TWO GREAT OCEANS

by

Lonnie Carter and Sherry Shepard-Massat

with the participation of Martha Simone Saxton

Copyright 2009

lonniety@aol.com

ssm314@nyu.edu

Much of the text is taken from transcripts of the time – 1870 –

and one passage from Frederick Douglass's Autobiography.

The rest is the invention of the authors.

FIVE (5) or SIX (6) actors play all speaking roles.

Two or Three White Women

One Black Woman

One Black Man

One White Man

Dramatis Personae –

In order of appearance and/or hearing

ABIGAIL ADAMS, the second First Lady of the United States

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON, suffragist

SUSAN B. ANTHONY, suffragist

WENDELL PHILLIPS, abolitionist

FREDERICK DOUGLASS, orator, former Cabinet Member in the Lincoln administration and ex-slave

SOJOURNER TRUTH, an activist before the word, ex-slave

LUCY STONE, suffragist, White

FRANCES WATKINS HARPER, suffragist, Black

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN, millionaire and virulent outspoken racist,

although supporter of women's suffrage, White

The JUBILEE SINGERS from Fisk University, if not in person, via tape

TIME - !869/70 - and other dates swirling around the ether

PLACE – Steinway Hall, New York City, 14th Street between 5th and 6th Avenue

N.B. This play is CHORAL. Dialogue overlaps; Call and response is rampant.

.

The Voice of Abigail Adams.

ABIGAIL ADAMS

In 1776, I stressed to my husband John - Remember, all men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the Ladies, we are determined to foment a revolution.

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

I condemn the 15th Amendment. It will establish an aristocracy of sex on this continent. The lower orders of Irish, Blacks, Germans and Chinese – think of Patrick and Sambo and Hans and Yung Tung, who do not know the difference between a monarchy and a republic, who cannot read the Declaration of Independence, or Webster's spelling book, making laws for the daughters of Adams and Jefferson, women of wealth and education…shall American statesmen claiming to be liberal, so amend their constitutions as to make their wives and mothers the political inferiors of unlettered and unwashed ditch-diggers, bootblacks, butchers and barbers, fresh from the slave plantations of the South, to establish an aristocracy based on sex alone? Mr. Phillips, your answer?

WENDELL PHILLIPS

This hour belongs to the Negro. As Abraham Lincoln said, 'One war at a time'; so I say, One question at a time.' This is the Negro's hour.

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

May I just ask one question based on the apparent opposition in which you place the Negro and the woman? Do you believe the African race is composed entirely of males?

WENDELL PHILLIPS

That sounds like a third question. Though perhaps we have four. White and white and Negro and black.

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

When the constitutional door is open, we must avail ourselves of the strong arm and blue uniform of the black soldier to walk in by his side.

SUSAN B. ANTHONY

I have argued constantly with the whole fraternity, but I fear one and all will favor enfranchising the negro without us. Woman's cause is in deep water. Come here and help. There will be a room for you. I seem to stand alone.

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

We have the Anti-Slavery Society and the Society for Women's Rights. The time has come to *bury* the black man and the woman in the *citizen*, and our two organizations in the broader work of reconstruction.

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN appears and speaks to the audience.

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN

'*Bury*' the black man?' An operative phrase.

But not before we have *extracted* our use from him.

The 'B*roader* work'?

Someone later in history, a *black* man, no doubt,

Stokely Carmichael, his name, I see it in my crystal ball,

I'm as EVIL as all Get Out,

and as smart as Lucifer,

the original Bearer of Light,

if you know your Old Testament

and I see down through,

throughout the aeons,

we just livin'through the Sixties,

here in the newly *Re*-United States

The *18* - 60's,

With its Emasculation Proclamation

The White Man *stripped*

I see Stokely, Mah Main man, Carmichael

He will be asked in what *position*

women serve in his Rights' Organization,

Snickerdoodle,

Sumpun like that,

and he will say,

"The position of women in mah Snickerdoodle Committee is… *Prone*."

'Supine' I would add, Darkie.

Chase you down in a pine forest.

Hang you from a low-tech lynch, called a tree,

Thank you, Mr. Clarence Thomas,

For bein' dass fulla-sheiss Nigra EVAH!

Soup - make some *black* bean soup from your piney sticky *black* beanie skull.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS rises.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Mr. George Francis Train, I have reason to believe we have addressed each other before.

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN

You got that right.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Not for the first time have I gotten you right.

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN

What was the first time, *kind cur?* Sir, I do mean, sir.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

No matter, Sir George.

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN

Call me Cur.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

And then what should I call your woman?

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN

I own no woman. You've heard of the Proclamation regarding slaves?

FREDERICK

Which you have railed against.

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN

Railed as only a Train can. That first time, my good boy. Man, I most certainly mean 'man'. I must re-examine my patterns of thought.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

It was Baltimore –

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN

Bawl Mo', I know it well. Got, had, I mean 'had', crabs there as recently as, well…

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Shortly after I arrived.

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN

Having stolen away from?

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

The deepest darkest down home.

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN

Deepest darkiest –

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Down Home I left. Go to hell, a white man said to me. And I said –

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN & FREDERICK DOUGLASSS

I ain't nevah goin' back to M I S S I P P I S S I

Dass spelled M-I-S-S-I-P-P-I-S-S-I

Male gesticulation between rivals, momentarily joined, of a unique bonding nature.

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN

Now, Darkie Devil, Mos' Beelzebubba-ish in the land, so you say you saw me in Bawl

Mo', where so many happy slaves had migrated because they did not know how happy they had been under Simon Lagree's lash and how forlorn they would be, being dumbly educated, 'stead of multiplicated and fornicated on the plantationcated where they could schtup the field nigras and the house nigras, and what was I doin' in Bawl Mo'?

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

You was doin' some slave capturin',

You was *out*-doin' some Simon Lagree beatin'

You was *outer outer* doin' some Simon Lagree Lagree doin'

Strangulatin', emasculatin', bloody Bloody Iron Masculatin',

Iron Mask over the face so the Darkie runnin' through the fields and marshes

Would get his mask get caught in the brambles and thorns

"I fall upon the thorns of Life, I bleed I bleed"

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN

That's Shelley, Percy Bysshe Shelley, and his

"I weep for Adonais, he is dead"

I ain't weepin' for no AdoNiggis - wish he dead!

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Mr. Train, Mr. Train, goin' so fas

"To weep for Adonais through our tears"

It's what we said, now did, 'though you wish me dead

Strung up, drowned, eviscerated

I will *not* be emasculated.

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN

You already been.

You cannot recover.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

I *am* recovered.

I am *not* a recovering slave.

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN

That would imply –

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

That I was a slave to begin with.

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN & FREDERICK DOUGLASS

And you/I surely were/was not.

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN

The last word?

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Yours.

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN

Not a chance.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

O, yes, a chance.

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN at the podium.

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN

I am a Maverick Democrat, a wartime Copperhead, for those of you who do not know, Copperheads are poisonous snakes of a human variety, we rise up at the most surprising moments, and we bite the BeJesus out of your spoiled and lazy backsides, and what we bite you about is your advocacy of the Civil War, which ain't no civil at all, it's going to destroy 600,000 lives and I have the crystal ball to prove it, 600,000 lives who do not need to be lost. Not at all. Let us not say, a la Edgar Allen Poe, Nevermore. Let us say, a la Us, Never at all.

I like to call myself 'Champion Crank'. I am an eccentric, whatever that means, out of the center, centrifugal, flying from the center **Millionaire**.

I am fond of pastel waistcoats,

lavender gloves and the sound of my own voice.

I dream, no, I am sure of being elected,

President

on a platform that includes

freedom for Ireland,

the eight-hour workday,

or the eight-hour Wakeday,

paper currency

Women's Rights

And every bit and bitter argument against Black Mambo Suffrage

Copperhead

Poisonous

‘gainst

Black Mambo Suffrage

SUSAN B.ANTHONY and ELIZABETH CADY STANTON.

SUSAN

Whatever I think privately of such remarks, I will never make the slightest public protest. Train is for woman suffrage. And now he’s promised financial backing for a newspaper of our own, to be called *The Revolution*. We’ve spent years hurrying from newspaper office to newspaper office in cities and towns all across this country –

ELIZABETH

- imploring the usually skeptical men who run them to give our cause a fair hearing.

SUSAN

Now women will finally have a paper –

ELIZABETH and SUSAN

- through which we can make our own claim in our own time!

A passage of time.

ELIZABETH

Look at what we’re reporting.

Women’s achievements all over the globe – a Swiss who

has outshot all her male competitors in a rifle contest; a French girl who saved fifteen

sailors from drowning; two Indiana sisters who run their father's gristmill; a new postmistress appointed to Bowling Green, Kentucky.

SUSAN

And look what The New York Times says –

"*The Revolution* is as charged to the muzzle with literary nitroglycerin…"

ELIZABETH

And what will they say about our next editorial –

"The male element is a destructive force, stern, selfish, aggrandizing, loving war, violence, conquest, acquisition, breeding in the material and moral world alike discord, disorder, disease and death."

SUSAN

Love those 'd's'.

ELIZABETH

I'm not done. "The idea strengthens at every step, that woman was created for no higher purpose than to gratify the lust of man. Society as organized today is one grand rape of womanhood under man power."

SCENE.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS.

Yes Yes, Mrs. Stanton. Elizabeth Cady Stanton has served us all well for many years. She and Susan B. Anthony have done everything in their power to advance the cause of universal suffrage. We cannot be so progressive if we do not congratulate them on their

vision for an equanimous, an egalitarian society.

Except –

Except – perhaps in this regard. Something has happened to, not their resolve, no. Their resolve is as firm as ever. Something has happened, in their minds, to the definition of universal. And something, perhaps, has happened in my mind as well. But more anon.

For now, let me say -

When women, because they are women, are hunted down through the cities of New York and New Orleans; when they are dragged from their houses and hung from lampposts; when their children are torn from their arms and their brains dashed out upon the pavement; when they are objects of insult and rage at every turn; when they are in danger of having their homes burnt down... then they will have an urgency to obtain the ballot equal to our own."

SOJOURNER TRUTH

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

FREDERICK DOUGLASS.

SOJOURNER TRUTH

The man over there says women –

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

Shall American statesmen –

SOJOURNER TRUTH

- need to be helped into carriages –

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

– so amend their constitutions –

SOJOURNER TRUTH

– and lifted over ditches -

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

– as to make their wives and mothers -

SOJOURNER TRUTH

– and to have the best place everywhere -

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

– the political inferiors –

SOJOURNER TRUTH

– Nobody ever helps me into carriages -

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

– of unlettered and unwashed ditch-diggers -

SOJOURNER TRUTH

– or over puddles or gives me the best place –

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

– bootblacks, butchers and barbers

SOJOURNER TRUTH

– and ain’t I a woman?

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

– fresh from the slave plantations of the South?

SOJOURNER TRUTH

- Look at my arm!

ELIZABETH CASDY STANTON
- The lower orders

SOJOURNER TRUTH
– I have ploughed and planted and gathered into barns

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON
– The Irish, the Blacks, the Germans, the Chinese

SOJOURNER TRUTH
– And no man could head me

ELIZABETH and SOJOURNER together
- And ain't I a woman!

SOJOURNER TRUTH
– I could work as much and eat as much, when I could get it

Enter FREDERICK DOUGLASS.

This is CHORAL, overlapping, call and response. Orchestrated.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS
- When women, because they are women

SOJOURNER TRUTH
– and bear the lash as well

SOJOURNER and ELIZABETH
– And Ain't I a Woman!

FREDERICK DOUGLASS
– are hunted down through the cities of New York and New Orleans

SOJOURNER TRUTH
– I have borne thirteen children

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON –
And I nine

SOJOURNER TRUTH
– and seen most of them sold into slavery

FREDERICK DOUGLASS
– when they are dragged from their houses and hung from lampposts

SOJOURNER TRUTH
– and when I cried out with my mother's grief

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON
– You would establish an aristocracy of sex on this continent

FREDERICK DOUGLASS
– when their children are torn from their arms

FREDERICK and ELIZABETH
- and their brains dashed out on the pavement

SOJOURNER TRUTH
- None but Jesus heard me

ELIZABETH
– And ain't you a woman?

SOJOURNER and ELIZABETH
– And Ain't I a Woman!

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

- When they are objects of insult and rage at every turn

SOJOURNER TRUTH

– Yes, massa, we comin' as fas' as we can, Massa

SOJOURNER and ELIZABETH

- And ain't you a woman!

Spot on GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN, pastel waistcoat, chartreuse scarf.

TRAIN

Hey, Darkie, how they hangin'?

George Francis Train

Freddie Douglassss

Wassup, MuthaBuck?

You got you down 'n dirty?

Whachu stealin'?

Chickens?

Roosters?

How much yore rooster servicin' four score and seven chicken?

Chicken EmanciLAYshun RockLAYMAYshun

Free at last

She and her and hers

Her pudENDum dum dum dum

Stick it through her ENDdum dum dum dum

Virginum gum gum gum

Tie you to the back of a buckboard, Buckie

Drag you slow then fas'

Bouncing your cranial downbeat with yore ass ass ass

DougLASS, Frederick MuthaBuck

You got your own rooster

Purple, pointed, double-jointed

Sack so tight

Lick ‘em up right

Spread that jizz’m

Ovah white girls’ schism

DiVIDE and pluck her

The back ho’s black and brown and tan

ProVIDE and suck her

Let me challenge you, my Brother, to a little game of squash

and the one who wins gets to, shall I say, *squash* the other

This is not eggzackly a slap across the cheek with my gloves,

but its impact is just as sharp

No seconds needed

No thirty paces

No medics on hand

I shall provide the court

ELIZABETH

To a good many other fellow veterans of the struggle against slavery, our decision to ally ourselves with you, Mr. Train, seems startling evidence of our willingness to abandon principle altogether.

As a matter of fact, Susan's old friend, Lucy Stone –

LUCY STONE

I denounce Susan B for making a spectacle of herself. She's no less crazy than this water moccasin Train.

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN

She confuses her vipers.

Never on this whole earth! Imagine having the audacity to demand to know why both you and Ms. Anthony placed advertisements in the newspaper supporting me. The nerve to question you of all.

ELIZABETH

And Susan lashed back at her questioners.

SUSAN B

'I AM the Equal Rights Association. Not one of you amounts to a bucket of warm spit except for me. I know what is the matter with you. It is envy, and spleen and hate, because I have a paper and you have not.'

TRAIN

Here! Here! A perfect trouncing as I live!

ELIZABETH

Yes, well in honesty, the names of Lucy Stone as well as other members were used without their permission. There is discomfort on my part for that. The old alliances between abolitionists and the Stanton-Anthony wing of the suffrage movement is coming apart. The year goes out and never did one depart that had been so filled with earnest and effective work.

SUSAN B

Nine thousand votes for woman in Kansas and a newspaper started. But all the old friends, with scarce an exception, are sure we are wrong. Only time will tell, but I believe we are right and hence bound to succeed. Speaking to abolitionists, both questions and answers are burned into the skins, their fiber like initials into a leather strap. They can be neither changed nor broken, once etched in fire, from their hold on the common truth which haunts their demeanor, their every waking moment of every hour. It is truly impossible.

TRAIN

I weep and I pray for you, madame. No, it is not easy to make die-hard abolitionists…

ELIZABETH

A tried and true bunch to the very last.

TRAIN

Warm into a common sense argument on the slave question.

ELIZABETH

Well, because there is not argument, in truth.

TRAIN

You respect them.

ELIZABETH

There is no question in mind that slavery is a cruel and a vile institution. I have no quarrel with that, Mr. Train. I am not on the fence. No moral qualms whatsoever much in the same fashion as insisting that educated, intelligent women not have to hold their tongues, and wait our turn until the educated make way for us behind them.

TRAIN

You should not be beholding to boot blacks; no.

SUSAN B

So long as Mr. Train speaks nobly for the woman, why should we repudiate his services, even if he does ring the changes ‘nigger nigger nigger’?’

ELIZABETH

Your views compare favorably

with the invective and denunciations and anathemas of some of the odder early abolitionists with their tattered coat-tails besmeared with rotten eggs.

(Train smoothes his fancy coat)

LIZ

The old alliance between abolitionists and the Stanton-Anthony wing of the woman suffrage movement is coming apart. The year goes out and never did one depart that had been so filled with earnest and effective work. Nine thousand votes for woman in Kansas and a newspaper started.

TRAIN

Yes,m. We know loud and clear.

ELIZABETH

All the old friends, with scarce an exception, are sure we are

wrong. Only time can tell, but I believe we are right and hence bound to succeed.

TRAIN

Bound to succeed! Speechify, o my darling!

ELIZABETH

If I were to draw up a set of rules for the guidance of reformers, I should put at the head

of the list: Do all you can to get people to think on your reform, and then, if the reform is good, it will come out in due season. Our slogan

SUSAN B

'PRINCIPLE, NOT POLICY.

JUSTICE, NOT FAVORS – MEN, THEIR RIGHTS AND NOTHING MORE.

WOMEN, THEIR RIGHTS AND NOTHING LESS'.

ELIZABETH

The idea strengthens at every step,

what woman was created for no higher purpose than to gratify the lust of man.

TRAIN

The lust of man! One grand rape!

ELIZABETH

Society as organized today –

ELIZABETH & TRAIN

One grand rape of womanhood under the man power.

ELIZABETH

Now, we are in the midst of a quarrel with Lucy Stone and many of our old suffrage allies. They say

LUCY STONE

THE REVOLUTION is a hideous embarrassment filled with radical

opinions certain to offend your Republican supporters and to deflect attention from the single issue of woman suffrage.

ELIZABETH

Have I not stood up for the slave and their freedom as

well? Have I not spoken up many times in their favor?

LUCY STONE

But those of us in Boston regret that

black and woman suffrage are not being pushed through together, but they also continue to see no alternative to working through the Republic Party, and believe that granting universal manhood suffrage represents a giant step toward true democracy.

ELIZABETH

Women will again have to be patient. The fifteenth amendment indeed. Once again, women are expected to wait for rights we believe should be ours by birth.

TRAIN

Let your corrupt politicians dance their double clogged jig,

As a bid for the suffrage of the poor Kansas Nig,

For our women will vote while the base plot thickens,

Before barbers, bootblacks, melons and chickens.

Woman votes the black to save,

The black he votes to make the woman slave,

Hence, when blacks and ‘Rads’ untie to enslave the whites,

‘Tis time the Democrats championed woman’s rights.

ELIZABETH

In 1840, Dr. Chauning said the act of emancipation was greater than that of releasing the Israelites from bondage.

TRAIN

But were he alive today, I am sure he would be disappointed to see how badly his philanthropy has worked for the slaves as well as for the white man. No, the sudden jump from bondage to freedom has not, will not and cannot work.

FREDERICK FREDERICK DOUGLASS present.

FREDERICK

When women, because they are women, are hunted down through the cities of New York and New Orleans;

LIZ

The Times says that they emancipated every negro in the West Indies.

TRAIN

And that they have pretty well ruined every planter to boot. No one will stand forth today to say that West Indies Emancipation has benefited the negro there but, on the contrary all lament the results.

ELIZABETH

Lament the results

TRAIN

Robespierre and Brissot tried the equalizing principle in St. Domingo and Alison has vividly painted the massacre. Speaking of the Haitian drama, the Negroes, said he, marched with spiked infants on their spears, instead of colors. They saved asunder the male prisoners, and violated the females on the dead bodies of their husbands. They found, by this sad experience, that liberty was one thing; abolition another.

FREDERICK

when their children are torn from their arms and their brains dashed out upon the pavement

LIZ

These negro revolutions are horrible to relate.

TRAIN

Indeed. Fire first, then murder, after torture, rape, mutilation.

LIZ

I will hear no more. Please.

FREDERICK

when they are dragged from their houses and hung from lampposts;

TRAIN

Why, Barbados, good lady, can also testify to the brutality of the negro character. Had not the plot of 1649 been discovered, all the whites would have perished and the hanging of forty of the ring-leaders in 1689 saved the island a second time. The fires swept over the plantations, burning down sugar mill and cottage in all directions all for the Wilberforce theory that a negro is equal to a Caucasian!

ELIZABETH

We know he is not

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

when they are objects of insult and rage at every turn;

TRAIN

In 1812, the negroes prepared to burn down New York, and nearly succeeded in 1841. All the white men were to be killed, and the negroes were to take their wives. Fourteen blacks were burned at the stake,

FREDERICK

when they are in danger of having their homes burnt down

TRAIN

and eighteen hanged for this little piece of mischief when

New York had only 10,000 population, Mrs. Stanton. Sunday is the day of massacre for this barbarous raceist; always on the Sabbath. The better the day, the better the deed, guides the negro assassin. The Nat Turner affair in Southampton County, Virginia, in 1831, was on Sunday. Three hundred mounted negroes, armed to the teeth, cut down all before them. Whole families, mother fathers, daughters, sons, sucking babies and school children were butchered by them, thrown into heaps and left to be devoured by hogs and dogs or to putrefy on the spot.

In Charleston, the whites were all to have been murdered on the 16th of June, 1822. As usual the plot was to ripen on Sunday. But William, the slave of Mr. Paul, preached and saved the city. Dominick Vesey was the leading ruffian of this infernal plot. Only three years ago, the people of Arkansas, Louisiana and Tennessee were alarmed at rumors of an insurrection to come off on Christmas Eve. So long as there are negroes and whites in the same country, so long may we expect these periodical revolutions. But, it is not easy to make an abolitionist warm into a common-sense argument.

FREDERICK

...then women will have an urgency to obtain the ballot equal to our own."

FREDERICK DOUGLASS takes stage in a new way.

FREDERICK

Although my old master, Captain Anthony, gave me, at the first of my coming to him from my grandmother's, very little attention, and although that little was of a remarkably mild and gentle description, a few months only were sufficient to convince me that mildness and gentleness were not the prevailing or governing traits of his character. He could, when it suited him, appear to be literally insensible to the claims of humanity. Esther was a young woman who possessed that which was ever a curse to the slave girl – namely, personal beauty. She was tall, light-colored, well formed, and made a fine appearance. Esther was courted by "Ned Roberts," who was as fine-looking a young man as Esther was a woman. Captain Anthony disapproved of their courtship. He strictly ordered her to quit the company of young Roberts, telling her that he would punish her severely if he ever found her again in his company. But it was impossible to keep this couple apart. Meet they would, and meet they did.

.I shall never forget the scene. It was early in the morning, when all was still, and before any of the family in the house or kitchen had risen. I was, in fact, awakened by the heart-rending shrieks and piteous cries of poor Esther. My sleeping-place was on the dirt floor of a little rough closet which opened into the kitchen, and through the cracks in its unplaned boards I could distinctly see and hear what was going on, without being seen. Esther's wrists were firmly tied, and the twisted rope was fastened to a strong iron staple in a heavy wooden beam above, near the fire-place. Here she stood on a bench, her arms tightly drawn above her head. Her back and shoulders were perfectly bare. Behind her

stood old master, with cowhide in hand, pursuing his barbarous work with all manner of harsh, coarse, and tantalizing epithets. He was cruelly deliberate, and protracted the torture as one who was delighted with the agony of his victim. Again and again he drew the hateful scourge through his hand, adjusting it with a view of dealing the most pain-giving blow his strength and skill could inflict. "Have mercy! Oh, mercy!" she cried. "I won't do so no more." But her piercing cries seemed only to increase his fury. After laying on I dare not say how many stripes, old master untied his suffering victim. When let down she could scarcely stand. From my heart I pitied her, and child as I was, and new to such scenes, the shock was tremendous. I was terrified, hushed, stunned, and bewildered. The scene here described was often repeated, for Edward and Esther continued to meet, notwithstanding all efforts to prevent their meeting.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS and FRANCES WATKINS HARPER.

FRANCES

Frederick.

FREDERICK

Frances.

FRANCES

I will do whatever I can.

FREDERICK

You will do whatever you can. And must.

FRANCES

And must.

FREDERICK

But what is it, what is it, Frances?

FRANCES

I shall speak out at every turn.

FREDERICK

Will you come to Baltimore with me?

FRANCES

Baltimore, Chattanooga, Atlanta, Biloxi. I'll wear a three dollar dress and pack a two dollar revolver.

FREDERICK

Or the other way 'round.

FRANCES

Turn me 'round, Frederick.

Let's spin and twist, gyrate our fate

And sing like larks at heaven's gate

SCENE.

We are before the meeting at Steinway Hall and FREDERICK

DOUGLASS is received backstage in a quiet private area by ELIZABETH

CADY STANTON.

ELIZABETH

Frederick –

FREDERICK
Elizabeth –

ELIZABETH
Frederick –

FREDERICK
Elizabeth –

ELIZABETH
So wonderful –

FREDERICK
Elizabeth –

ELIZABETH
Frederick
That we can meet

FREDERICK
We *are* meeting

ELIZABETH
We are *meeting*

FREDERICK
As we do always

ELIZABETH
As will we ever

FREDERICK
May the good Lord willin'

ELIZABETH

What's your phrase?

FREDERICK

And the crick don't rise.

ELIZABETH

That's your phrase alright.

FREDERICK

Eliz, the crick won't rise, not between us

We shall hold each other above the rush

The dams may break and waters push and shove

Nothing shall destroy our mutual faith,

even, I dare say, our love

ELIZABETH

"Faith is the thing hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"

FREDERICK

You quote St. Paul aptly, but Paul also dealt with things *seen*.

Before he was Paul, he was Saul the tax collector

ELIZABETH

And he was struck from his horse on the way to Ephesus

to collect taxes

and God spoke.

FREDERICK

Saul, now Paul, saw God.

ELIZABETH

He heard Him mightily.

FREDERICK
He was not hoping for faith at all.

He was hoping for things *seen felt smelt touched heard*

He wanted everything

in all his senses

ELIZABETH
Mr. Douglass –

FREDERICK
Mrs. Stanton, I am trying to give you the truth

ELIZABETH
The truth of what? Are you trying to shock me?

FREDERICK
Into reality?

ELIZABETH
Yes.

FREDERICK
Yes.

ELIZABETH
What is that reality?

FREDERICK
Train. George Francis Train.

ELIZABETH (singing)

Train Train Goin' So Fas'

FREDERICK
You have so much, shall I say, *interior* intelligence.

ELIZABETH
I don't know what that means.

FREDERICK
You know what you should be doing, yet you're not doing it.

ELIZABETH
What should I be doing?

FREDERICK
Rejecting Train.

Rejecting So and So Train and his racist… This is the Man – you read your own newspaper, woman -

ELIZABETH
Mr. Train has been our most *fearless* supporter

FREDERICK
He hates Black Men.

ELIZABETH
I think you are too blunt.

FREDERICK
Perhaps I am too *Black.*

ELIZABETH
He merely posits –

FREDERICK

That “Black Men stink

like poisoned ink

That Black Men shit

on White Girl’s tit”

ELIZABETH

That is not what Mr. Train means – how dare you use that language in front of me.

FREDERICK

It *is* what he *says* and it *is* the language used in his paper, the paper which has been turned over to you and Mrs. Anthony

ELIZABETH

- although he may occasionally say

for emphasis something somewhat different

from what he *means*

And I don’t edit that part of *The Revolution*

FREDERICK

Words *mean* what they *say*

He *says* what he *means*

The Revolution? Which one? The American, the French, the Revolutions of 1848?

Which one turned the language this *charming* way?

“The Black Goat, erect, mounts the white ewe’s flanks

She screams and she ‘Baaaaas’ and spits out her ‘Thanks’

He pushes her off and goes for her mouth

‘Rise again, Rise again, now eat the South’ “

The Doggerel is bad enough, but the prose hits new lows

Would you like to hear? But I'll spare you because even these big African lips

Can barely wrap themselves around these hissing syllables

ELIZABETH
You don't have to belabor, Frederick, I too can read.

FREDERICK
Have you?

ELIZABETH
Yes.

FREDERICK
Every word? Or are you not such a glutton?

ELIZABETH
For eating the South? I'm not, in fact, one who wants the South wasted beyond all recognition. There are twisted souls, vagrant, vindictive, vicious –

FREDERICK
Train is such a soul, if one can say he has one, the very thing he denies I and my brothers possess.

ELIZABETH
O, he knows you possess a soul. He and I have had this conversation, as should you and he.

FREDERICK
Where is he? Word has it that he's skipped the country leaving you and Susan with mounting debts. It seems you both signed some papers –

ELIZABETH
Don't talk to me of papers. It will all be straightened out

And I don't know about your 'brothers', as you call them.

You've always been an anomaly

FREDERICK

I am *not* an *anomaly*, but exactly what any of my brothers could become

We are capable and not inferior any more than white women are inferior

and undeserving of the vote

But you do not even acknowledge that the tone of this Train's train of thought

is despicable and must be denounced and rejected

ELIZABETH

That is, I grant you, the tone in which he speaks

He is, at times, intemperate, full of it

But what is his goal, for girls and women

It's very clear

It's that Black men must step aside,

take off their coats, however tattered, and put them down across the puddles

and let the queens that we are, as Sir Walter Raleigh put down his cloak

for Queen Elizabeth to trod,

bow and usher the women forward to the very front

and then retreat to the back of the line

And if only you could hear him speak,

He's a great admirer of yours,

though it may be hard to believe,

he calls you 'heroic'

FREDERICK

Retreat!

ELIZABETH

An heroic retreat? I don't understand.

FREDERICK

When we've won the war, and you insist that we *retreat!*

To the very back of the line, is it?

ELIZABETH

Behind the Black Women, whom you conveniently ignore

even though they have nurtured you and given you suck

FREDRICK

Yes, they have and they will 'til the end of time

And we Black Men will protect them –

ELIZABETH

And keep them from the vote.

"Remember, all men would be tyrants if they could."

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Abigail Adams.

I've never known a man who didn't want to direct.

ELIZABETH

Frederick Douglass. Perhaps.

FREDERICK

So if you say this, and I quote,

“Shall American statesmen ... so amend their constitutions as to make their wives and mothers the political inferiors of unlettered and unwashed ditch-diggers, bootblacks, butchers and barbers, fresh from the slave plantations of the South?”

ELIZABETH

Where have you gotten these words from?

FREDERICK

Where do you think?

ELIZABETH

From a purloined copy of my speech?

FREDERICK

Yes.

ELIZABETH

I would never have thought to call you a thief.

FREDERICK

It was given to me by someone about whom you would be surprised.

So when you say this, and I quote –

ELIZABETH

Don’t quote me further

FREDERICK

In fact, I was going to quote you the same, because if Black Men are unlettered,

What are Black Women

And why are you suddenly rising to their defense and offering them the vote

ELIZABETH

Because at the very least Black Women have their degradation to speak for them.

They are lost

You are in the foreground

They are under the earth

FREDERICK
This is a trap, but I will follow it through

We are in the foreground

Black Women not in the fields are in the house

ELIZABETH
And they are being violated

repeatedly

repeatedly

repeatedly

FREDERICK
Every night

I hear you clearly

ELIZABETH
Do you hear the screams –

FREDERICK
The muffled cries

ELIZABETH
The muffled cries

FREDERICK
The screams

ELIZABETH

Yes, you do

FREDERICK

Yes, I do

ELIZABETH

And what are you going to do about them?

FREDERICK

I'm going to shout them out in a Vote for the Black Man!

ELIZABETH

May I burden you with the obvious, but how does your shouting out a vote for the Black

Man going to save the Black Woman from degradation?

Have you given that a thought?

FREDERICK

You've not given the Black Woman a thought.

Why do you raise her now?

ELIZABETH

Because she is the next frontier

FREDERICK

You're thinking far forward.

ELIZABETH

I'm a far forward thinker.

FREDERICK

Then why not start with the first step?

ELIZABETH

Alright, there are two prongs to this first step –

FREDERICK

Prongs? What about prawns? I spent a lot of time, after I escaped the deepest darkest South, arriving in Baltimore, and I found employment there in a fish store, shelling oysters, mussels, I couldn't get the stink off my hands no matter how many lemons I rubbed, when I could even get a lemon or two, which I had to steal, but the prawns were the worst. Do you have the vaguest idea what I'm talking about?

ELIZABETH

You're telling me of your hard times.

FREDERICK

Neptune was the name of the Fish Monger and he had names for us also.

ELIZABETH

What was yours?

FREDERICK

Lemon.

ELIZABETH

You don't think I know what you're talking about.

Perhaps I don't.

I haven't had your experiences. You haven't had mine.

FREDERICK

No, but look at all you've done. You and Miss Anthony. You have championed labor's right to strike. You've called for equal pay for equal work.

ELIZABETH

Yes, and we made efforts to build a coalition with organized labor and we organized two female chapters, but we could not persuade the men to come out for women suffrage and eventually we were driven out.

FREDERICK

Because in your zeal to improve the plight of female workers, you urged women typographical workers to apply for the jobs of men who were out on strike.

ELIZABETH

Our ouster from this coalition was clear evidence that the worst enemies of women's suffrage will ever be the laboring class of men.

It's time to choose

The clock has sounded its alarm –

FREDERICK

Rich White –

ELIZABETH

Poor Black –

FREDERICK & ELIZABETH

Lose.

FREDERICK

Women –

ELIZABETH

Men –

FREDERIDCK & ELIZABETH

Lose.

ELIZABETH

That's the vote

Rich White Poor Black

FREDERICK

Rich Black Poor White

FREDERICK & EIZABETH

What about that?!

FREDERICK

All lose.

ELIZABETH

All the time.

FREDERICK

Where is the tea you promised me?

ELIZABETH

Would you like black tea?

FREDERICK

Green tea. Health considerations.

ELIZABETH

White tea? Your choice.

We have but a moment. Before the meeting. The convocation.

The tea is here. On the sideboard. Still hot. Please serve.

FREDERICK

Us.

ELIZABETH

I require none.

FREDERICK

Do you require something stronger?

HE pulls a flask from his pocket.

We hear singers warming up.

FREDERICK
I hear the Jubilee Singers from Fisk.

ELIZABETH
They've come from Nashville. Raising money for their University.

FREDERICK
I tip my flask and salute Fisk

ELIZABETH
I have strength enough without. Haven't you?

FREDERICK
You would want me to have some consolation as I stand and wait at the back of the line.

ELIZABETH
Women Women must be the first in that line

FREDERICK
Nothing nowhere is where you want me

at the end of a very long day

Let us now smite them smite them sight not seen

ELIZABETH
Even at this late moment, we might smite them together, Frederick, my dear

Our causes are just, let everyone hear the singers singing for us

Mind you not our differences, mind only our common goal

I do not call and yet I call – Frederick, please, sincerely,

this has been – words escape – will you hold open the door, this once, as the gentleman you are?

FREDERICK

This door of wood, indeed.

HE opens her door and SHE passes on through.

We hear the JUBILEE SINGERS louder and more concentrated

as we join the assembled body in the great hall of Steinway Hall.

LUCY STONE is at the podium.

The JUBILEE SINGERS sing “Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing”

JUBILEE SINGERS

Lift every voice and sing,

'Til earth and heaven ring,

Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;

Let our rejoicing rise

High as the listening skies,

Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.

Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,

Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;

Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,

Let us march on 'til victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,

Bitter the chast'ning rod,

Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;

Yet with a steady beat,

Have not our weary feet

Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?

We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,

We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,

Out from the gloomy past,

'Til now we stand at last

Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,

God of our silent tears,

Thou who has brought us thus far on the way;

Thou who has by Thy might

Led us into the light,

Keep us forever in the path, we pray.

Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,

Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;

Shadowed beneath Thy hand,

May we forever stand,

True to our God,

True to our native land.

LUCY STONE

Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing - The Negro National Anthem by the Jubilee Singers of Fisk University. Welcome all to the annual meeting of the American Equal Rights' Association here at historic Steinway Hall in New York City. The meeting is now officially called to order.

Man in the back

Mrs. Stone, may I be recognized?

LUCY STONE

Mr. Wendell Phillips, yes, you are recognized. Do you have a motion?

WENDELL PHILLIPS comes forward.

WENDELL PHILLIPS

Thank you, Mrs. Stone. I do. Let us cut to the quick. We are here for several purposes, but the first is the one we can move on expeditiously. I move that Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony be expelled from the Association and be shown the door, also expeditiously.

LUCY STONE

It has been so moved. Is there a second?

A Woman in the back.

I second.

LUCY STONE

Let the record show that Frances Watkins Harper has seconded the motion.

Is there discussion?

There is a STOP ACTION for a wordless scene between FRANCES WATKINS HARPER and GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN. THEY eye each warily, circling like cats about to strike. Then just as suddenly, TRAIN leaves the scene and we are back to the ACTION.

PHILLIPS

This hour belongs to the Negro. As Abraham Lincoln said, 'One war at a time'; so I say. One question at a time. This is the Negro's hour.

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

Men need refining. Let woman fulfill her godlike mission. She is nobler, purer, better than man.

LUCY STONE

Mrs. Stanton will of course advocate the precedence of her sex, and Mr. Douglass will strive for the first position for his, and both are perhaps right. But we are lost if we turn away from the middle principle and argue for one class. Woman has an ocean of wrongs too deep for any plummet, and the negro too has an ocean of wrongs that cannot be fathomed. There are two great oceans; in the one is the black man, and in the other is the woman. But I thank God for the 15th amendment, and hope that it will be adopted in every state. I will be thankful in my soul if anybody can get out of the terrible pit.

FRANCES WATKINS HARPER, one of the few Black suffragists present.

FRANCES WATKINS HARPER

I regret the fact that the nation cannot handle more than one question at a time, but since it is a fact, I would not have the black woman put a single straw in the way, if only the

men of the race can obtain what they want. The Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America grants suffrage to the Black Man

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

Let me answer Mrs. Harper and Mrs. Stone in the same manner with the same words. The struggle for the last thirty years has not been merely on the black man as such, but on the broader ground of his humanity. Either men and women – all men and all women, black as well as white, are equal or they are not. The vote is a citizen's natural right. To grant suffrage to one group of citizens at the expense of another is to betray the conviction that has been the mainspring of the movement since 1848, argued with equal vehemence by men and women alike. To abandon it is to accept an aristocracy of sex. If that word 'male' be inserted, as now proposed, it will take us a century to get it out again. And let me quote Mrs. Anthony – "I would sooner cut off my right hand than ask the ballot for the black man and not the woman."

WENDELL PHILLIPS

Without stooping to the macabre, I would be happy to supply the cleaver.

And where, may I ask, is the fabled Mrs. Anthony?

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

She is on business related to our strivings.

WENDELL PHILLIPS

Do you suggest she is trying, with little success, I hear, to straighten out the crooked and nefarious dealings of one George Francis Train?

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

You don't know of what you speak.

WENDELL PHILLIPS

Don't I?

We are still in the Discussion section of the motion, Mrs. Stone?

LUCY STONE

I will remind Mr. Phillips that it was he who wanted a swift vote? But, yes, we are still in that section.

WENDELL PHILLIPS

Thank you, Mrs. Stone. Swift, yes; fair, yes.

Well, then, Mrs. Stanton, is it about *The Revolution?*

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

Which revolution? Are you speaking of 1848 when all of Europe was exploding and the Womens' Rights Association had their first meeting at Seneca Falls, New York?

WENDELL PHILLIPS

No, I am speaking of *The Revolution*, the newspaper which Mr. George Francis Train has turned over to you, with all its debts, I note. I quote Mrs. Lucy Stone herself.

LUCY STONE

"We are now in a serious quarrel with Miss Anthony and Mrs. Stanton and the Train admixture. To Mrs. Stone and many of your old suffrage allies, *The Revolution*, what a name!, is a hideous embarrassment, filled with radical opinions certain to offend your Republican supporters and to deflect attention from the single issue of woman suffrage. The very cause you wish to promulgate is the one that is finally damaged by its inegalitarian stance."

WENDELL PHILLIPS

And here I quote Miss Anthony herself –

SUSAN B

"All the old friends, with scarce an exception, are sure we are wrong. Only time can tell, but I believe we are right and hence bound to succeed."

WENDELL PHILLIPS

Mrs. Stanton, you are not right. Miss Anthony is not right. And you and your cause are doomed to ignominious failure. I move that the discussion be closed and the vote be taken on the expulsion of these misguided souls.

LUCY STONE

Do I hear a second?

ELIZABETH

I will not allow a second to this motion, from Frances Watkins Harper or any other. I will not be expelled from an organization I helped found, one to which Miss Anthony is not any less devoted. Mr. Phillips, ever-infamous from here on out, you say 'inegalitarian'? You do not in the slightest understand the ferocity of my opposition to the Fifteenth Amendment, the final element in the Radical Republicans' program of Reconstruction. The amendment is meant to protect –

WENDELL PHILLIPS

The amendment is meant to protect the rights of freedmen by preventing the states from barring anyone from voting on the basis of, and I quote, race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

ELIZABETH

And once again, women are expected to wait for rights that should have been ours from birth. The Fifteenth Amendment would do nothing to remedy the cruel paradox spelled out by a young suffragist from Missouri, and I quote, "Every intelligent virtuous woman is the inferior of every ignorant man."

WENDELL PHILLIPS

We regret that black and woman suffrage are not being pushed through together, but there is no alternative but working through the Republican Party. Granting universal manhood suffrage represents a giant step toward true democracy. Women will have to be patient.

ELIZABETH

God first called light out of darkness and order out of chaos. To grant black and immigrant men the vote while denying it to women is to exalt ignorance above education, vice above virtue, brutality and barbarism above refinement and religion.

LUCY STONE

Do I hear a second?

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Mrs. Chairman?

LUCY STONE

Mr. Douglass, will you second?

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

No, I will not. At least not yet. Let me address you, Mrs. Stanton. I've admired you for decades and I admire you still. I would like to think that my few words in support of

your woman-suffrage resolution at Seneca Falls in 1848 in some small way helped that resolution pass.

ELIZABETH

It did. Your eloquence, you know, it did.

FREDERICK

But your views as reported in *The Revolution* have deeply wounded me. The employment of certain names such as Sambo and the bootblack and the daughters of Jefferson and Adams and all the rest that I cannot coincide with. I have asked what difference there is between the daughters of Jefferson and Washington and other daughters. I must say that I do not how anyone can pretend that there is the same urgency in giving the ballot to woman as to the negro. With us, the matter is a question of life and death, at least in fifteen States of the Union.

When women, because they are women, are hunted down through the cities of New York and New Orleans; when they are dragged from their houses and hung from lampposts; when their children are torn from their arms and their brains dashed out upon the pavement; when they are objects of insult and rage at every turn; when they are in danger of having their homes burnt down... then they will have an urgency to obtain the ballot equal to our own."

Great applause.

FRANCES WATKINS HARPER

Is that not true about all black women?

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Yes, yes, yes, it is true of the black woman, but not because she is a woman, but because

she is black. Julia Ward Howe, at the conclusion of her great speech delivered at the convention at Boston last year, said, "I am willing that the negro get the ballot before me." Woman! Why, she has 10,000 modes of grappling with her difficulties.

But let me tell you one thing further.

It is about Mrs. Stanton.

When there were few houses in which the black man could have put his head,

this wooly head of mine, found refuge in the house of Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton,

and if I had been blacker than sixteen midnights,

without a single star, it would have been the same.

There is no name greater than hers in the matter of woman's rights and equal rights.

SUSAN B. ANTHONY appears.

SUSAN B. ANTHONY

If Mr. Douglass had noticed who applauded when he said "black men first and white women afterwards" –

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Miss Anthony, how nice to welcome you. We have missed you in the proceedings. How will you now proceed?

WENDELL PHILLIPS

Returned from the front of the Financial Shenanigans of Mr. George Francis Train and his deeply illegal, let us not say immoral, dealings? How is everything *dealing?*

SUSAN B. ANTHONY

He would have seen it was only the men. When he tells us that the case of black men is

so perilous, I tell him that even outraged as they are by the hateful prejudice against color, he himself would not today exchange his sex and color with Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

FREDERIK DOUGLASS

Will you allow me a question?

SUSAN B. ANTHONY

Yes, anything for a fight today.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

I want to enquire whether granting to woman the right of suffrage will change the nature of our sexes.

Great laughter.

SUSAN B. ANTHONY

It will change the nature of one thing very much, and that is the pecuniary position of woman. It will place her in a position in which she can earn her own bread, so that she can go out into the world on equal competition in the struggle for life, so that she shall not be compelled to take such positions as men choose to accord her and then take such pay as men choose to give her.

Let me now offer two resolutions –

WENDELL PHILLIPS

There is a motion –

FRANCES WATKINS HARPER

Seconded.

WENDELL PHILLIPS

On the floor.

LUCY STONE

There is a motion on the floor and it is to expel Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony from the American Equal Rights' Association. In the Chair's view, there has been ample discussion to act on the motion. Is there further discussion?

SUSAN B. ANTHONY

There is much further discussion.

I offer two resolutions – the first I call for opposition to the Fifteenth Amendment. The other, we demand educated suffrage. Let me take the first. The amendment would not mean equal rights. It would put two million colored men in the position of tyrants over two million colored women, who until now had at least been the equals of the men at their side. If you will not give the whole loaf of justice to the entire people, if you are determined to extend the suffrage piece by piece, then give it first to women, to the most intelligent and capable portion of the women at least, because in the present state of government it is intelligence, it is morality which is needed.

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

Enfranchising black men will enslave black women. Take any class that have been slaves and you will find that they are the worst when free and become the hardest masters. Not another man should be enfranchised until enough women are admitted to the polls to outweigh those already there.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Let me quote a more eloquent voice for absolute equality, a voice especially caustic in 1865 when dismissing the notion that there should be property or educational requirements for would-be voters. "Where does the aristocrat get the authority to forbid

poor men, ignorant men, and black men, the exercise of their rights. All this talk about education and property qualification is the narrow assumption of a rotten aristocracy. How can we grade wealth and education? Shall a man be disenfranchised because he never had time to learn the signs of Cadmus, or because by the statute laws of his State he was forbidden to read and write, or amass property in his own name?"

Do you recognize your words, Mrs. Stanton?

SUSAN B. ANTHONY

We do not believe in allowing ignorant negroes to make laws for us to obey.

TRAIN in a stop-action.

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN

Miss Anthony commenced the campaign four-fifths negro and one-fifth woman. Now she is four-fifths woman and one-fifth negro. Keep your nose twenty years on a negro and you will have hard work to smell a white man again.

Out of the stop-action.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

We have heard the voice of Train speaking as a ventriloquist through the mouth of Miss Anthony. Let the vote proceed.

LUCY STONE

Hearing no further discussion –

The meeting breaks up. LUCY STONE speaks to the audience.

In the end, Stanton and Anthony were beaten and expelled from the association. The

convention voted against educated suffrage and expressed only its "profound regret" that Congress had not submitted a Sixteenth Amendment – and overwhelmingly approved ratification of the Fifteenth. Anthony and Stanton were isolated and discouraged, but not yet through.

SUSAN B. ANTHONY and ELIZABETH CADY STANTON.

ELIZABETH
We will form a new organization with a broad agenda – continued opposition to the Fifteenth Amendment, a sixteenth amendment that will specifically recognize a woman's right to vote, an eight-hour workday and equal pay for working women –

SUSAN B. ANTHONY
- and divorce reform that will obliterate forever the notion that wives "belong" to their husbands.

ELIZABETH
And what of Train?

SUSAN
And what of our debts?

ELIZABETH
The rotten bastard left us with a mountain of debts! Fuck *The Revolution.*

ELIZABETH and SUSAN
Fuck *The Revolution!*

SUSAN
I choose you for President.

ELIZABETH

I accept. Let us repudiate man's counsels forevermore and solemnly vow that there shall never be another season of silence until woman has the same rights everywhere on this green earth, just as man, woman must lead the way to her own salvation with a hopeful courage and determination that knows no fear or trembling. We must not put our trust in man in this transition period, since, while regarded as his subject, his inferior, his slave, their interests must be antagonistic.

LUCY STONE (to the audience)

I think we need two national associations for woman suffrage, so that those who do not oppose the Fifteenth Amendment or take the tome of *The Revolution* , may yet have an organization with which they can work in harmony. Men are actively encouraged to join. I nominate the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher as the American Association's first president. Every effort is to be made to work for suffrage, and suffrage alone, on the state level and within the Republican Party. No side issues are to be taken up. The American is to be a haven for those who do not use the methods which Mrs. Stanton and Miss Anthony use.

ELIZABETH

The American Association has been organized by persons who ignore the two persons, myself and Susan who have stood in the ranks of the suffrage army, if not its acting generals. They are persons who are either new converts or new workers, or old ones who have been comparatively silent, out of the public field for the last ten or fifteen years. To make proposals of peace to them and theirs would prove just as futile as overtures to Jeff Davis and his compeers.

LUCY STONE

I agree cooperation is impossible. It is best not to strike hands with Stanton or Anthony. When I and Julia Ward Howe launch the American's weekly, *The Woman's Journal*, we will make a point of doing so on January 8, 1870, the second anniversary of *The Revolution's* debut.

FRANCES WATKINS HARPER

The woman-suffrage movement is split in two. Such wasted energy involved, all the backbiting and apparent duplication of effort, would seem likely to have damaged the cause in which both groups believe so passionately. But whether this division actually will slow or accelerate votes for women will yet be a matter of debate.

LUCY STONE (to ELIZABETH)

I hope you will see it as I do, that with two societies, each in harmony with itself we shall secure the active hearty cooperation of *all* the friends better than either could do alone. The radical abolitionists and the republicans could never have worked together but in separate organizations will both do good service. There are just as distinctly two parties to the woman movement.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

You may be right. It is hard to see how Stanton and Anthony will be able to function if they have to wait for the approval of Lucy Stone and her allies, and equally difficult to imagine how Stone can hold on to her conservative allies if she remains formally linked with the the two radical women whom they consider an embarrassment.

FRANCES WATKINS HARPER and FREDERICK DOUGLASS.

FRANCES

How lovely –

FREDERICK

Yes. How lovely –

FRANCES

It is. Indeed.

FREDERICK

How lovely to be back where we are.

FRANCES

We are where we are.

FREDERICK

What does that mean?

FRANCES

It means that we are nowhere.

FREDERICK

There's nothing between us?

FRANCES

O, there are things between us. Things which mean everything something nothing.

FREDERICK

So my tongue on the upperside on the innerside of your mouth –

FRANCES

- is not enough to make me come back to you.

FREDERICK

It was before.

FRANCES

It was before what?

FREDERICK

If you don't recall –

FRANCES

I don't care to.

FREDERICK

My tongue –

FRANCES

Please – please – your licking apparatus is meaningless to me. I was much more interested, as you must know, in your penetrative ability. I need the thrust.

What do you need?

FREDERICK

I need it with us the same. Thrust. Must Thrust. Bust. I want your Bignesses.

FRANCES

As does Train.

FREDERICK

Don't speak to me of Train.

FRANCES

He's not a rival.

FREDERICK

He would fuck you.

FRANCES

He has.

FREDERICK

He has?!

FRANCES

Metaphorically. He has fucked us all.

FREDERICK

I don't think so.

FRANCES

I think so.

FREDERICK

I would have felt it.

FRANCES

You would have denied that you felt it.

FREDERICK

You insult me.

FRANCES

The truth hurts.

FREDERICK

Not as much as the fucking, does the truth hurt.

FRANCES

What is it about the fucking that doesn't hurt as much as the truth?

FREDRICK

What is it about the truth that doesn't hurt as much as the fucking?

FRANCES

I think you want neither the fucking nor the truth.

FREDRICK

Is it possible that we can get beyond the truth and on to the fucking?

FRANCES

Or beyond the fucking and on to the truth.

FREDERICK

I want both.

FRANCES

You will get either. Or neither. Or Both.

FREDERICK

No!

FRANCES

Negotiable. Nothing. Nothing is negotiable. You got what you wanted.

FREDERICK

What is that?

FRANCES

Your vote. Your Amendment. Your way.

FREDERICK

Which you paved. "I would not have the black woman put a single straw in the way, if

only the men of the race could obtain what they wanted."

FRANCES

Yes, I chose your path. A choice which offered no choice.

FREDERICK

You speak in riddles, woman.

FRANCES

Like the Sphinx I am.

FREDERICK

Sphinx. Minx. Vixen.

FRANCES

You may have me. Cut me to the quick.

SHE slides away as TRAIN appears.

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN

I'm keeping our appointment.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Not necessary. Squash is of no interest to me.

TRAIN

We are to have a duel.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Not my understanding.

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN

Mine.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS

We were to play *squash*, but it no longer interests me.

GEORGE FRANCIS TRAIN
But a duel does me. Your earlier understanding has been cancelled.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS
Changing the rules, Mr.Train? Not allowed.

TRAIN
You're not the one doing the allowing.

The winner takes your Sphinx. Your minx. Your vixen.

As quickly as FRANCES left, that quickly does SHE return.

She slits TRAIN's throat. HE dies in his own bile.

We are back in Steinway Hall.

LUCY STONE is at the podium.

The JUBILEE SINGERS sing "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing"

JUBILEE SINGERS
Lift every voice and sing,

'Til earth and heaven ring,

Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;

Let our rejoicing rise

High as the listening skies,

Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.

Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,

Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;

Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,

Let us march on 'til victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,

Bitter the chast'ning rod,

Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;

Yet with a steady beat,

Have not our weary feet

Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?

We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,

We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,

Out from the gloomy past,

'Til now we stand at last

Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,

God of our silent tears,

Thou who has brought us thus far on the way;

Thou who has by Thy might

Led us into the light,

Keep us forever in the path, we pray.

Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,

Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;

Shadowed beneath Thy hand,

May we forever stand,

True to our God,

True to our native land

FRANCES WATKINS HARPER and FREDERICK DOUGLASS

stand over the dead Train. Slowly, dirgelike, THEY sing

'Freight Train freight Train, goin' so fast.

We hear the voice of Dick Gregory –

DICK GREGORY

I here now advance the idea of mourning American Nazi leader

George Lincoln Rockwell just as we Martin Luther King.

We need to be a nation to give a damn no matter who get shot.

As LUCY STONE gavels the meeting to order -

LUCY STONE

Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing - The Negro National Anthem by the Jubilee Singers of Fisk University. Welcome all to the annual meeting of the American Equal Rights' Association here at historic Steinway Hall in New York City. The meeting is now officially called to order.



Quick Black.