

# THE WAYFARING WIDOW

## *book* CLUB *kit*

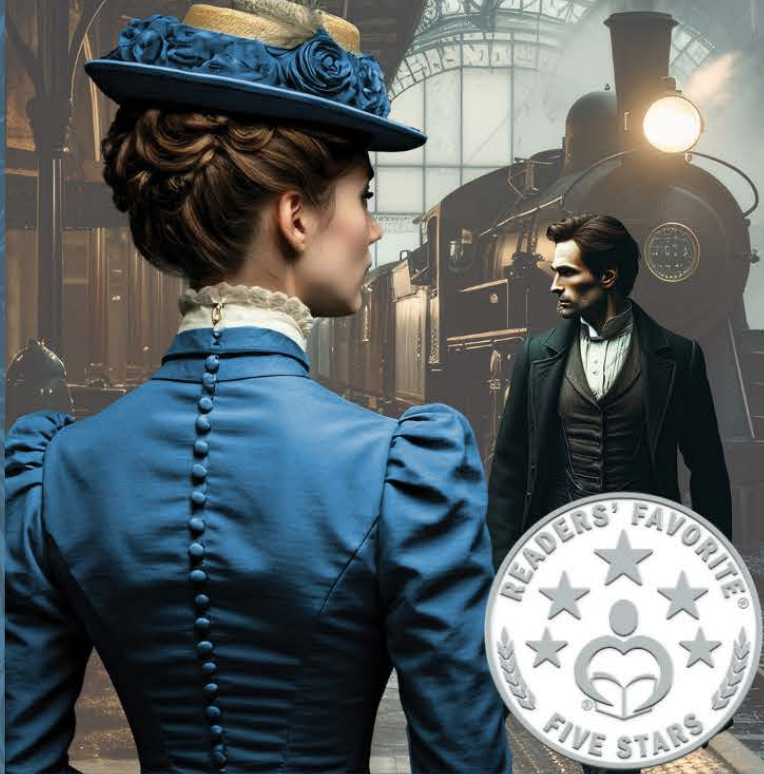
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BIRD'S-EYE VIEW SERIES  
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## THE WAYFARING WIDOW



CASEY CLINE

A WIDOW WITH SCARS FROM HER PAST.

A DECLARED BACHELOR WITH HIS OWN TROUBLED HEART.

WILL THEIR JOURNEY TOGETHER LEAD TO LOVE OR LOATHING?



# AUTHOR'S NOTE

Isabella Bird was a real-life Englishwoman who traveled around the world by herself in a time when it wasn't common for a woman, and an unmarried one at that, to do so.

In *The Wayfaring Widow*, I have tried to remain as true to Isabella Bird's actual travels in America in 1854 as possible. Isabella's first-hand account in *The Englishwoman in America* served as the basis for most of what you see within my book's pages.

It's an intimidating prospect to bring a real person from history into a fictional novel, and I wanted to ensure I did justice to her character while at the same time creating a compelling love story in a cast of characters that were my own creation.

Because I only just grazed the surface of Isabella's adventures in my novels, I encourage you to learn more about her and even read her firsthand travel accounts. After all, as Isabella has said herself in *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains*, "Everything suggests a beyond."



Isabella Bird (Source: Public Domain)





# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

## 1 ISABELLA BIRD'S LEGACY

Had you heard about Isabella Bird before reading *The Wayfaring Widow*? What was the most surprising detail you learned about Isabella in the novel?

## 2 HISTORICAL JOURNEY

What historical places, events, or cultural details in the book stood out to you the most? What place in the book would you most like to have visited with Isabella in 1854?

## 3 VICTORIAN SOCIETY

Though women in the 19th century experienced greater freedoms than their predecessors, they were still subject to societal strictures and norms. How did these limitations impact Victoria and Harrison's romance?

## 4 FIRST IMPRESSIONS

What are your thoughts about Victoria and Harrison's first meeting and how it set the stage for their "enemies-to-lovers" romance?

## 5 VICTORIA'S TRANSFORMATION

How has Victoria's past impacted how she feels about herself and what she deserves in life? How does this trip help her discover her true worth?



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

## 6 HARRISON'S GROWTH

How did Harrison overcome his own internal battles so he could pursue what he really wanted in his life?

## 7 ISABELLA'S INFLUENCE

How did Isabella help encourage Victoria and Harrison along the journey?

## 8 POETRY & ROMANCE

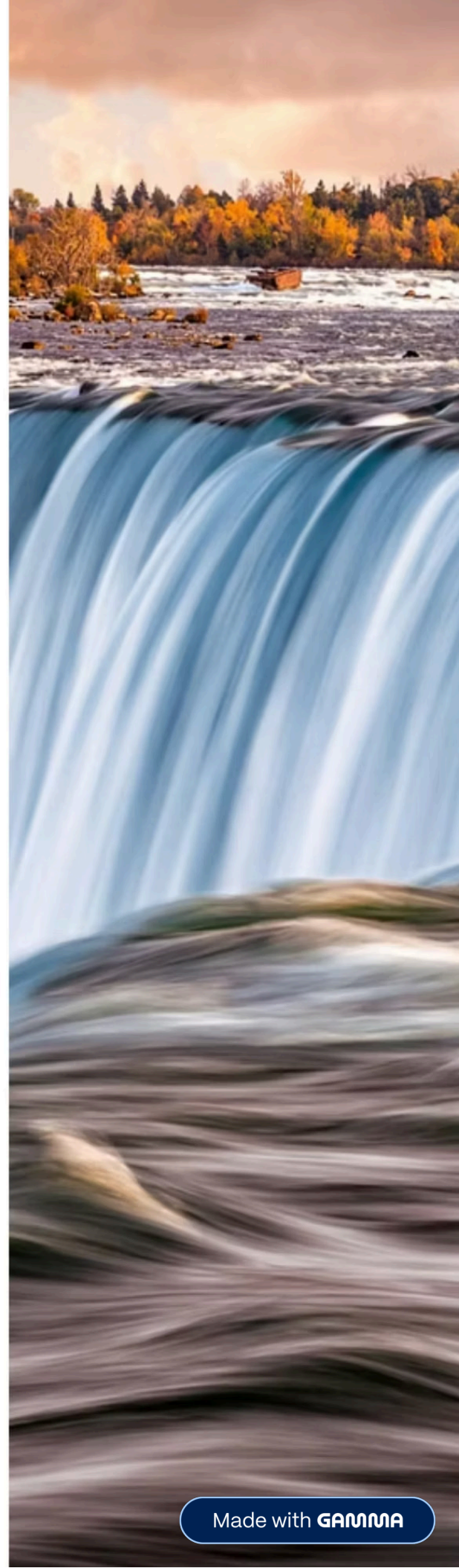
How did Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's "A Psalm of Life" poem deepen the romance between Harrison and Victoria?

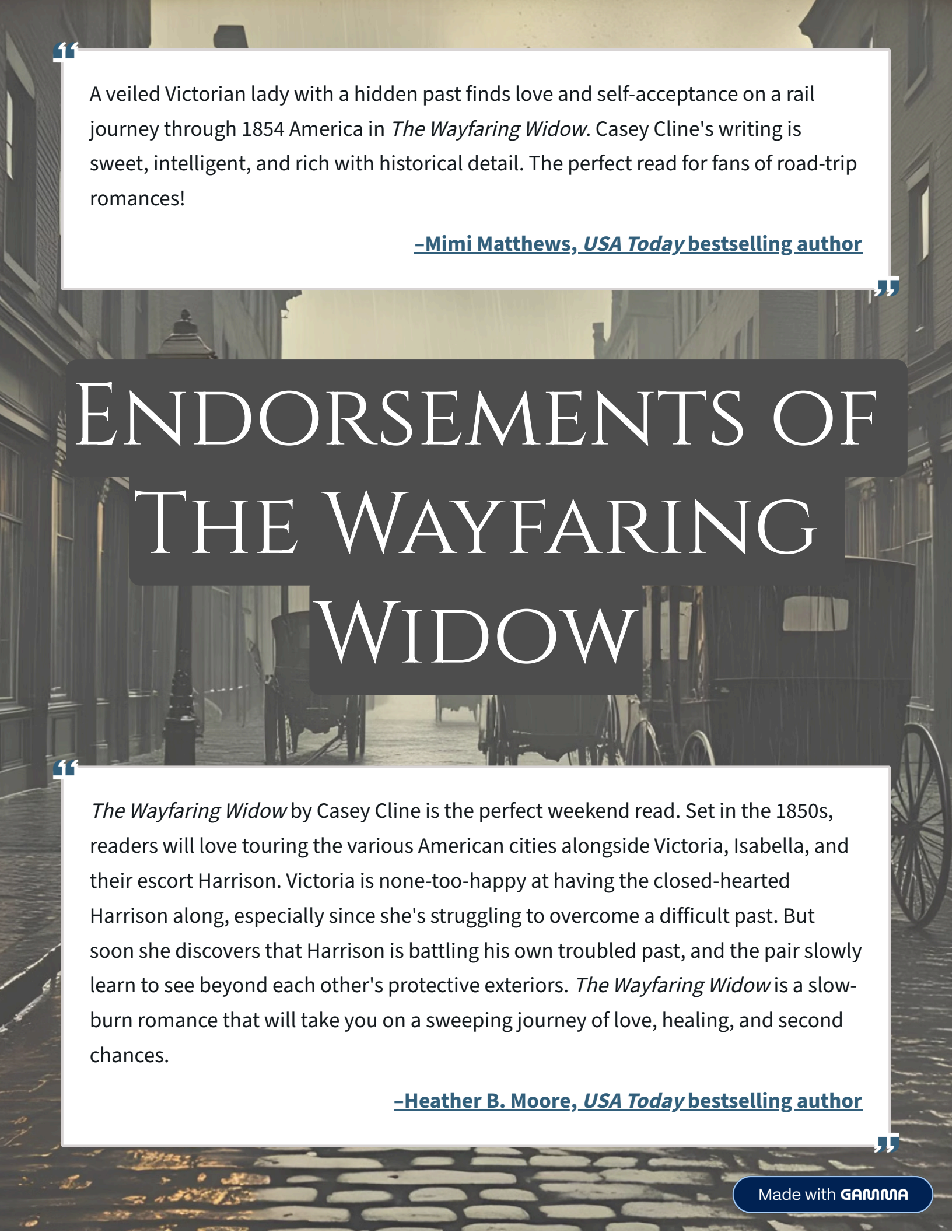
## 9 DREAM CAST

Who would you cast in a movie to play Victoria, Harrison, and Isabella?

## 10 FUTURE ADVENTURES

What do you predict will happen with Georgina on her 1873 journey to the Hawaiian Islands with Isabella?





A veiled Victorian lady with a hidden past finds love and self-acceptance on a rail journey through 1854 America in *The Wayfaring Widow*. Casey Cline's writing is sweet, intelligent, and rich with historical detail. The perfect read for fans of road-trip romances!

-Mimi Matthews, *USA Today* bestselling author

# ENDORSEMENTS OF THE WAYFARING WIDOW

*The Wayfaring Widow* by Casey Cline is the perfect weekend read. Set in the 1850s, readers will love touring the various American cities alongside Victoria, Isabella, and their escort Harrison. Victoria is none-too-happy at having the closed-hearted Harrison along, especially since she's struggling to overcome a difficult past. But soon she discovers that Harrison is battling his own troubled past, and the pair slowly learn to see beyond each other's protective exteriors. *The Wayfaring Widow* is a slow-burn romance that will take you on a sweeping journey of love, healing, and second chances.

-Heather B. Moore, *USA Today* bestselling author



# WHAT READERS ARE SAYING



Oh truly, what a remarkable story this was - full of angst, heart, and revelations that just tugged at my heart in both heartbreaking and heartwarming ways. I loved how beautifully it showed the evolution of the main characters' relationship - from one characterized by distrust and wariness, to one of full surrender to the depth of the affection that bloomed between them.

-BookBub reviewer



What I admire most about this novel is the rich and authentic historical detail. Casey Cline drew inspiration from Isabella Bird's real travel accounts, making the settings and journey feel vivid and convincing. I often felt like I was right there—experiencing the scenery, the suspense, the sorrow, and the joy along with the characters. ... As a fan of historical romance, I found this book deeply satisfying. The story is clean, sweet, and filled with emotional depth.

-Goodreads reviewer

## ADD YOUR OWN REVIEW ON:

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# RECIPE SUGGESTIONS

“

we breakfasted, at seven o'clock, on johnny-cake, squirrels, buffalo-hump, dampers, and buckwheat, tea and corn spirit.

”

*The Englishwoman in America*, by Isabella Bird

## JOHNNY-CAKES

A classic, frontier menu item, Johnny-Cakes are cornmeal based cakes cooked on a flat surface like a griddle or skillet.

Consider trying Small Town Woman's recipe here:

<https://www.smalltownwoman.com/johnny-cakes/>



## DAMPER BREAD

Damper is a traditional Australian bread. Made with just a few staple ingredients, it was often made over an open fire, but can also be made in an oven.

Try this recipe from Caroline's Cooking:  
<https://www.carolinescooking.com/australian-damper-bread/>

NOTE: I spared you from any recipes pertaining to squirrels or buffalo hump. You're welcome.

Made with GAMMA

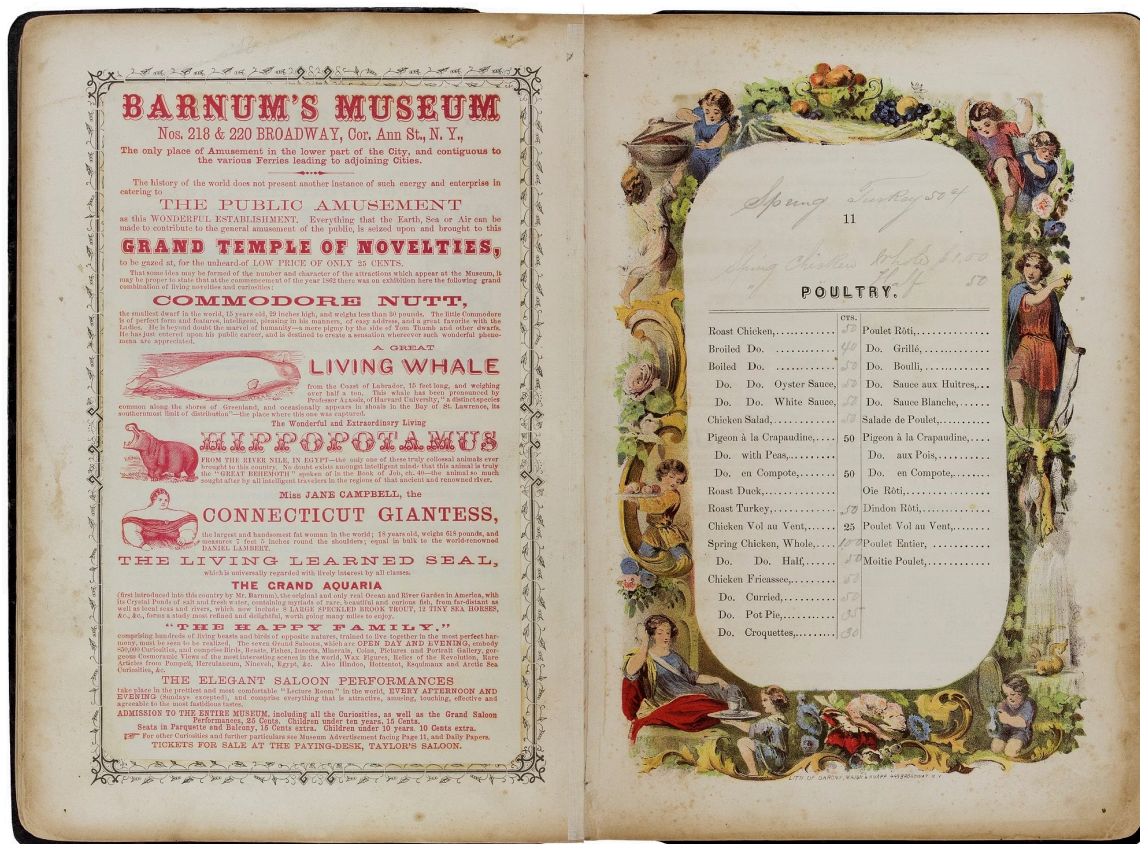


# ELEVATED DINING EXPERIENCE

The most superb of [the restaurants in New York City] is Taylor's [Saloon] in Broadway.

*The Englishwoman in America*, by Isabella Bird

If you're catering to a more refined palate, then perhaps copying this 1861 menu from Taylor's Saloon in New York City may be more to your liking. Isabella described Taylor's as "a perfect blaze of decoration." **The restaurant's opulence was nearly as famous as its inclination to serve unchaperoned women at the time.**



Source: Taylor's Saloon, "À la carte," *Grolier Club Exhibitions*, accessed September 7, 2025,

<https://grolierclub.omeka.net/items/show/828>. Note: the "Do" means "ditto"



# SUGGESTED GAME: THE RHYMES

Try your hand at "The Rhymes" as played by Isabella, Victoria, and Harrison in The Wayfaring Widow. Or, [browse this 1854 "Book of Parlor Games"](#) for more inspiration.

## The Rhymes.



IVING an answer of which the first word rhymes with the last of the demand addressed to you, is the difficulty of this game, which makes many forfeits.

### EXAMPLE.

The company is ranged in a circle, intermixed with ladies and gentlemen, who interrogate their right-hand neighbours. These reply, and go on questioning to the right, and so on, thus :—

*A Lady.* "How is your *aunt*?"

*A Gentleman.* "Jaunty as possible. What will you do on *Sunday*?"

*A Lady.* "Monday, I have a balloon fight at Saint Cloud. Have you a good *appetite*?"

*A Gentleman.* "Quite. Do you love *company*?"

*A Lady.* "Not any. When are you at *home*?"

*A Gentleman.* "Sometimes. Are you not afraid of being *caught*?" &c.

If you can find a word without rhyme, give it. The player thus answered is obliged to give a forfeit, as are those who do not immediately find rhymes.

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Casey Cline collects hobbies and pursuits as quickly as she reads books. She likes to believe her degrees and licenses in business, law, and real estate aren't entirely incongruous with writing historical stories about the ultimate adventure in life—love. Casey lives in Nebraska with her husband, two daughters, and three cats.



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