

ANN

She must remain on bedrest for three days, do you understand?

MR. BODINE

That's a rather large inconvenience, to be honest.

ANN

Well you've made a rather large investment at this point, wouldn't you agree? Three days, minimum.

Ernestine produces TWO BOTTLES from a desk drawer.

ERNESTINE

The green bottle will help keep you clean, the blue one is for the pain.

Ernestine hands the bottles to Bethany. Mr. Bodine swipes the blue one.

MR. BODINE

I'll take that. Don't want her drinking half the bottle and sleeping all day.

Joseph pulls a thick, round cushion from under the desk and drops it in Bethany's lap. It lands with an unexpected THUD. Bethany looks confused.

ANN

This is for the return journey, and any time you need to sit up during the next three days.

Joseph takes the handles of Bethany's wheelchair, ready to transport her to the carriage. Mr. Bodine heads for the door, satisfied that he's heard everything important.

Ann gives Bethany a knowing look and turns the cushion in her lap to reveal a small BUTTON sewn into the seams. She gives it a quick pat so Bethany is sure to notice it.

ANN (CONT'D)  
(whispered, sincere)  
Good luck.

Joseph and Bethany follow Mr. Bodine. Ernestine holds open the door. She gives Bethany the same knowing look.

Bethany cautiously unbuttons the cushion and peeks inside the seams: it's full of MONEY. Whatever Mr. Bodine paid Ann, at least half of it must be there.

Bethany locks down her poker face and braces for the cold.

EXT. BODINE MANOR - CONTINUOUS

Mr. Bodine's dark carriage rolls to a halt, dwarfed in the shadows of his sprawling white manor.

126 INT. BODINE MANOR - CONTINUOUS

126

Mr. Bodine sweeps inside without a glance to Bethany, who hobbles in slowly with her cushion. She looks up at the staircase, daunted and sore. Mr. Bodine pauses before disappearing into his study.

MR. BODINE  
I'll only say this once: you are to obey Mrs. Bodine's every order.

He holds up the medicine bottle.

MR. BODINE (CONT'D)  
If she catches you lazing about, you won't see a drop of this, you understand?

Bethany nods, eyes on her cushion.

127 EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - AFTERNOON

127

Caroline sits on the front steps, watching the doors of St. Patrick's with rapt attention. There's a BIBLE in her lap.

Caroline lights up as the cathedral doors swing open and a group of SENIOR SCHOOLBOYS swaggers out. Ira Davies is in their midst. Caroline grabs the Bible and sticks her nose in it, resisting the urge to peek at him.

Success: Ira sees her and ambles over. She pretends to be engrossed in scripture.

IRA  
Good afternoon, Caroline.

CAROLINE  
Oh! Ira! Good afternoon.

A flash of movement in the nearest window: Ann draws back the curtains a hair to watch over her daughter with disapproval.

IRA  
What are you reading?

Ira sits down next to Caroline. Caroline blushes.

CAROLINE  
First Timothy, Chapter Two.

128 INT. BOARDING HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 128

Ann closes the curtains with ire and walks away from the disturbing scene. She passes Charles going the opposite direction.

CHARLES  
Who is it? More protesters?

ANN  
If only.

129 INT. BODINE MANOR, SERVANT QUARTERS - NIGHT 129

Bethany sits on the bed in her traveling coat and dumps money from the cushion into a carpetbag.

She scoops out the last coins, then covers her treasure with clothing.

Candlelight flickers on Bethany's face as her fellow maid DINAH enters.

DINAH  
Hide everything!

Bethany stuffs the carpetbag behind her pillow. She tries to stand up, but she doubles over in pain. Dinah runs over to steady her and help pull her coat off.

130 INT. BODINE MANOR, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 130

MRS. PERMELIA BODINE (45) flies down the hallway toward the servant quarters. She is an angular woman with an aquiline nose, wearing nightclothes and a cruel expression.

She clutches the BLUE BOTTLE. Mr. Bodine tails her.

MR. BODINE  
 Permelia, give that to me! You're  
 being hysterical.

MRS. BODINE  
 You've shamed me for the last time,  
 Chester Bodine! I should have  
 stayed with my sister.

131 INT. SERVANT QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS 131

Mrs. Bodine bursts through the door and locks it. Dinah snaps to attention, still holding Bethany's coat. Bethany sits hunched on the bed, looking queasy.

MR. BODINE (O.C.)  
 (shaking the doorknob)  
 Open the door!

MRS. BODINE  
 Leave us alone, Chester!  
 (to Dinah and Bethany)  
 Tell me everything that devil has  
 been doing behind my back.

Dinah and Bethany are petrified. In fact, Bethany faints.

132 INT. SERVANT QUARTERS - A FEW HOURS LATER 132

A DOCTOR examines Bethany in her room. Mrs. Bodine hovers over them.

The Doctor turns to face the worried Mrs. Bodine. The look in his eyes is foreboding, even accusing. Mrs. Bodine directs her own accusatory stare at her husband, who leans reluctantly in the doorway.

EXT. BODINE MANOR - THE NEXT MORNING

POLICEMEN escort a weeping, limping Bethany to their wagon at dawn.

The Bodine watch from their porch, looking both relieved and ashamed.

133 INT. BODINE MANOR - CONTINUOUS 133

Dinah keeps an eye out as she sneaks out of the Servants quarters, wearing Bethany's coat and carrying her carpetbag.

134 INT. CLINIC, LOBBY - AFTERNOON 134

A few days later, a well-dressed MIDDLE-AGED COUPLE visit Madame Restell. They hold hands and look jittery with anticipation.

At the sound of a CRYING BABY, the woman laughs with delight and squeezes the man's hand. He grins and hugs her.

Ann enters, followed by Ernestine, who is pushing a YOUNG MOTHER in a wheelchair. That mother is holding her NEWBORN BABY.

The couple can hardly contain their excitement. Ann gently hands the child to the ecstatic older woman as Joseph emerges from the stockroom with pamphlets and supplements.

Ernestine puts a hand on the birth mother's shoulder as the girl wipes away a bittersweet tear. The middle-aged couple is already head over heels in love with their new baby.

This warm bubble of affection bursts, however, when the CONSTABLE enters unannounced, followed by two POLICEMEN.

Joseph greets them, first in the line of defense. Ann gives an ominous glance to Ernestine, who whispers to the birth mother and wheels her back down the hall. Ann steels herself for confrontation.

135 NEWSPAPER HEADLINE: 135

"THE DAILY GAZETTE: RESTELL ARRESTED AGAIN! WILL THE WICKEDEST WOMAN IN NEW YORK FINALLY SEE JUSTICE?"

136 INT. BOARDING HOUSE, CAROLINE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS 136

Caroline reads the Bible on her bed. A KNOCK: Charles enters.

CHARLES  
We're leaving for the courthouse  
now.

He kisses Caroline on the forehead. She seems withdrawn.

CHARLES (CONT'D)  
Please keep the doors locked and  
the curtains closed. The reporters  
are getting aggressive.

CAROLINE  
May I still have lunch with Sarah?

CHARLES  
I'm sorry, dear. I don't think it's  
a good idea.

CAROLINE  
(frustrated)  
How much longer is the trial going  
to last?

CHARLES  
As long as it takes to prove your  
mother's innocence.

He touches the Bible in Ann's hands.

CHARLES (CONT'D)  
Perhaps you should pray for her.

He leaves her to brood.

137 INT. COURTHOUSE - MID-MORNING

137

The court is three times as packed as it was for Ann's first trial. There are many familiar faces: Samuel Jenks Smith, the YMCA, Father John Hughes and a mob of angry Catholics.

Charles, Joseph, and Gideon the florist sit as close to Ann as possible.

This time, the only other woman present is Bethany, trembling at the witness stand.

Mr. Bodine sits in the front row and stares menacingly at Bethany as she is questioned by Orlando Stewart, now a trusted member of the Restell staff.

ORLANDO

Is it not true that you were previously employed at Lavinia's Parlor House on Barrow Street before going to work for the Bodines?

The court frowns en masse at the mention of Lavinia's.

BETHANY

Yes, but that was years ago. I live in Albany now.

ORLANDO

According to Mr. Bodine's records, you were chastised as recently as February for breaking curfew, after which it was discovered you had been engaging in prostitution.

BETHANY

I wasn't! I had gone to see my sweetheart.

ORLANDO

Then why did Mr. Bodine confiscate twenty dollars from you at that time?

BETHANY

We were pooling everything we had, so we could get married and run away together.

ORLANDO

But you didn't run away; you continued to work for the Bodines, during which time you were treated for several occasions of feminine irregularity and twice for hysteria.

Members of the jury nod and stroke their beards.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

On the fifth of July this year, Mr. Bodine described your behavior as "obscene and provocative" and withheld your wages for "gross insubordination." Can you tell us more about the circumstances surrounding these accusations?



Bethany glances involuntarily at Mr. Bodine, then locks eyes with Ann. They both look equally regretful and victimized.

138 INT. BOARDING HOUSE, DINING ROOM - THAT NIGHT 138

An exhausted Ann sips tea at the dining table. Charles enters with a tray of food for a nightcap.

ANN

I don't want to walk up any more stairs today.

CHARLES

I'll carry you just this once.

He sets the tray in front of her and rubs her shoulders. Ann puts her hand on his.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

I hate to take solace in this, but poor Bethany fears for her life. She'll never testify against that ogre. Without him, her story falls apart.

He kisses her head. Ann stares into her cup.

ANN

I've never lost a patient, Charles. Bethany *lives*. Women die in childbirth every day. Am I not saving lives?

139 INT. CAROLINE'S ROOM - NIGHT 139

Ann slips into Caroline's room with a candle. She admires her sleeping daughter, gently brushes the hair from her forehead, and tiptoes out.

As soon as the door closes, Caroline's eyes open. She stares into the dark with bitter scorn.

140 EXT. COURTHOUSE - THE NEXT MORNING 140

Ann, Charles, Joseph, and Gideon emerge from Ann's carriage on the final day of the trial. Picketers descend upon them as soon as they ascend the courthouse steps.

PICKETERS

Her house is built on baby's blood!  
Haul her out! Hang her up!

Charles, Joseph, and Gideon flank Ann and escort her swiftly up the stairs.

141 INT. COURTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS 141

Ann and company make for the courtroom to escape the jeering crowd. Orlando Stewart is waiting in the hall; he hurries over.

ORLANDO  
(dead serious)  
Ann. I'm sorry. Bethany has turned  
State's Evidence.

Ann shakes her head, waiting for an explanation.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)  
It means they know everything.

142 INT. COURTROOM - AFTERNOON 142

The courtroom once again thrums with tension. The jury has reached a verdict. Ann stands and stares hollow-eyed as the PRESIDING JUROR announces:

PRESIDING JUROR  
In the case of the State of New  
York versus Ann Lohman, alias  
Madame Restell, the jury finds the  
defendant guilty of second degree  
manslaughter.

The crowd ERUPTS. Ann is pale as a ghost. The judge CRACKS the gavel.

JUDGE  
(permissive)  
Order.  
(triumphant)  
Ann Lohman, I hereby sentence you  
to a fine of one thousand dollars-

Ann's heart leaps into her throat at the wild possibility of escaping with merely a fine.

JUDGE (CONT'D)  
-and twelve months incarceration at  
Blackwell's Island Prison.

Ann's knees buckle. Orlando steadies her. Charles, Joseph, and Gideon climb over their seats to reach her.

Time slows. Ann's loved ones wrap her in frantic, desperate embraces. They plead reassurances that Ann does not hear.

Their goodbyes are cut short by the stone-faced BAILIFF, who pulls Ann away through the churning crowd.

Gideon clenches Joseph's hand. Charles begins to weep. Joseph and Gideon lead him off, before they are cornered by TABLOID REPORTERS.

143 EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - AFTERNOON 143

Caroline is once again reading the Bible on the front steps when Ann's carriage returns.

She puts the book down, too anxious to pretend not to care.

Gideon and Joseph climb out first and assist Charles. His eyes are red and swollen. Caroline springs to her feet.

144 EXT. BLACKWELL'S ISLAND PRISON - MORNING 144

Police drag Ann out of the wagon with a half dozen other PRISONERS.

The towering brick architecture stretches out in front of them in all directions, imposing and malevolent.

Ann whips around to peer at the world around her, trying to memorize green leaves and blue skies, before a PRISON GUARD prods her in the back with his CLUB and forces her on.

The prison gates yawn open to consume the new arrivals.

Ann disappears into the dark.

145 EXT. BLACKWELL'S ISLAND PRISON - MORNING 145

SUPER: ONE YEAR LATER.

A magnificent four-horse carriage gallops toward the prison.

146 INT. FOUR-HORSE CARRIAGE - CONTINUOUS 146

Charles' expression is inscrutable as he arrives at Blackwell's Island.

He has loaded the interior with flowers, gifts, and food. Ann's ermine riding robe is folded on his lap.

147 EXT. PRISON - CONTINUOUS 147

Charles helps Ann into her robe outside to the luxurious carriage. She looks changed. Haunted.

148 INT. FOUR-HORSE CARRIAGE - CONTINUOUS 148

Ann sits quietly, gently stroking the robe like she's never seen it before.

Charles looks at her, pain welling in the corners of his eyes. Ann doesn't meet his gaze.

149 EXT. 5TH AVENUE - NOON 149

The carriage stops near the boarding house. There's a newly constructed brownstone building right next door, and it's not just any building:

It's a mansion.

Charles leads Ann towards it. She squints in consternation: it certainly wasn't there this time last year.

Ann instinctively pivots toward the boarding house. Charles gently redirects her.

CHARLES

Please, I want to show you something.

150 INT. MANSION - CONTINUOUS 150

Charles opens the front door with pride and reveals a home that's beyond Ann's wildest dreams, every detail suited to her desires.

CHARLES

I hope you'll forgive me for making an executive decision without you, but after all you've been through, I thought you deserved it.

He leads her into the living room, but before they can enter they are greeted by:

Collette, now more widely known as MADAME COSTELLO OF BOSTON. She has truly flourished into a lovely woman, equally elegant, poised, and commanding.

COLLETTE

Welcome home.

She gives Ann a big, overwhelming hug. Ann can hardly believe her eyes.

CHARLES

I wrote to Collette as soon as your trial began, and she's been managing the business for you ever since.

COLLETTE

There was never any question. I am forever in your debt.

Ann shakes her head 'No.'

COLLETTE (CONT'D)

The tide is changing, Ann. There were riots after the verdict was announced. Women marched in the street for you. Madame Restell is more in demand than ever.

CHARLES

They've started including the clinic in walking tours of the city! I've got maps to prove it.

COLLETTE

(gently humorous)

Don't worry, we collect a fee from the tour guides.

CHARLES

They're calling abortions 'Restellisms' in the papers now.

ANN

(after a beat)

Where is Caroline? Why didn't she ever visit me?

The dreaded question. Charles and Collette frown.

CHARLES

I'm so sorry, Ann. I couldn't make her see reason.

ANN

What reason? I'm her mother! Where is she??

COLLETTE

She doesn't want to see you.

CHARLES

She's been living with the Davies.  
I see her across the street  
occasionally, when she goes to  
mass.

This is Ann's undoing. She collapses in despair. Charles and Collette enfold her, but she can't even see them.

**END OF ACT II**

151 EXT. CLINIC - DAY

151

SUPER: MARCH, 1878.

A chipper TOUR GUIDE addresses a gaggle of TOURISTS who have stopped outside the clinic.

TOUR GUIDE

And here we have the flagship  
office of the infamous Madame  
Restell, known as "The Wickedest  
Woman in New York." Her clandestine  
practices that began right here  
have made her a rumored  
millionaire, despite public opinion  
unquestionably set against her! She  
has been four times arrested, even  
more frequently sued, and still  
refuses to close her doors.

TOURIST WOMAN

(to her husband)  
I call that tenacity.

TOURIST MAN

Most would call it depravity.

TOUR GUIDE

In fact, her empire has expanded to  
include offices in Boston and  
Philadelphia! But who would want to  
leave the greatest city on earth??

Polite chuckles from the crowd.

## TOUR GUIDE (CONT'D)

If you get a chance to visit 5th Street, you may very well see her on one of her *highly provocative* daily carriage rides.

152 INT. ANN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

152

66 YEAR OLD ANN sits at her desk, filling out paperwork with a fine feather pen. Her hair is graying, her ensemble regal yet subdued; not so flamboyant as the colorful dresses of her prime.

On the wall behind her are framed pictures of Collette and Ernestine, with accompanying newspaper articles profiling "Madame Costello of Boston", and "MADAME ELVIRA OF PHILADELPHIA," respectively.

There are two other framed portraits in a special display on the shelf, Union Soldiers who fought and died with honor in the Civil War: GIDEON CLIFFORD TATE and JOSEPH PHILIP TROW.

There's a soft knock on the door.

ANN

(not looking up)

Come in.

A young woman in uniform, HELEN (16), appears. She is dressed like Ernestine and Collette, back when they were assistants.

HELEN

Mister Blackburn, ma'am.

A plainly dressed bearded man with dark bushy hair enters. Although he only looks to be about thirty, he walks with a cane and a slight limp. Helen exits.

ANN

Please have a seat, Mr. Blackburn.

He does.

ANN (CONT'D)

How may I help you?

Mr. Blackburn speaks in a thick Eastern European accent.

MR. BLACKBURN

My wife is pregnant, and very frail. We have five children already, and with our youngest, she nearly died.

(MORE)

MR. BLACKBURN (CONT'D)  
 (unexpectedly emotional)  
 I know it is a sin, but I cannot  
 lose her.

Ann puts a hand on his. He hides his surprise.

ANN  
 It is no sin to care for your  
 beloved. Do you know how long it  
 has been since she has had her  
 regular courses?

MR. BLACKBURN  
 A few months, I think.  
 (worried)  
 Will she need surgery?

ANN  
 (firm)  
 I do not perform surgical  
 abortions, Mr. Blackburn.

MR. BLACKBURN  
 Oh, I-

ANN  
 Not for many years. The laws are  
 very strict these days, do you  
 understand? It is illegal now to  
 even mention such things in print.

MR. BLACKBURN  
 I understand.

ANN  
 (filling out a  
 prescription)  
 I am prescribing some pills to  
 restore your wife's regularity.  
 They will remove any obstructions  
 that may be preventing her courses.

She hands him the prescription.

MR. BLACKBURN  
 Thank you.

He bows deeply in his chair with his hand over his heart.

ANN  
 Of course. Take that to Joseph in  
 the-  
 (a pang)  
 (MORE)



ANN (CONT'D)  
 -I'm sorry, *Helen*, in the lobby.  
 She'll provide the rest.

Mr. Blackburn rises and heads for the door, much relieved.

ANN (CONT'D)  
 Oh, Mr. Blackburn-

He turns.

ANN (CONT'D)  
 You forgot your cane.

It's still leaning on her desk. His eyes go wide. He limps back for it.

MR. BLACKBURN  
 Thank you.

Ann watches him exit with narrowing eyes.

153 EXT. BREWSTER'S BOOKS - SUNSET

153

Ann and Helen walk down Chatham Street toward the bookstore where Ann met Charles so long ago.

ANN  
 It will do you good. You're too young to remember Seneca Falls, and I was in prison at the time, but I attended the National Convention in '51 and every year thereafter until the war.

Helen nods, impressed.

HELEN  
 Do you think if we win the Vote, I can go to Medical School?

ANN  
 It will certainly be a step in the right direction. But you already know twice as much as those hypocritical grave-robbers.

A cluster of people huddle around the storefront. Inside, it's all dark.

A man with collar-length wheat colored hair, now flecked with white, makes his way through the crowd. It's Henry Ward Beecher, the revolutionary preacher.

BEECHER

Well if it isn't Ann Lohman!

Beecher clasps Ann's hands and kisses her on the cheek.

ANN

Father Beecher, I thought you were still on tour.

BEECHER

Got back last week!

ANN

Helen, this is Father Henry Ward Beecher, the only man of God I can abide.

Beecher laughs and shakes Helen's hand.

HELEN

I know who he is, ma'am. He's the most famous preacher in the nation!

ANN

And the only one who has yet to condemn me to hell.

BEECHER

You don't condemn me, I don't condemn you. Seems fair!

ANN

I assume you're here for the lecture.

BEECHER

That I was, but Anthony Comstock has struck again.

He gestures to the store windows, which are covered with LARGE POSTERS, but not the usual advertisements:

"CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE."

"THIS ESTABLISHMENT HAS BEEN FOUND TO BE IN VIOLATION OF THE COMSTOCK ACT."

"NEW YORK SOCIETY FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF VICE: OFFICIAL WARNING."

Beyond the glass, the shop has clearly been raided: books lay scattered and countless shelves are empty.

The crowd hums with indignant conversation. A teenage BOOKSTORE CLERK tips his hat to Ann.

BOOKSTORE CLERK

I'm sorry you came all this way for nothing, ma'am. It happened this morning.

ANN

Surely Mr. Brewster won't stand for this.

BOOKSTORE CLERK

That's the worst part, ma'am: Comstock arrested him personally, and today was his eighty-second birthday!

154 INT. ANN'S MANSION - EVENING 154

Ann returns home after the cancelled lecture. Her butler greets her at the door and takes her coat.

ANN

(subdued)

Thank you, Horace.

Horace bows and exits. Ann climbs the grand staircase, carrying the weight of the world.

155 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS 155

Charles is lounging in his smoking jacket and lighting his pipe when Ann enters.

CHARLES

You're home early.

ANN

Brewster's shut down.

CHARLES

(straightening up)

What?

ANN

They were raided this morning, by Anthony Comstock.

Charles is flabbergasted. Ann takes the pipe from him and inhales deeply.

156 INT. ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL, CONFESSIONAL BOOTH - DAWN 156

ANTHONY COMSTOCK (29) sits in the dark and confesses to his priest:

COMSTOCK  
 Forgive me, Father, for I have  
 sinned. It has been two days since  
 my last confession.

PRIEST  
 Tell me your sins, child.

COMSTOCK  
 I have been deceitful, in the name  
 of Your Divine Word.

He looks down at his lap, where he holds a FAKE BEARD. He turns it over and over in his hands.

157 INT. SANCTUARY - EARLY MORNING 157

Comstock waits in line for communion behind a family of three: a mother and father in their mid-forties and their teen daughter.

As the girl takes communion, Comstock watches proudly. She is the spitting image of YOUNG CAROLINE, except for the rust colored hair of her father, IRA DAVIES.

As the family returns to their place in the pews, Comstock smiles at them. The mother is of course CAROLINE DAVIES, and she looks just like ANN did twenty years ago.

Comstock takes communion and returns to his seat alone.

158 EXT. ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL - MID-MORNING 158

Comstock catches up with the Davies outside after mass. Ira inclines his head respectfully.

IRA DAVIES  
 How are you, Anthony?

COMSTOCK  
 Very well.  
 (to Ira's daughter)  
 Congratulations, Agnes. I was proud  
 to see you in the group of  
 Catechism graduates.

AGNES

Thank you, Mr. Comstock.

CAROLINE

She's joining the Sisters of Holy Mercy in the spring.

COMSTOCK

Wonderful. May I have a word?

Ira nods. Caroline and Comstock stroll down the hall together. Agnes watches them nervously as Ira puts a steadying hand on her shoulder.

159 EXT. ANN'S MANSION - CONTINUOUS

159

Horace answers the door looking politely puzzled.

AGNES

(curtseying)

Good morning, sir. May I speak with Mrs. Lohman?

HORACE

And who may I say is calling?

AGNES

Agnes Davies. I'm her granddaughter.

160 INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

160

Ann and Agnes stare at each other across the coffee table, on which Horace sets a silver tea tray full of cakes.

Ann peers at Agnes like she's seeing a ghost. She really does look just like Caroline did at her age, despite her father's red hair. Agnes peers back with equal curiosity.

AGNES

I've wanted to meet you for a long time.

Ann tries to gather her words. Agnes beats her to it.

AGNES (CONT'D)

(rushed)

Life is too short, don't you agree? Father's parents died last year, in a fire. It changed him, enormously. I want my family to be whole again.

ANN

I'm so sorry, Agnes. But *I* am not the reason we cannot be a family.

AGNES

I know. Mother is- stubborn. But ever since I was old enough to read, I've tried to learn everything I could about you. I- I love you.

ANN

If you've read about me, then you must know that I am despised.

AGNES

Grandmother-

Ann FLASHES BACK:

161 INT. ANN'S MIDDLE-CLASS BEDROOM - NIGHT 161

She's TWENTY-FOUR, snuggling Caroline in bed and reading Mother Goose. Caroline's eyes go wide with suspense. Ann smiles in true delight.

CUT TO:

162 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY 162

Ann sees Agnes through a fog of memory. She sees her daughter; she sees herself. Agnes looks back with a child's sincerity.

AGNES

Jesus loves you. And I believe He has a plan for us all.

Ann snaps out of it. There's a bitter taste in her mouth.

ANN

Why did you come here, child? Why today, not at Christmas, or your mother's birthday, or when your grandparents died?

Agnes fumbles for an answer.

ANN (CONT'D)

Is there something you need?

Ann pulls out a purse from her dress pocket and opens it. It's loaded with cash.

AGNES

I didn't come for money! I'm sorry.

Ann puts away the purse and waits patiently.

AGNES (CONT'D)

I thought that if you knew how important it was to me, you would say yes. And if you said yes, you and Mother could make up.

The sound of swift FOOTSTEPS echoes through the hall.

ANN

And if we made up?

AGNES

Then, she wouldn't-

CAROLINE(O.C.)

Agnes Seraphina Davies!

Agnes springs to her feet. Her parents are waiting in the doorway. Horace rushes up behind them.

Ann rises as well, eyes locked with Caroline. Ira looks extremely uncomfortable.

IRA

Terribly sorry to disturb you, Mother Lohman. Come along, Agnes.

AGNES

Mother, please. We're all here together now, can't we at least talk?

CAROLINE

We are leaving right now.

Agnes looks heartbroken, but none of the adults say anything to change her fate. She trudges out, shrinking. Ann watches the Davies family disappear down the hall.

ANN

Caroline! What did I ever do to you except provide for your every comfort??

The front door SLAMS.

163

EXT. TRAIN STATION - MORNING

163

Ann and Charles walk briskly toward a train departing for Boston. Charles grips his luggage in one hand and Ann's arm in the other.

CHARLES

Cheer up, darling. Everything is ready. All I have to do is sign the papers. I'll be back in no time.

ANN

Any time is a waste of time when Collette is perfectly capable of handling it by herself.

CHARLES

I know, my love. You were a good teacher. And your empire is still expanding!

Ann kisses him tersely.

ANN

Alright then. Be off with you. Give Collette my best, and read everything twice before you sign it.

CHARLES

I will.

He boards the train.

ANN

And make sure you invite the press to the ribbon cutting ceremony!

CHARLES

Already have.

The train WHISTLES. It's time to go. Charles blows her a kiss and disappears into the cabin. Ann shouts to the closing door.

ANN

And bring me a copy of the lease!

CHARLES(O.C.)

Yes, dear!



164 INT. ANN'S MANSION, MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT 164

Ann wears a silk robe and draws herself a bath. While she's waiting for the tub to fill, she gently tidies Charles' side of the vanity, taking special care of his shaving kit and RAZOR.

She glances at a NEWSPAPER on the vanity. The headline reads:

"COMSTOCK LAWS SWEEP THE NATION: NEW MANDATES IN SEVEN STATES BANNING OBSCENITY IN PRINT."

ANTHONY COMSTOCK'S PICTURE casts a piercing glare from the front page. Ann quickly tucks it away.

165 EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - SUNRISE 165

Ann starts her day early, marching up the front steps of the boarding house with an air of authority. She unlocks the door with a SKELETON KEY.

166 INT. BOARDING HOUSE, DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 166

Boarding girls gather at the table for breakfast. Ann sifts through a stack of mail, handing out the girls' post.

ANN  
Where is Gertrude?

167 INT. BOARDING HOUSE, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 167

Ann strides down a hall of first floor bedrooms reserved for women in late stage pregnancy. She knocks on a closed door.

GERTRUDE (O.C.)  
Thank God!

Ann throws open the door.

168 INT. GERTRUDE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS 168

Gertrude is still in bed, extremely pregnant and drenched in sweat.

GERTRUDE  
I can't walk! I think it's time!

169 EXT. RESTELL BOARDING HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 169

Ann wheels Gertrude out to the carriage. Three girls, LUCRETIA, ROSE, and OLGA, run along with them shouting blessings and encouragement.

They help the driver carefully guide Gertrude into the carriage which then takes off for the clinic.

170 EXT. CLINIC - MID-MORNING 170

Ann rushes for the clinic door, brandishing the key. Mr. Blackburn is waiting by the entrance. He jumps out of Ann's way and pulls his hat off respectfully.

ANN  
Pardon me, sir.

She shoves the key in the lock and flings open the door. Mr. Blackburn takes a step inside but Gertrude's SCREAMS make him whip around and clutch his hat so hard he crumples it.

171 INT. CLINIC, LOBBY - AN HOUR LATER 171

Mr. Blackburn sits in the otherwise empty lobby with his crumpled hat in his lap while Gertrude's SCREAMS ring out from the operating room.

He pulls a CRUCIFIX from his shirt and prays.

His meditation is broken when a disheveled HELEN appears, wiping the sweat from her brow.

HELEN  
Mr. Blackburn, thank you for waiting.

He tucks the necklace back in his shirt and pushes himself to his feet with his cane.

172 INT. ANN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 172

Helen looks over Mr. Blackburn's file.

HELEN  
So your wife still has not had her monthly courses?

MR. BLACKBURN  
No.

HELEN

And when did she finish her  
tablets?

MR. BLACKBURN

Two weeks ago.

Helen makes a note.

MR. BLACKBURN (CONT'D)

Please, is there anything else you  
can do? She cannot deliver another  
child.

Helen bites her lip and consults a thick textbook on the  
desk.

HELEN

She can try again with the tablets.  
It's not too late.

173 INT. CLINIC, LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

173

Helen hands Mr. Blackburn the tablets.

HELEN

Tell her to take these right away,  
and if you'll simply use these-

She produces a condom package and a pamphlet.

HELEN (CONT'D)

-when you lay with her from now on,  
it will prevent this dilemma in the  
future.

She points out the instructional ILLUSTRATIONS on the  
pamphlet; Mr. Blackburn sputters and blushes. He bows, backs  
away shyly, and exits.

Somewhat oblivious, Helen smiles to herself for a job well  
done.

Then she notices BROWN SMUDGES on her hands. Puzzled, she  
smells them and, finding the scent inconclusive, wipes them  
on her apron.

174 EXT. CLINIC - CONTINUOUS

174

Outside, Mr. Blackburn tucks his cane under his arm and walks  
away with a spring in his step.

He pulls a handkerchief from his waistcoat pocket and wipes the brown MAKEUP off his hands and face.

175 INT. OPERATING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 175

Ann scrubs down while an exhausted Gertrude lays on the operating table with her BABY, both wrapped in white linen.

176 INT. BOARDING HOUSE - NIGHT 176

Ann opens the door for Gertrude, who holds her swaddled baby. At the sound of the door:

LUCRETIA(O.C.)  
They're back!

The other girls appear from all corners of the house to congratulate Gertrude and coo over the new arrival.

While the women huddle together, Ann slips away.

177 EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 177

Ann walks home alone. The boarding house, with its warm light and cheerful voices, recedes behind her.

Her dark mansion seems abandoned in comparison.

178 INT. ANN'S MANSION, MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT 178

Ann sits in Charles' armchair, wearing his smoking jacket and smoking his pipe.

179 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - THE NEXT MORNING 179

Sunlight through the window wakes Ann, still in the armchair. The pipe has fallen onto the floor. There's a small burn on the rug. She picks up her mess, still groggy.

180 EXT. ANN'S MANSION - MORNING 180

Ann wears her riding coat and walks out to the carriage. The driver is feeding the horse an apple. He pats the horse's neck and heads back to his seat but Ann waves him away.

ANN  
I'll drive myself today.

He knows better than to argue. He steps back and lets Ann take the reins.

181 EXT. 5TH AVENUE - CONTINUOUS 181

Ann drives her carriage through the bracing wind, looking solemn, imperious, and lonely.

182 INT. CLINIC, LOBBY - MORNING 182

Ann passes through carrying bulging BANK DEPOSIT BAGS as Helen drowsily lights the sconces.

HELEN

Would you like some coffee?

ANN

When I'm back from the bank.

Helen nods and suppresses a yawn. Ann checks the front desk for any forgotten deposits.

Then, a distant KNOCK. Helen cocks her head to the side, trying to pinpoint the location.

The knock continues. Ann strides to the front window.

HELEN

I think it's coming from the back.

ANN

I know.

She makes a small gap in the curtains and peeks through.

183 EXT. CLINIC, ANN POV - CONTINUOUS 183

ANN (O.C.)

Damnit.

There is a sea of bodies swelling around the front door: men in suits.

184 INT. CLINIC, LOBBY - CONTINUOUS 184

Ann pulls back from the window.

ANN

Another day, another protest. Keep the front door locked.

Ann heads toward the utility hallway behind the stockroom, where visitors leave in secret during times of tumult. The distant knock is joined by violent POUNDING on the front door and windows.

HELEN

Do they have us surrounded??

ANN

Go make coffee, Helen. They'll wear themselves out before you finish your first cup.

Ann exits through the stockroom.

185 EXT. GREENWICH STREET ALLEY - CONTINUOUS 185

Ann cracks open the door of what used to be Gideon's Flower Shop, before the war.

She can see three men hovering around the clinic back door: two POLICEMEN and one apparent civilian, probably a reporter.

They are blocking the way between Ann and her carriage. There's no way she can pass undetected.

She closes the door as quietly as possible and locks it behind her.

186 INT. CLINIC, LOBBY - AN HOUR LATER 186

Ann and Helen silently sip their coffee while SHADOWS move outside the curtained windows in an obvious stakeout and show of force.

ANN

I refuse to sit idle all day! I did enough of that in prison.

She abandons the coffee and grabs the deposit bags.

HELEN

But the police!

ANN

I am a sixty-six year old woman!  
The police should be protecting me!

She strides off. Helen trots after her.

187

EXT. GREENWICH STREET ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

187

Helen opens the old flower shop door for Ann: she walks out with a slow regality that masks her fear.

Ann strolls toward the carriage; it's only seconds before the three men at the clinic back door spot her. They march over.

Helen keeps watch from the door, ready to lock it in a flash.

ANN

May I help you gentlemen?

They draw close enough for Ann to study their faces. The central figure is no reporter: it's Anthony Comstock. Ann recognizes "Mr. Blackburn" in a nauseating rush of terror.

POLICEMAN

Ann Lohman?

ANN

Yes?

POLICEMAN

You are under arrest for procurement of abortion and distribution of obscene materials.

Ann unseals a deposit bag and pulls out a stack of money.

ANN

You must be mistaken. I am a businesswoman in excellent standing with the community.

She counts out a ridiculous sum, then triples it.

ANN (CONT'D)

I serve our public, just like you.

The policemen look extremely tempted. Comstock does not.

COMSTOCK

Please, Mrs. Lohman. There's no reason to further debase yourself.  
(twisting the knife)  
What will your granddaughter think when all this comes out in the papers?

Ann snarls. Comstock surveys her like a caged animal.

COMSTOCK (CONT'D)

You know, it's truly amazing that a pure dove like her could be your descendent.

He takes the deposit bags as if they were dirty diapers. He nods to the policemen: they grab Ann by the arms and march her around the building. Comstock strides confidently beside them.

COMSTOCK (CONT'D)

But I suppose the child's mother strove valiantly to find and keep the righteous path. After what you put her through, I'm surprised she even knew where to look.

ANN

You know nothing about me, boy.

A flicker of rage sparks in Comstock's eyes.

188 EXT. CLINIC - CONTINUOUS

188

As they round the corner, tabloid journalists, protesters, and spiteful onlookers swarm them, out for blood.

COMSTOCK

Oh, but I do. Your Caroline has told me many stories. Did you know she arranged our meeting *personally*?

Comstock chuckles, victorious. Ann looks dazed as she is shoved into the wagon.

Helen observes fearfully through the curtained clinic windows: MORE POLICE are preparing to break in the front door.

She dashes out of sight right before they succeed.

189 EXT. GREENWICH STREET - CONTINUOUS

189

Helen barrels onto Greenwich Street in Ann's carriage. She is *clearly* not an expert driver, but seems to find it exhilarating.



190 EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - MIDDAY 190

Helen dashes up the boarding house stairs and blows through the front door, leaving it hanging wide open.

191 INT. BOARDING HOUSE, DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 191

Helen stands at the head of the dining table, gesturing emphatically at a room full of pregnant women in the middle of lunch.

Between bites, they exchange shocked expressions. Gertrude rocks her baby in one arm and feeds herself with the other.

In the blink of an eye, they are surrounded by the POLICE, who have come with a warrant to RAID THE BOARDING HOUSE.

RAID MONTAGE:

192 EXT. 5TH AVENUE - CONTINUOUS 192

The police simultaneously raid Ann's mansion. A dozen men file inside her home while the other squad overtakes the boarding house.

193 INT. BOARDING HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 193

The police search every room; they shake down every woman.

They confiscate pills and tinctures, condoms and pamphlets.

PAPARAZZI flood in after them, noting everything with morbid curiosity and violating any sense of privacy.

194 INT. ANN'S MANSION - CONTINUOUS 194

The police do the same to Ann's home: they gleefully turn it upside down.

They shove Horace out of the way in the foyer and thwart him as he tries to protect the Lohman's belongings.

The police take medical books and business journals, personal toiletries, and more. What they don't take they try to break.

Meanwhile, journalists rip through the pieces like vultures.

195 INT. CLINIC - CONTINUOUS 195

Back on Greenwich Street, police confiscate countless boxes from the clinic stockroom.

196 INT. CITY JAIL, WARDEN'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON 196

WARDEN  
And how do you plead?

ANN  
(trance-like)  
Not guilty.

The warden stamps the paper on his desk.

WARDEN  
Well, you are a considerable flight risk. Can't let you off cheap.

He tallies a sum on a piece of scratch paper.

WARDEN (CONT'D)  
(smirking)  
Not much you can't afford, though, is there, Madame Killer?

He doesn't get the fight he's looking for. Ann is broken.

197 EXT. UPTOWN CLINIC, BOSTON - MORNING 197

Collette and Charles stand in front of a crowd of REPORTERS, BUSINESS OWNERS, and SUFRAGETTES for the new clinic's ribbon-cutting ceremony.

An embellished sign above the door of the handsome building reads, "MADAME COSTELLO: FEMALE PHYSICIAN."

Collette holds a pair of big golden scissors. Charles addresses the crowd:

CHARLES  
Thank you for joining us today at this historic expansion of our Boston offices. For twenty years, you have welcomed us into your community and allowed us to be your partners in family planning. Here's to twenty more!

Polite applause. Collette cuts the ribbon.

As WAITERS weave through the crowd, handing out hot cider and cookies, a woman makes her way to the front.

SUFFRAGETTE

Madame Costello! Won't you say a few words?

The eager Suffragettes draw near. Collette smiles. With an encouraging nod from Charles, she proclaims:

COLLETTE

The day of the female physician is upon us!

Patrons who had begun to mingle, thinking the speeches were over, give her their attention.

COLLETTE (CONT'D)

We will not give up our fight for admittance into Medical Schools and Universities, nor will we abandon our fight for the Vote! We have earned our place in the public sphere, and we are never going back!

Tumultuous applause from the Suffragettes. A few sideways glances from the businessmen. A REPORTER sees his opening:

REPORTER

And what are your thoughts on the recent arrest of your mentor Madame Restell and raid of her office in New York?

He hands Charles a TELEGRAM: it looks terribly authentic.

Charles and Collette lock eyes: there's no time to lose. They flee the scene, leaving a trail of confused patrons in their wake. The reporter looks thrilled.

198

INT. BOARDING HOUSE, DINING ROOM - MORNING

198

The boarding girls sit solemnly at the table.

LUCRETIA

They took the rest of my pills. I didn't get to finish my treatment. Do you think it will still work?

OLGA

How many did you have left?

LUCRETIA

Three.

ROSE

I got my courses yesterday, but I still have a bottle of tea in my locker at the factory. I can bring it to you tonight.

LUCRETIA

Yes, please!

ROSE

I don't think you'll need the whole bottle. Does anyone else need some?

Half a dozen girls raise their hands.

199 EXT. ANN'S MANSION - NIGHT

199

Charles and Collette arrive in a HANSOM CAB.

As soon as it drives away, a PAPARAZZO slinks into view.

PAPARAZZO

Mr. Lohman! May I have a word?

Charles fumbles urgently with the key.

CHARLES

No.

PAPARAZZO

Who is your guest? Does she know your wife is in jail??

Charles opens the door and pushes Collette inside.

PAPARAZZO (CONT'D)

Will it be a struggle to produce the twenty thousand dollar bail???

They slam the door in his face.

200 INT. NEW YORK CITY JAIL, CELL - MORNING

200

Ann lays on her cot and stares at the ceiling. The heavy door CREAKS open, but she doesn't turn her head.

A pause, then the sound of heavy FOOTSTEPS as the Warden tromps over.

WARDEN

Are you gonna get up and walk or  
are you that thrilled with your new  
accommodations?

Ann gets up.

201 EXT. ANN'S MANSION - CONTINUOUS 201

Charles opens the door for Ann as Collette rushes out to wrap her in a wordless embrace.

Ann receives her silently, looking mortally tired.

202 INT. ANN'S MANSION, LIVING ROOM - DAY 202

Ann, Charles, and Collette take tea with Orlando Stewart, now quite bald and bespectacled.

CHARLES

The trial is set for April 1st.

Orlando sips his tea in slow consideration.

ORLANDO

As your former attorney and as your  
friend, Ann: I think the time has  
come for you to retire.

Everyone looks at Ann, gauging her inscrutable expression.

203 EXT. CLINIC - DAY 203

RETIREMENT MONTAGE:

Ann climbs up a ladder in front of the clinic as Helen steadies her from below.

ORLANDO(V.O.)

I know it's not in your nature to  
keep a low profile-

She takes down the MADAME RESTELL SIGN and hands it to Helen.

ORLANDO(V.O.)

-But I implore you to trust me.  
Public opinion has taken a turn for  
the extreme.

204 INT. CLINIC, LOBBY - CONTINUOUS 204

Inside, Ann and Helen survey the damage from the raid. The stockroom door hangs open, displaying its emptiness, nearly everything confiscated.

ORLANDO(V.O.)  
 People of every imaginable creed  
 are being locked away for inane,  
 minute infractions.

205 INT. ST. PATRICK'S - CONTINUOUS 205

Anthony Comstock leaves the confession booth, looking satisfied. Agnes Davies sits at the far end of the room under the stern eye of Caroline and awaits her turn to confess.

Comstock tips his hat to them as he exits. Caroline nods back. Agnes looks miserable.

206 INT. BOARDING HOUSE, DINING ROOM - NIGHT 206

Ann and Collette pass out ENVELOPES to the anxious boarding girls.

ORLANDO(V.O.)  
 You've fought the good fight for  
 almost fifty years.

They all open their letters. Each one contains a TRAIN TICKET TO BOSTON.

207 EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY 207

The girls board the train to Boston with Collette and the few belongings they have. Helen is with them too.

ORLANDO(V.O.)  
 Don't let a malevolent fool with  
 fewer than half your years and less  
 than an ounce of your wisdom steal  
 away the rest of your life.

Helen turns back to say a painful goodbye: Ann lingers by the station exit, watching sadly from a distance.

END RETIREMENT MONTAGE.

208 EXT. ANN'S MANSION - NIGHT

208

Ann sits in a rocking chair on her front stoop and stares across the street at the glowing stained glass of the cathedral. Perhaps she has been here for hours.

Charles slips outside to join her. She doesn't break her concentration. He puts a hand on her shoulder.

CHARLES

It's getting cold, love. Come inside.

She doesn't respond. Eventually he gives up and goes back in.

Ann's expression grows bitter as a SACRED LATIN HYMN swells into clarity: *Kyrie Eleison*.

The Paparazzo who harried Charles and Collette appears.

PAPARAZZO

Madame Restell!

Ann sighs and heads begrudgingly for the door.

PAPARAZZO (CONT'D)

Have you seen your picture in the Illustrated Times? They did you no favors.

Ann pauses in spite of herself, door half open.

PAPARAZZO (CONT'D)

You deserve to tell your side of the story! Is it true that Comstock visited you twice in disguise? Personally, I find the deception reprehensible.

ANN

(under her breath, peeved)  
Helen!

The Paparazzo looks pleased with himself.

PAPARAZZO

Tell me one thing and I'll stop bothering you.

Ann faces him.

PAPARAZZO (CONT'D)

You've been in practice for decades, but you've never been the only abortionist in the city. Why do you think people hate you so much?

ANN

(steely)

They are envious because I have such a fine house in such a splendid location.

She slams the door.

209

INT. ANN'S MANSION, MASTER BEDROOM - MIDDAY

209

Ann lays in bed with her eyes open, listless and dissociated.

Charles enters with a newspaper and sits quietly beside her. He strokes her leg.

CHARLES

You have the resounding support of the Suffragettes. They're partnering with the National Liberal League to repeal the Comstock Act.

He gives her the paper. She rolls her eyes.

ANN

And how long will I have been in prison by the time that happens?

She lets the paper drop to the floor. It lands beside a copy of the NEW YORK ILLUSTRATED TIMES: the front page bears a CARICATURE of a haggard woman wasting away in jail, titled "MADAME RESTELL IN THE HALLS OF JUSTICE."

210

EXT. 5TH AVENUE - MORNING

210

SUPER: APRIL 1ST.

Outside St. Patrick's, Agnes and five other young CATHOLIC WOMEN load their luggage into two carriages and say goodbye to their families.

Agnes hugs her father.

IRA

We are so proud of you, Agnes.



CAROLINE  
 Don't let Mary Catherine fill your  
 head with daydreams.

211 EXT. COURTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS 211

The Catholic girls' carriages wind their way through the busy streets until they are forced to stop outside the Courthouse, where a massive PROTEST and COUNTER-PROTEST are on the verge of becoming a riot.

On one side of the street are Suffragettes, the National Liberal League, Free Thinkers and Abolitionists.

On the other side are members of St. Patrick's, the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, the YMCA, and the police.

All surrounding traffic has halted, resulting in massive congestion.

212 INT. ANN'S MANSION, LIVING ROOM - MORNING 212

Horace clears breakfast from the coffee table while Charles loads his pipe.

CHARLES  
 How many are there?

HORACE  
 Five, the last time I counted.

Charles massages his temples. He gets up and disappears into his study. He returns with a PISTOL.

213 EXT. ANN'S MANSION, FRONT STOOP - CONTINUOUS 213

FIVE REPORTERS jump to attention at the sound of the opening door and scatter when Charles cocks his pistol.

214 EXT. ANN'S MANSION, BACK DOOR - CONTINUOUS 214

Three other REPORTERS are skulking around back when Charles comes charging around the corner.

CHARLES  
 Be gone, vermin!

They aren't as quick to get the message, so he SHOTS his pistol into the dirt. They scatter.

215 INT. ST. PATRICK'S CARRIAGE - CONTINUOUS 215

Agnes' carriage rolls backwards as the driver attempts to navigate away from the courthouse.

MARY CATHERINE  
What's happening?

AGNES  
(craning her neck)  
People are fighting!

216 EXT. COURTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS 216

Agnes pokes her head out of the window.

SUFFRAGETTE  
Comstock is a laughing stock!

Agnes twists to look the other direction.

YMCA PROTESTOR  
Death to Madame Killer!

Agnes gasps and ducks back inside.

217 INT. ST. PATRICK'S CARRIAGE - CONTINUOUS 217

MARY CATHERINE  
What are they saying?

AGNES  
Madame Restell. They must be here  
for her trial.

YOUNG CATHOLIC WOMAN  
How dreadful. I hope they lock her  
away for good. Or hang her.

Agnes is stunned by the casual brutality. Something snaps inside. She climbs out of the carriage.

218 EXT. COURTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS 218

Agnes darts off into the crowd, toward the picket line of Suffragettes.

Mary Catherine pops her head out of the window:

MARY CATHERINE  
Agnes, what are you doing?!

219 INT. ANN'S MANSION, MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS 219

Ann sits on the edge of the bed wearing a nightgown. An ignored tray of breakfast sits on her bedside table.

She runs her fingers over the creases of an old, worn-out DOLL: the one that Caroline loved to drag around when she was five.

She looks up at her armoire, where the dress she has picked for court is draped. The dress is gothic and black, like funeral attire.

220 INT. MASTER BATHROOM - MID-MORNING 220

Ann draws a bath. She sits at her vanity while she waits on the tub to fill.

She opens a small PAINTED BOX: the one from her cedar chest in the tailor shop. She's kept it all these years, but instead of humble broaches it now contains mounds of DIAMOND JEWELRY.

She puts on EARRINGS, a NECKLACE, and THREE DIAMOND RINGS.

From behind a row of perfume bottles, she withdraws a small vial of yellow liquid, labelled LAUDANUM. She downs it in a single swallow.

Ann looks in the mirror; her gaze is expansive and accepting.

She sees herself at NINETEEN.

She sees herself at TWENTY-FOUR.

She sees herself at THIRTY-THREE.

She sees herself as she is, at sixty-six. She lets her hair down.

As she drops her hair pins on the vanity, her eyes are drawn to Charles' SHAVING KIT, especially his RAZOR.

She takes the razor with her to the tub. She slips her robe off and steps inside.

- 221 INT. COURTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS 221  
Two BAILIFFS throw open the courtroom doors and people flood inside. The Bailiffs struggle to maintain order.
- 222 EXT. ANN'S MANSION - CONTINUOUS 222  
Charles sits on the front stoop cleaning his gun in an attempt to ward off the curious and brazen.
- 223 INT. ANN'S MANSION, MASTER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 223  
Ann opens the razor in the bathtub. She can hear *Kyrie Eleison* drifting in through the windows. Or maybe it's in her head.
- 224 INT. COURTROOM - LATE MORNING 224  
The trial is standing room only. The tension is palpable.  
Anthony Comstock observes from the Plaintiff's table. The Defendant's table is empty.
- 225 INT. MASTER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 225  
*Kyrie Eleison* fills the air. Ann closes her eyes and slips deeper into the water, still holding the razor.  
She is THIRTY-THREE. She is TWENTY-FOUR. She is NINETEEN.
- 226 INT. COURTROOM - CONTINUOUS 226  
Suffragettes squeeze into the back of the Courthouse. Among them, Agnes struggles to see the Defendant's table. Everyone looks confused.
- 227 INT. MASTER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 227  
NINETEEN YEAR OLD ANN sinks deep into the bath, remembering:  
MEMORY MONTAGE:
- 228 INT. TENEMENT HOUSE - DAY 228  
Ann bounces infant Caroline in the old tailor shop while Henry Sommers hems Joseph's trousers during the Sommers' first week in America.

Ann weeps over Henry's body as Joseph and a couple of neighbors carry the corpse out of their bedroom.

229 INT. MASTER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 229

TWENTY-FOUR YEAR OLD ANN sinks further into the bath.

230 INT. CLINIC - NIGHT 230

Ann, Collette, and Caroline dance in a circle in the clinic lobby. Caroline clutches her favorite doll.

231 EXT. 5TH AVENUE - NIGHT 231

Ann is dragged away by the Constable and Samuel Jenks Smith during first arrest.

232 INT. MASTER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 232

THIRTY-THREE YEAR OLD ANN is fully submerged in the bath, holding the razor.

233 EXT. 5TH AVENUE - DAY 233

Fifteen year old Caroline runs down the street, screaming:

CAROLINE  
I don't want to be like you!

234 INT. MASTER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 234

The words slice through time.

SIXTY-SIX YEAR OLD ANN bursts out of the water, gasping for air, still clutching the razor.

CUT TO:

235 INT. COURTROOM - NOON 235

Everyone buzzes with speculation as the DEFENSE ATTORNEY approaches the Judge's bench.

Orlando Stewart knits his brow in concern from the front row. He whispers to the man sitting next to him, Henry Ward Beecher.

ORLANDO  
Have you seen Charles?

Beecher shakes his head, 'No.' They share dark looks.

236 INT. ANN'S MANSION, MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS 236

Charles enters with his impeccably clean pistol. He sets it on his dresser, then notices the full tray of breakfast on Ann's bedside table.

He goes in for a nervous nibble, then stops himself and takes it downstairs instead.

237 INT. MASTER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 237

Ann stares straight ahead as the bath water calms.

MEMORY MONTAGE, CONT'D:

238 INT. ANN'S LIVING ROOM - DAY 238

An angry Caroline whisks Agnes out of Ann's living room. Ann shouts after her.

ANN  
Caroline!

239 INT. MASTER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 239

Ann is back in the tub.

ANN  
(whispered)

Caroline.

240 INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 240

Charles sets the breakfast tray on the kitchen counter. A window SHATTERS in the dining room next door. Charles runs toward the noise.

241 INT. DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 241

Horace dashes in as Charles picks up the BRICK that broke the window and peers through the jagged glass for the culprit. They hear BOYS LAUGHING outside.

242 INT. MASTER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 242

Ann's bath water is cold and still.

MEMORY MONTAGE, CONT'D:

243 INT. POLICE WAGON - DAY 243

Ann sits in the dark with her ear to the cabin after being apprehended by Anthony Comstock.

Inside the cabin, he is praying:

COMSTOCK

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord  
is with you. Blessed are you among  
women, and blessed is the fruit of  
your womb, Jesus.

The policemen beside Comstock tuck the BANK DEPOSIT BAGS deep into their pockets.

CUT TO:

244 INT. ANN'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM - NIGHT 244

Eighteen year old Ann lays in bed, exhausted, after giving birth to CAROLINE. She's the happiest she's ever been.

COMSTOCK(V.O.)

Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for  
us sinners, now and at the hour of  
our death. Amen.

END MEMORY MONTAGE.

245 INT. MASTER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 245

Ann is sixty-six. Her bath water is cold. *Kyrie Eleison* goes mute.

She takes a deep breath. The quiet is comforting.

She opens the razor.

She slits her throat from ear to ear.

246 INT. COURTROOM - CONTINUOUS 246

The murmur of the crowd has risen to a low roar.

Orlando waves the Defense Attorney over and whispers low. The Attorney shakes his head, clearly stumped. Orlando swiftly excuses himself. Agnes watches him leave.

247 INT. ANN'S MANSION, MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS 247

Charles returns to the bedroom suite.

CHARLES

Ann? They broke another window.

He notices Ann's court dress, still draped over the armoire. He heads for the bathroom.

248 INT. MASTER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 248

Charles opens the door and peeks inside.

CHARLES

Ann?

He scans the room. *He finds her.*

249 EXT. ANN'S MANSION - AFTERNOON 249

Orlando Stewart rushes out of his cab and up the Lohman's front stairs. He knocks frantically on the door. No answer.

He lets himself in.

250 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS 250

Orlando enters the bedroom suite and is intercepted by Horace, whose uniform is stained pink and soaking wet.

Orlando barrels past him into the bathroom, where he can see Charles squatting over the bathtub.

251 INT. MASTER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 251

Orlando grips the door frame; he is sickened by the sight. Charles gazes up at him with bloodshot eyes. He's drenched to the bone, clutching Ann's naked, ice white body.



252 INT. COURTROOM - AFTERNOON

252

The Constable enters the Courtroom and a hush falls over the crowd. He walks directly to the Judge's bench and speaks too softly to hear.

JUDGE

Counsel, approach the bench.

Both attorneys approach. The Judge gives them the news. They return to their tables in stunned silence. The Plaintiff Attorney whispers to Comstock.

COMSTOCK

She what??

His Attorney hushes him. Henry Ward Beecher stands up in the spectator aisles and demands.

BEECHER

Where is Ann?

The Defense Attorney can't look him in the eye.

253 INT. ANN' MANSION, MASTER BATHROOM - 5PM

253

Ann lies on a bed of ice in the bathtub that was once crimson with her blood. It sparkles like her diamonds.

254 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

254

A CORONER'S JURY congregates in the bedroom next door.

255 EXT. COURTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

255

Comstock slinks out of the courthouse with his eyes on the ground, following his attorney.

AGNES(O.C.)

Anthony Comstock! You should be  
ashamed of yourself!

The familiar voice makes him look up. The Suffragettes have him surrounded: Agnes Davies is in the middle of the pack with an armful of EGGS. She PEGS him with one.

PLAINTIFF ATTORNEY

Go! Go!

The men run for a cab but it's too late: the Suffragettes plaster them with ROTTEN EGGS.

## SUFFRAGETTES

Liar! Cheat! Hypocrite! Murderer!

They tear Comstock's clothes and pull his hair. When they run out of eggs, they pick up ROCKS from the street.

## SUFFRAGETTES (CONT'D)

*MURDERER!*

Comstock runs for his life.

256 EXT. ANN'S MANSION - DAY 256

A few days later, Charles and Horace replace the dining room window. After a moment of admiring their handywork, they turn to go back inside.

A friendly wave catches their attention.

Collette, Helen, Lucretia, Olga, and Rose are all waiting on the front steps of the boarding house next door. They've brought their luggage: they must be planning to stay.

257 EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - DAY 257

Charles unlocks the front door. Collette and the girls file inside. Charles watches from the steps as lights spring on throughout the house. It almost makes him smile.

258 EXT. CONVENT - EVENING 258

Agnes climbs out of a shabby cab at the Sisters of Holy Mercy.

259 INT. CONVENT - CONTINUOUS 259

Agnes reports to Mother Superior.

## MOTHER SUPERIOR

Please explain your tardiness. Mary Catherine says you leapt from the carriage.

## AGNES

I didn't want to miss my grandmother's trial.

Mother Superior looks morbidly curious.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

Many of our sisters come to Holy Mercy seeking redemption for the sins of their families. Does that sound familiar to you?

AGNES

Mother Superior, is it always true that a person who takes their own life is damned?

Mother Superior looks at her with great sadness.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

It is a mortal sin.

Agnes ruminates.

AGNES

What about the man who causes her to stumble?

MOTHER SUPERIOR

It is not for us to judge, but to worship and obey God.

AGNES

A millstone.

Mother Superior raises a brow.

AGNES (CONT'D)

It would be better for him to have a millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

MOTHER SUPERIOR

If someone has wronged you, child, you should pray for them.

260 INT. BOARDING HOUSE, DINING ROOM - MORNING

260

Collette sits at the head of the table. Grief hangs heavy over breakfast. Helen hands over a thick FOLDER.

COLLETTE

Thank you. Did everyone sign?

Everyone nods. The front door CREAKS open down the hall.

AGNES(O.C.)

Hello?

Agnes wanders in with her luggage. Collette looks like she's seen a ghost.

COLLETTE  
(to herself)  
Caroline?

AGNES  
That's my mother. I'm told she looked just the same at this age, except for the hair.

COLLETTE  
(fascinated)  
What can I do for you, child?

AGNES  
I want to help women, like Madame Restell.

The girls look inspired. Collette smirks.

COLLETTE  
She's your grandmother, dear. I think it would be alright if you called her Ann.

261 EXT. SLEEPY HOLLOW CEMETERY - DAY 261

Charles, Collette, and Agnes visit Ann's grave.  
She's buried beside Joseph.

262 EXT. ANN'S GRAVE - CONTINUOUS 262

The thick folder lays open on the grass; countless signatures streak the pages. Collette and Agnes sit beside the grave.

AGNES  
Fifty thousand signatures.

Charles smokes his pipe under a nearby tree.

AGNES (CONT'D)  
We're taking the fight to Congress.  
Father Beecher is going with us.  
And Collette is teaching me everything she knows.

COLLETTE

-which is everything you taught me.  
We're going to Philadelphia next  
week to visit Ernestine. We'll give  
her your best.

A moment of reverent silence.

AGNES

Fifty-thousand signatures, Ann.  
People really believe in you.

Collette picks up the folder; Agnes helps her to her feet.  
They amble off through the cemetery.

Charles lingers the longest, watching the headstone as though  
he can see his beloved reclining against it, winking at him.  
He winks back, then follows Collette and Agnes.

As he rambles through the cemetery at an old man's pace, a  
HAND grabs his and playfully takes his pipe.

Charles smiles, and suddenly he's very young again, holding  
hands with his sweetheart.

They wander into the mist.

FADE TO BLACK.

263

SUPER: CONGRESS DENIED THE PETITION TO REPEAL THE COMSTOCK ACT. IT CONTINUES TO PROVIDE A LEGAL FOUNDATION FOR OBSCENITY LAWS ACROSS THE COUNTRY. IN 2022, THE U.S. SUPREME COURT OVERTURNED ROE. VS. WADE, ENDING FEDERAL PROTECTION OF ABORTION. TODAY, NEARLY HALF OF ALL U.S. STATES HAVE BANNED ABORTION OR ARE LIKELY TO DO SO.

**THE END.**