

SCENE ONE

1912 - Hotel Room. After the NAWSA (National American Woman Suffragist Association) world conference in Stockholm, Sweden. A settee, an arm chair, a writing table with a chair, paper, and pens. Throughout the dialogue the characters dance a tango.

(A recording of Carrie Chapman Catt's speech on Suffrage plays. CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT, with her hair up, wearing a day dress, sits on a settee, writing a letter. MOLLIE enters reading the same letter as CARRIE speaks.)

CARRIE

Darling, Mollie brown eyes, as I watched you walk away from me on that pier...my heart skipped a beat, not in excitement but in fear...the most consuming fear, I have yet felt in my lifetime. A fear I no longer wish to feel. Yours, Carrie Chapman Catt

(MOLLIE crosses to the writing table, takes paper and pen writes a letter to CARRIE. MOLLIE circles CARRIE as she speaks.)

MOLLIE

My pet, I forced myself to not look back as I left the pier. I felt your eyes upon me, but I feared I wouldn't allow you to leave if I turned 'round. Lovingly, Mollie Hay

(CARRIE stands - circles MOLLIE in a dance, as they speak.)

CARRIE

I hoped you would look back. I wanted to see your brown eyes one last time, so I could remember them in my dreams. I will miss you so much...but this is the price we must pay for suffrage.

MOLLIE

May I speak boldly?

CARRIE

(twirls around)

Don't hesitate, my heart, be bold...be brazen.

MOLLIE

Love...can I even say this... Love fills me so much, especially since you've been away. It's taken me so long to find you. I'm half my life and I want to hang on as tightly as I can.

CARRIE

Your words fills me with happiness; I want this feeling to grow. I want these feelings to continue and increase. Each syllable brings sanity to my fretful mind. Wherever I receive one of your letters, my anxiety disappears. My dreams come alive remembering the night we met and filled with fond memories of the speakeasy in New York...the softness of your touch still sends thrills I haven't felt before.

MOLLIE

That night, I remember all eyes were on you, during the first NAWSA convention. Your eloquence ran circles around the entire room. Your words, for them...for me. I have resigned myself to share you with NAWSA, Madam President.

(Music begins)

CARRIE

My words were for you, my Mollie brown eyes...I was - am ...mesmerized. (beat) I tried humor for the first time, but I'm afraid my attempt wasn't successful.

MOLLIE

In my humble opinion, humor brings the point, like an arrow to the bulls eye, but with a gentle push, not a forced punch to the throat. You were brilliant and had everyone in the palm of your hand. My heart waits for you, Mollie.

(CARRIE and MOLLIE greet each other)

MOLLIE [CONT'D]

I've missed you, my heart.

CARRIE

It does my soul good to be home, with you.

MOLLIE

You can rest your weary bones for a moment. I have heard you were the toast of every town.

CARRIE

(laughs)

After years of criticism for my gruff exterior, I finally listened. At times I want to shake them until they truly hear what I am speaking to and take action...no longer passive in their acceptance but active in the work.

(They cross to the settee)

(CARRIE retrieves the pin holding her hair. MOLLIE begins singing)

MOLLIE

BLACK IS THE COLOR

OF MY TRUE LOVE'S HAIR.

HER LIPS ARE LIKE SOME ROSES FAIR.

SHE HAS THE SWEETEST SMILE

AND THE GENTLEST HANDS.

I LOVE THE GROUND WHERE ON SHE STANDS.

(The music continues under the dialogue)

CARRIE

We are a team...partners, you and I? Will you commit to me, move in with me, pledge yourself to me?

MOLLIE

I am your partner..full stop. My heart, I commit and pledge myself to you alone. Our lives are melded into one...on a singular mission. You've had my progressive ideas and now we can implement them. I know Susan and Elizabeth have been reluctant, but even with their small successes, it's not enough, we need drastic change in order to further suffrage.

(CARRIE spins MOLLIE across to the settee, they sit.)

CARRIE

I adore you when you put on your prickly pear Colonel persona.

MOLLIE

The others say I am too harsh in my opinions.

CARRIE

At times it is true, however, that is what I love about you.

(kisses MOLLIE's cheek)

Strength.