

"A Tea Out of Time"

An Original Script  
by  
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INT. LARGE HALL - DAY - PRESENT -- MORNING

WE SEE the inside of a barn turned into a modern day event space. There are three tables set for five. Three doors lead out of the space. A door stage left that goes to the kitchen, a bar upstage and a door stage left that goes to the street.

We hear a bit of commotion off stage left.

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895] (O.S.)  
This is a barn...

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960] (O.S.)  
Yes it is.

In walks Mildred Taylor, 55 years old. She crosses center stage, surveying the large open space with a smile.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960] (CONT'D)  
And what a barn it is. They obviously  
don't keep animals in here.

Emma Biddlecom Sweet, about 33 years old comes tentatively in. She looks around.

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]  
It is still a barn. What kind of a  
place is this to have a tea party  
and a speaker? What will she think?  
(She eyes Mildred)  
And where are the rest of your  
clothes? Your knees are showing!

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]  
(looking down at her  
knees)  
Oh, I don't know, the fashion looks  
like it's going to go straight up,  
with no end in sight.

54 year Ann Collins comes in circa 1970. She is dressed in a leopard skin mini skirt, gogo boots and a red cowboy hat.

Emma SCREAMS.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960] (CONT'D)  
Like I said, no end in sight.

ANN COLLINS [1970]  
Well, I like to make an entrance,  
but never had a reaction like that  
before! Ann Collins, nice to meet  
you.

The exterior door is heard opening and in walks Agnes Snook circa 1931 about 30 years old.

AGNES SNOOK [1931]  
Hello, I'm Agnes Snook.

Mildred walks up to her and puts out her hand to shake it.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]  
Assembly woman, Mildred Taylor.  
Nice to meet you.

Emma Biddlecom Sweet goes up to Agnes and gives her hand in a more dainty shake.

AGNES SNOOK [1931]  
(Looking at Emma's  
long dress. A little  
shocked)  
Well, the invitation didn't say  
costume party.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]  
(looking at what Emma  
has on)  
No, it didn't... Actually the  
invitation didn't say much. I have  
it right here...

Mildred Taylor pulls the invite out of her pocket book.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960] (CONT'D)  
It says...

Before she can read it, we hear a new invitee enter in the door.

MARY ANN WOODWARD [1849]  
"Your presence is requested at a  
meeting of the minds..."

All eyes turn to Mary Ann Woodward, who walks through the door.

Ann Collins looks at yet another long dress and starts to wander upstage looking around.

MARY ANN WOODWARD [1849] (CONT'D)  
The invitation... that's what it  
said and that's why I came. I own a  
patent. You might have seen the  
invention? The rocking chair fan?

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]  
Oh, yes! What a wonderful invention,  
you rock and it fans you!

Ann Collins is heard from the bar in an aside.

ANN COLLINS [1970]  
 I came to see if I could interest  
 anyone in a canvas, this meeting  
 does not look like it's going to be  
 my cup of tea.

MARY ANN WOODWARD [1849]  
 Oh, you're an artist?  
 (Crossing towards Ann)

ANN COLLINS [1970]  
 (coming downstage,  
 digs in her purse  
 for her photo album)  
 Yes, I paint thoroughbred race horses.  
 Here's Citation painted for Alfred  
 Vanderbilt, Dom Bingo painted for  
 Bing Crosby...

MARY ANN WOODWARD [1849]  
 (stops in her tracks,  
 a little shocked)  
 Race horses!

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]  
 (to Ann Collins)  
 Ann Collins, the artist, Cherry St.  
 in Lyons, right? I believe I know  
 your sister, Ellen Gardner, from the  
 Young Republicans. Didn't she late  
 work on the Dewey Campaign?

ANN COLLINS [1970]  
 Yes, she did. As a matter of fact,  
 Ellen was furious when my friend  
 Tallulah Bankhead spoke at Truman's  
 rally in Madison Square garden.

Ann crosses towards Mildred center stage and the two woman  
 shake hands.

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]  
 I'm not sure I should have taken it  
 upon myself to book the speaker... I  
 don't think that my employer, Susan  
 B. Anthony should be mixing with...  
 Oh, maybe she will prove to be an  
 inspiration to all of us.

MARY ANN WOODWARD  
 [1849]  
 Who???

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]  
 Oh, I love reenactments!

The comment is lost on the four other women as two more women rush through the door. Eliza Cooper circa 1864 and Sylvia Newport circa 1914. There is some commotion as Eliza is trying to rush the 86 year old African American, Sylvia, in through the door.

ELIZA COOPER [1864]

Oh you poor woman, were thee seen?  
What is thee doing out in daylight,  
and alone?

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]

Child, I'm 86 years old, I'm sure I  
can go to a public meetin' if I feels  
like it.

ELIZA COOPER [1864]

Well then the good Lord can watch  
over thee, since thee will not let  
me do it.

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]

The good Lord been watchin over me  
these 86 years just fine. I got an  
invitation to this here meetin' and  
I got a right to be here!

ELIZA COOPER [1864]

I am just trying to help thee. My  
husband, the good Griffith Cooper  
and I are...

(lowering her voice)

...Friends...and we can help thee  
and thine should thee need it. If  
thee needs... passage, to the other  
side.

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]

I am a Christian, and I am old, but  
I ain't ready for that yet! I got a  
few good years in me still and I  
don't go for any of that talkin to  
the dead and all.

Eliza and Sylvia back away from each other very slowly.  
Eying each other.

A WOMAN comes down the stairs stage right. She is dressed  
in furs, about 16 years old and has darker skin and black  
long hair. She is the MOUND DWELLER.

At the same time as the Mound Dweller enters, KATE FOX, about  
16, enters through the door. She has heard the tale end of  
what Sylvia Newport has said.

KATE FOX [1853]

Well there's somebody that disagrees with you and they are in this room right now. Mr. Splitfoot is that you? Mr. Splitfoot do as I do.

Snapping her fingers four times, four rappings answer her snaps. Kate then claps four times, four knocks follow.

Everyone backs away quickly. A tiny bit of confusion ensues.

ELIZA COOPER [1864]

I have seen thy unholy trickery written of in the papers.

Ann goes toward the bar.

ANN COLLINS [1970]

I think I think I need a drink....

Eliza Cooper, the Quaker, crosses her arms and scowls; Mildred Taylor debunks what she's just seen.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]

(to herself)

If I could do that parlor trick I could get more legislation moved through the Assembly.

Emma turns to Mildred.

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]

This is to be a meeting of the minds, not a seance. Who invited this fake Fox sister? Is she to usurp Susan B's place as guest speaker here? Susan speaks every year at LiliDale. That would be the place to discuss spirits, not here.

KATE FOX [1853]

Oh, do you have their card? My sister is taking bookings every weekend.

At this point ANTOINETTE BROWN BLACKWELL walked through the door. She takes one look at Kate Fox.

ANTOINETTE BROWN BLACKWELL [1853]

Oh. So the Spiritualists have been called... Are your sisters prancing about? I thought this was to be a serious affair.

KATE FOX [1853]

Miss Brown, how is what you're doing so different?

(MORE)

KATE FOX [1853] (CONT'D)  
 You a woman, preacher... Me a woman,  
 medium. We are both connecting people  
 with the afterlife.

ANTOINETTE BROWN BLACKWELL [1853]  
 I don't presume to speak with the  
 dead. I, through thorough study of  
 the bible, lead people to live lives  
 in a manner that the Lord would wish  
 them!

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]  
 Is this to be a religious meeting of  
 sorts?

ANN COLLINS [1970]  
 Is this just a meeting for women?

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]  
 Well of course, if we're discussing  
 women's suffrage! This is the  
 pressing issue of the day.

Katherine Wykle, 71 years old comes through the door.

KATHERINE WYKLE [1940]  
 Hello ladies, Katherine Wykle, Mayor  
 of Clyde.

Katherine Wykle extends her hand.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]  
 (coming downstage  
 toward Katherine)  
 Katherine Wykle, yes, Mayor of Clyde,  
 you ran twice. But, you, I'm sorry,  
 I must have you confused with someone  
 else, because... you're... you...

KATHERINE WYKLE [1940]  
 Yes?

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]  
 (blurts it out)  
 You're dead.

KATHERINE WYKLE [1940]  
 I may be old, but I'm not dead!

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]  
 Yes you are...

The two women stare at each other. As we hear some commotion  
 at the front of the door. Two women come in: 62 year old  
 Fern Huxley Palmer and 60 year old Gertrude "Gertie" Garner  
 Correll.

GERTIE GARNER CORRELL [1950]

(laughing)  
Well now I've seen everything!

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974]

(yelling behind her)  
Just because there's a nudist colony  
over in Williamson doesn't mean you  
can flaunt around naked just anywhere!  
(looking around)  
Somebody rip those curtains down.

Ann Collins goes to the window.

ANN COLLINS [1970]

I've always wanted to do this! Gone  
with the Wind is my favorite movie!!!

She rips the curtains down and gives them to Fern. Who trots  
back out the door.

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974] (O.S.)

Here, put this one.

VENUS RISING (O.S.)

I will not!

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974] (O.S.)

If you don't, you're not coming one  
step further!

VENUS RISING (O.S.)

Really! Fine.

In stamps Venus Rising, wrapped with the curtains in toga-  
style with Fern behind her.

ANN COLLINS [1970]

This has just got interesting!

GERTIE GARNER CORRELL [1950]

You're not kidding, this is the statue  
from Wolcott! She's supposed to be  
standing on a pedestal in the middle  
of a fountain!

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]

It's Venus Rising! She's the talk  
of the town, they just put her up.  
But how do you's know, who are ya?

GERTIE GARNER CORRELL [1950]

I'm Gert Garner Correll and what do  
you mean "just put up." It's 1950,  
I was 20 year's old when she was put  
up!

General confusion ensues and various women say what year they are in. Silence.

Two women walk into this strange silence. Bessie Seeley, 22 years old, comes through the door, helping the terrified Permelea Pease, 17 years old through the door. Bessie is so involved in comforting Permelia that she doesn't realize that everyone is looking at them.

BESSIE SEELEY [1903]

It's alright. Don't worry.

PERMELIA PEASE [1853]

(terrified)

I shouldn't have come. I didn't tell my husband... I should be getting our things together, we're leaving soon.

Both women stop in their tracks as they realize that all of the other women are staring at them.

One of the women steps forward.

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974]

Fern Huxley Palmer, from Ontario.

Permelia Pease looks at Fern's outfit from 1974 and screams!

ANN COLLINS [1970]

We've already been through that.

Permelia notices what Ann is wearing and studdering and pointing, nearly faints on the spot.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]

Calm down. We know this might be frightening for you, but, just tell us your names and... what year you think this is.

Both women look at each other and Bessie speaks first.

BESSIE SEELEY [1903]

Bessie Seeley. 1903.

Permelia starts to back away.

PERMELIA PEASE [1853]

This is the devil's work!

ANTOINETTE BROWN BLACKWELL [1853]

You are from Rose. I've seen you. You're...you're a Neversweat.

(MORE)

ANTOINETTE BROWN BLACKWELL [1853]  
 If this is the COVID's work, we'll  
 leave together, but I've spent too  
 many years in Seminary to not know.  
 Come stand by me, we'll face this  
 together.

PERMELIA PEASE [1853]  
 Actually I'm a Standalone.

ANTOINETTE BROWN BLACKWELL [1853]  
 Well suit yourself, but I think we  
 would be stronger standing together.

PERMELIA PEASE [1853]  
 Standalone. We call ourselves  
 Standalones, not neversweats...

ANTOINETTE BROWN BLACKWELL [1853]  
 Oh, I see. Well, please tell us  
 your name and... what year you think  
 it is.

PERMELIA PEASE [1853]  
 Nancy Permelia Pease and it is the  
 year of our Lord, 1853.

ANTOINETTE BROWN BLACKWELL [1853]  
 Thank the Lord. Yes it is, 1853!

ANN COLLINS [1970]  
 1970.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]  
 1960.

GERTIE GARNER CORRELL [1950]  
 1950.

All of the women start to yell out their years again and  
 general chaos ensues yet again.

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]  
 Ladies, ladies, please! Can we have  
 some sort of order here.

Mildred, seeing that Emma is not making any headway with the  
 confused women, takes off one of her shoes goes over to the  
 nearest table and starts banging on the table ala Kruschev  
 bringing silence to the crowd.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]  
 If it worked for Kruschev...

Everyone stares at her.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960] (CONT'D)

I saw it on TV.

(blank stares from  
some of the women,  
others repeat "TB!!!"  
Tuberculosis!!!!!!?)

Some of the women even pull their handkerchiefs out of their sleeves and cover their noses and mouths.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960] (CONT'D)

Look, we need to calm down if we're to get to the bottom of this. Please can we please sit down. Possibly by year?

(Mildred points to  
the table SR)

Here, can we have the earlier years here in these 5 chairs. Organize yourselves as to chronological order.

(Mildred points to  
the Center table)

And then carry on there and then the last group at that table.

Kate Fox, Antoinette Brown Blackwell and Permelia Pease walk to the SR table. After a bit of conversation from the women going over their dates, Mary Ann Woodward and Eliza Cooper also go to that table.

Emma Biddlecom Sweet goes to the center table, followed by Bessie Seely, Venus Rising, Sylvia Newport, and Agnes Snook.

Katherine Wyckle, Ann Collins, Gert Garner Correll, Mildred Taylor and Fern Huxley Palmer all go to the table SL. All sit except Mildred.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960] (CONT'D)

Good, now this is making a bit more sense. Most of the outfits blend nicely with the people you are sitting with.

The Mound Dweller, sits on the floor where she is.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960] (CONT'D)

So now, maybe we could all introduce ourselves again. And say where we're from?

Fern Huxley Palmer, opens her purse and pulls out a small notepad and a bic pen. She looks at the first table ready to take notes.

Kate Fox sees that all eyes are turning to her. She stands.

KATE FOX [1853]

My name is Katherine Fox. My family calls me Kate and I am from Hydesville in the town of Arcadia and we've already established, it's 1853.

(She sits)

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]

Does anyone here NOT know what Kate Fox did?

A round of "no's" are heard and Kate is extremely pleased.

The Mound Dweller raises her hand, but no one seems to notice except Kate.

KATE FOX [1853]

You all know that I'm a medium, except her?

All look to where Kate is pointing, see nothing, then look back at Kate.

GERTIE GARNER CORRELL [1950]

Weren't you debunked at a trial or something?

KATE FOX [1853]

What??? When??? But what about...?

Kate points at the Mound Dweller.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]

Good, thank you Kate. Let's hear from Antoinette now.

Kate sits in a huff. Mound dweller hangs her head.

Antoinette stands.

ANTOINETTE BROWN BLACKWELL [1853]

Antoinette Brown. I am originally from Henrietta, but am currently engaged as a minister at the Congregationalist Church in South Butler.

(Antoinette waits for those around her to be astounded. Not getting the desired reaction, she sits down again.)

Permelia stands up.

PERMELIA PEASE [1853]  
 I am Permilia Pease, recently married  
 to Josiah Etheridge of Rose. We are  
 of the Standalones and I shouldn't  
 have come. Most of you are  
 blasphemous in one way or another.  
 And the devil inhabits these quarters  
 for sure.

Permilia breaks down and sobs and Antoinette stands to console  
 the girl and help her to sit back down.

MARY ANN WOODWARD [1849]  
 My name is Mary Ann Woodward. I'm  
 from Palmyra and I beg to differ,  
 it's 1849.  
 (She starts to sit  
 and then stands again)  
 Oh, and I've just sent in a patent  
 for the rocking chair fan.

Blank stares except from Emma Biddlecomb Sweet who nods.

MARY ANN WOODWARD [1849] (CONT'D)  
 You rock and it fans you....

Eliza Cooper perks up at this.

ELIZA COOPER [1864]  
 I have one of those. Thee invented  
 that?

MARY ANN WOODWARD [1849]  
 Yes.

ELIZA COOPER [1864]  
 But, I've had it a good ten years  
 and it's 1864. A sad year at that,  
 civil war is tearing apart our country  
 and our Supervisor of Williamson,  
 Benjamin Hance has lost two of his  
 four sons... Oh, and for those who  
 arrived before me, my name is Eliza  
 Cooper.

Eliza sits.

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]  
 (standing)  
 My name is Emma Biddlecom Sweet,  
 from Macedon. I am the cousin and  
 present secretary of Susan B. Anthony.

All of the women at the SR table say "Who?" This is a jaw  
 dropping moment for the other two tables.

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895] (CONT'D)

If this is a ruse or a put on of  
some sort I will be gravely  
disappointed in all of you...

(looking in a sideways  
glance at Ann Collins)

... Ladies.

BESSIE SEELEY [1903]

No, please continue. If we are not  
all in the land of dreams, or  
deceased, you must admit that this  
is all very, very interesting. I  
know of your employer! I never could  
have conceived of graduating from  
law school without Mrs. Anthony's  
example of what a woman could be and  
accomplish. Tell those that have  
come before you.

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]

(takes a breath)

Susan B. Anthony is the President  
of the National American Woman  
Suffrage Association.

ELIZA COOPER [1864]

Woman Suffrage Association? She's  
an abolitionist! I have heard of  
the Anthony family and their work  
with the American Anti-Slavery  
Society...

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]

Yes she was an abolitionist in her  
youth! She was so brave. She  
encountered hostile mobs, armed  
threats and had things thrown at  
her. And just over in Syracuse, her  
image was dragged through the streets!

ELIZA COOPER [1864]

Yes, yes, we heard all about that!

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]

This side of the room is very aware  
of all that she has done for the  
women's rights movement and what she  
did for the anti-slavery movement..  
A pillar she was. Please Emma, go  
on and tell us... what year you are  
in...

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]

1895.

PERMELIA PEASE [1853]

(under her breath)

Submit yourselves therefore to God.  
Resist the devil and he will flee  
from you...

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]

It is 1895. And my cousin Susan has  
graciously assented to come to  
this.... this *barn* and speak with us  
today.

Emma sits. There is a pause.

BESSIE SEELEY [1903]

Well I'm Bessie Seeley, and actually,  
for me, it's 1903. And if you are  
speaking the truth, and Susan B.  
Anthony is coming here, today... I  
don't care what year it is....

KATHERINE WYKLE [1940]

Hallelujah!

BESSIE SEELEY [1903]

Oh, and I'm from Walworth.  
(looks at Venus Rising)  
... It's your turn.

VENUS RISING [1913]

(as she's standing  
regally)

Well... I'm Venus Rising.

She starts to saunter about the stage looking at the women  
and her surroudings.

VENUS RISING [1913] (CONT'D)

I was cast in NYC by Mott Iron Works.  
I was placed at the center of Wolcott  
to be cherished and admired by all.  
Men from miles around come to drink  
from my fountain. And I could care  
less what year it is because I will  
exist forever.

ANN COLLINS [1970]

God, I love you.

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]

(smacks the table)

She's a harlot! No decent person  
likes the damn thing. You were put  
up just last year, 1913, and already  
everybody wants to take you down.

VENUS RISING [1913]

How dare you! Who are you to talk  
to me in this way.

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]

(standing with trouble)

I's Sylvia Newport, girl and Devil  
get behind me if we are in those  
nether regions! It is 1914 and I am  
86 years old. Lived in Sodus my  
whole life, a free person of color!

Sylvia sits down in a humph.

Venus makes her way upstage left toward the bar. There is a  
pause. Silvia and a few other women look at Agnes Snook.  
She looks a bit scared and definitely shy.

AGNES SNOOK [1931]

(quietly)

My name is Agnes Snook...

KATHERINE WYKLE [1940]

(from the SL table,  
but very close to  
Agnes)

Louder please, I can't hear you.

AGNES SNOOK [1931]

(clears her throat)

Agnes, my name is Agnes Snook and  
pardon me, but I'm not so used to  
being in the spot light. I'm a nurse  
at Marion Collegiate Academy. I've  
just been hired. It's 1931...

(she sit's down quickly)

KATHERINE WYKLE [1940]

I'm Katherine Wykle, Mayor of the  
Village of Clyde. First Democrat in  
quite some time I might add. It's  
1940 in Clyde and I will be overjoyed  
if Susan B. Anthony walks through  
that door. I also might add that  
after just 3 years under my  
leadership, our Village is in better  
financial shape today than in the  
last decade! And that's with a  
republican board! Imagine what I  
could do with just a handful of  
Democrats.

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]

A woman mayor, Mm-mm-MM-mm-mmmm.  
That'd be like having a Negro  
President! Imagine that...

GERTIE GARNER CORRELL [1950]

That's ridiculous...

(catching a look from  
Sylvia)

Not that there would be anything wrong with that, but it wouldn't happen for at least 100 years! And since I'm in 1950, that would be 2050, ha! Anyway, I'm Gertie Garner Correll and my husband and I sell real estate in the Sodus area. I'm from Huron. My husband, Ed makes boats.

ANN COLLINS [1970]

I'm Ann Collins Evans. I'm an artist of race horses married to Laramie Evans and we have one child, a beautiful little girl, Larry Ann. It's 1970 in Lyons and mini skirts are in style now for quite some time.

Fern looks up from her note taking and stands with the pad.

She writes down what she herself says.

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974]

I'm Fern Huxley Palmer. I'm from Ontario and in my town no women of a certain age would be caught dead in a miniskirt.

Ann, feathers ruffled, starts to reply but Fern continues.

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974] (CONT'D)

I'm active in the Grange, actually 1st woman elected to the Executive Committee of the NYS Grange. And I'm pretty sure it's 1974.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]

Right. So, I guess I should have gone before Ann and Fern since I'm in 1960 at the moment and mini skirts are just making it to the runway, but no one is actually wearing them!

(All the women at the  
table look, stare,  
or point at Ann  
Collins)

I'm Assemblywoman Mildred Taylor and the first woman to be elected to the Ways and Means committee of the NYS Assembly. So Fern it's good that you and I are sort of running this affair.

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]  
Excuse me? Please remember that I  
took the initiative to engage our  
speaker!

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974]  
(cuts her off, as she  
speaks, she makes  
her way toward center  
stage.)  
Well, it looks like we have one woman  
from almost every town and two from  
Lyons.

KATHERINE WYKLE [1940]  
Of course, the county seat always  
getting more than everybody else,  
better roads, nice courthouse.

ANN COLLINS [1970]  
Well I could always leave... This  
isn't really my type of thing....

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]  
No, let's just wait and see. You  
got an invitation so you must be  
here for some reason.... You did get  
an invitation, right?

Ann stares at her blankly.

Fern continues to look at her notes.

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974]  
Oh, wait. We're missing someone for  
Savannah..

The women look around. The Mound Dweller looks around and  
realizes, it must be her. She raises her hand and looks up  
at Fern.

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974] (CONT'D)  
(Looking at the women)  
There's no one here from Savannah,  
right?

The women shake their heads and the Mound Dweller beats a  
few times on her chest with her palm.

Kate Fox stands up slowly, realizing that no one else can  
see the Mound Dweller and walks towards her.

KATE FOX [1853]  
I think she is...  
(Pointing down)  
I think she's from Savannah.

Various women talk at once, each taking a line that is appropriate to their character, ie "Oh, great." "Here she goes..." "There's no one there!", "She who?", "This is creepy." Etc.

MOUND DWELLER (8000 BCE)

(Speaking rapidly)

I am from the open fields, swamps and mounds, near here. I am of the Mound Dwelling people. We live here with the large beasts of the land. Hear me I am talking. Hear me, hear me...

KATE FOX [1853]

I can feel a sentient being here. She's trying to communicate something to us. This spirit is agitated.

MOUND DWELLER (8000 BCE)

Ag-i-tated?

KATE FOX [1853]

She's old, no, young but an old spirit, here for many thousands of years.

MOUND DWELLER (8000 BCE)

You! You can see me, see me now!

The Mound Dweller grabs ahold of Kate's arm, immediately sending her into a trance.

MOUND DWELLER  
(8000 BCE)

Tell them ~~(CONF'D)~~ I am here. I am from what they are calling Savannah. I'm here, but I don't know why...

KATE FOX [1853]

Tell them that I am here. I am from what they are calling Savannah. I'm here but I don't know why...

Eliza and Agnes get up and look like they are going to leave. Permelia turns white as a ghost and unsteadily trying to rise, lets out a shuddering breath. The two women nearest her console her.

At the same time, Antoinette rushes over to Kate and grabs ahold of her other side.

ANTOINETTE BROWN BLACKWELL [1853]

(turning Kate around,  
she slaps her on the  
face)

Stop this! Stop this now.

Kate blinks and snaps out of the trance. A bit of confusion ensues.

Bessie Seeley stands up.

BESSIE SEELEY [1903]  
Ladies, LADIES! Let's see if we can  
make some sense out of this. We  
must be here for a reason.

ELIZA COOPER [1864]  
And that reason would be?

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]  
Well something to do with women.

All the women say, "OBVIOUSLY!"

A young man, THE BUSBOY, comes out carrying a large tray full of cups and the tea service. All eyes turn to him. He stops. Looks around with his eyes and continues a little slower setting up the tea service.

The women say nothing, they just stare at him, eyes wide, some mouths open.

He retreats awkwardly and exits.

Antoinette goes back to her seat and unsteadily sits down. The women take a beat.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960] (CONT'D)  
Why don't we mingle. Aren't you  
curious. We have women here from,  
from...

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974]  
(looking at her papers)  
From 1974 all the way back to 1849...

The Mound Dweller looks around exasperated, knowing that her time period is way before 1849.

Fern looking at her papers makes her way back to the table.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]  
So, don't be afraid, get up and sit  
with someone out of your own time.

The women look around and Ann stands up.

ANN COLLINS [1970]  
I think I'll join Venus at the bar.

Ann Collins make her way upstage to the bar.

The rest of the women just sit still, some looking at those at their table, others looking at other tables.

Agnes Snook slowly and timidly gets to her feet. All eyes on her, which makes her even more timid. She slowly walks over to the SL table and up to Fern Huxley Palmer.

AGNES SNOOK [1931]

As you remember, I'm a nurse. I would like to know what advances have been made in the medical field. And what has become of the country, are we still in a depression?

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974]

(standing and taking  
her hands)

Let me tell you that we are not in a depression now, although we have gone through a gas crisis for quite some time. A year ago, cars were lined up at the gas stations and fights broke out.

AGNES SNOOK [1931]

Over gasoline?

Fern nods her head.

Table one looks bewildered.

Gert gets up and makes her way to the bar. Mildred crosses to Katherine Wykle. Kate Fox sits crosslegged on the floor near the Mound Dweller, but not facing her. Bessie Seeley walks over to Mary Ann Woodward.

Eliza Cooper walks to the center table and looks from Sylvia to Emma.

ELIZA COOPER [1864]

The war must be over, did the Union stand?

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]

The civil war ended in 1865, just one more year for you. The north won, but there have been wars and rumors of wars since then. It seems like the end times.

KATHERINE WYKLE [1940]

(turns toward that  
table)

In my time, the world is at war. There is a tyrant over in Germany...

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]

Yes, the Kaiser.

KATHERINE WYKLE [1940]  
 No, Adolf Hitler. There is talk  
 that we will be entering in that war  
 just as we did in WWI.

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]  
 We entered into the Great War? When?

ELIZA COOPER [1864]  
 The whole world at war, will the  
 madness never stop.

Katherine, shaking her head, turns back to her table and  
 freezes. Lights down on all the tables but Table 2.

Sylvia sighs loudly.

ELIZA COOPER [1864] (CONT'D)  
 What is troubling thee, my child?

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]  
 Child! Do I look like a child to  
 you?

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]  
 She does seem a bit.... well, a little  
 bit past childhood, you know.

ELIZA COOPER [1864]  
 We are all children of God, my dear.  
 I meant nothing more than that. But  
 I can see that you are upset about  
 something.

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]  
 (mollified)  
 Well... you talking about that there  
 War between the States, and that  
 Supervisor feller losing two of his  
 sons.. It got me thinking about my  
 own young'uns. My husband Hiram and  
 me, we had ten in all...

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]  
 (scandalized)  
 Ten!!! Goodness gracious... My  
 husband and I... we never had a one.  
 But then if we had, I likely never  
 would have become so involved in my  
 cousin Susan B. Anthony's cause of  
 women's rights...

ELIZA COOPER [1864]  
 (ignores Emma)  
 Well, ten is a good round number.  
 Thee was fortunate God so favored  
 thee and thy good man.

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]

What are their names?

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]

Our oldest was Priscilla... she was born in '45... then James, then Charlie. Harriet and Martha, the next two... they didn't last but a few years - gone even before that Civil War ever started, just itty-bitties they was.

Eliza and Emma are both terribly saddened by this, and move to comfort Sylvia.

ELIZA COOPER [1864]

(head slightly bowed)

The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away...

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]

I had four more girls after that... Lillian and Nancy and Caroline and Delia and then little John come along. He was my last, born in 1869.

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]

That must have helped you in your grief.

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]

Hmph... Yes, well, it did.. For a little while. They're almost ALL of them gone now! One after t'other. None of my daughters left to see me through my old age...

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]

What about the boys? Surely some of them must still be living...

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]

Just two. My youngest, John... he's a help, but I always felt guilty 'bout him. He never married, see? Spent his life takin' care of his old ma. Anyway...

(looking at Eliza)

...that's what I got thinkin' 'bout when you was talkin' about that Supervisor man losin' his sons. TWO? I lost eight of my ten!

ELIZA COOPER [1864]

Oh my dear woman, I am sorry... Were any of them lost in the war?

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]

Woman, ain't you been paying attention? I told you, my oldest boy was born in '47. He was just a youngun when that war started. 'Sides, they didn't have any colored servin' roundabout here...

There is a pause.

ELIZA COOPER [1864]

I am sorry. I just want to say I am sorry I didn't understand you were a free woman of color.

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]

Well I'se old enough to have been a slave...

(Sylvia give a sideways glance at Eliza; nodding her head)

That's what you was wanting to do for me. You and your husband was gonna take me to the other side of the lake.

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]

You're husband was a conductor on the Underground Railroad!

Eliza stiffens a bit, worried that someone might overhear.

ELIZA COOPER [1864]

(in a low voice)

Everyone thought that it was my husband who hid the slaves, but it was really me.

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]

Why would he make his wife do that? So you could get tossed in jail when the sheriff appeared on your doorstep?

ELIZA COOPER [1864]

Oh, no. They never would have asked me anything. We women were hardly even seen.

A SPOT LIGHT COMES UP on Kate Fox and the Mound Woman.

All of the other women freeze in the dim light.

The Mound Girl stands up and looks down on Kate for a second. She walks around Kate and sits in front of her. Slowly she reaches out and touches Kate on the arm.

KATE FOX [1853]  
 (Inhales audibly;and  
 seems to focus in on  
 the Mound Dweller)  
 I... You're here. I see you somewhat.  
 Like, like an illusion, but you're  
 definitely right there. You look to  
 be sixteen, seventeen. What is your  
 name?

MOUND DWELLER (8000 BCE)  
 Tuta-napsum... It means 'She has  
 Found Life.' I survived birth, and  
 the first few winters when many die.

KATE FOX [1853]  
 "She has found life." Well you  
 certainly have. When do you come  
 from?

MOUND DWELLER (8000 BCE)  
 (Thinks about this)  
 Long, long ago. I see nothing I  
 know of here. There are no large  
 beasts, many of the women have large,  
 large, legs.  
 (she picks up Kate's  
 skirt)  
 OH! Not large legs, just empty under  
 here.

Kate laughs.

KATE FOX [1853]  
 This is a hoop skirt, we make our  
 waists look smaller and more beautiful  
 like this. A little hard to breath,  
 but...

MOUND DWELLER (8000 BCE)  
 But small waist... That is sign of  
 sickness. In my tribe those most  
 fortunate have big belly. Eat well,  
 have babies.  
 (proudly)  
 I have babies. Strong girls and one  
 boy. They are...  
 (saddened;confused)  
 They are not here... What is here?  
 (agitated again)

KATE FOX [1853]  
 (calming her)  
 It's okay, none of us really knows  
 where we are, or why.  
 (MORE)

KATE FOX [1853] (CONT'D)

When my father brought me here from Hydesville, it was 1853. But here, inside, it's out of time... You kind of look like an indian, but you're wearing fur and what looks like teeth around your neck. The indians today don't look like you.

MOUND DWELLER (8000 BCE)

Out of time... and too warm. Where is the ice?

(she exhales, nothing)

There is no fire here to keep so warm.

KATE FOX [1853]

Ice? It's not winter so now there is no ice.

MOUND DWELLER (8000 BCE)

Beasts would not like that. They have much hair, keep warm that way.

KATE FOX [1853]

Beasts? That's the 2nd time you've mentioned them. What kind of beasts? How large?

MOUND DWELLER (8000 BCE)

Beasts, like this.

(careful to keep one hand on Kate, she mimes parts of a mastodon)

KATE FOX [1853]

That would be what the Bible calls a behemoth! Or a Mastedon! You lived with the Mastedons?

MOUND DWELLER (8000 BCE)

Yes, great beasts. We hunt them. The whole tribe works together to bring down the beast.

(getting lost in thought, agitated)

I am a runner.

KATE FOX [1853]

A runner?

MOUND DWELLER (8000 BCE)

I Run beside beast, scare it, beast fall into pit.

KATE FOX [1853]  
Women helped in the hunt?

MOUND DWELLER (8000 BCE)  
Yes! I am a fast runner! Always  
first to reach pit...  
(Now completely in  
the memory)  
But last hunt, earth crumbles. Tuta-  
napsum falls with beast. Beast lands  
on Tuta-napsum. I.... I...  
(the Mound Dweller  
breaks down realizing  
she is dead)

KATE FOX [1853]  
(silently, sadly)  
I could have told you. That's why I  
am the only one who can see you...

Kate hugs the Mound Dweller and they freeze. The light goes  
out on them and comes up on Table #1...

ANTOINETTE BROWN BLACKWELL [1853]  
There she goes again, talking to  
herself. Now she's babbling on about  
"Macedon."

BESSIE SEELEY [1903]  
I'm Bessie Seeley, if you'll remember.  
I'm from Walworth. If you all come  
from the 1800's, you might be  
interested to know the advances that  
women have made in my time, 1903.

The three women look interested but no one says anything.

BESSIE SEELEY [1903] (CONT'D)  
I'm also only 50 years in your future,  
so I'm not so scary as say, that  
last table over there...

The three women giggle and are put immediately at ease, even  
Permelia.

ANTOINETTE BROWN BLACKWELL [1853]  
I would indeed enjoy knowing a little  
about your time. What are women  
able to do? Just recently the Married  
Woman's Property Act was passed,  
giving Married Women the right to  
own property.

MARY ANN WOODWARD [1849]  
We just received the right to file  
patents in 1845. Hence the rocking  
chair fan!

PERMELIA PEASE [1853]

Why would a woman want to manage property? The Lord gives these hardships to men.

Antoinette looks at Permelia.

ANTOINETTE BROWN BLACKWELL [1853]

What about education? I was able to attend Divinity School, but they would not give me a degree in Theology.

BESSIE SEELEY [1903]

(pause and smiles)

I have just graduated from the University of Syracuse School of Law and am the very first woman to receive a degree in that subject.

PERMELIA PEASE [1853]

Who is going to seek advice from a woman lawyer?

BESSIE SEELEY [1903]

I don't expect many men will, but I plan to use my degree for social injustices. Like child labour laws. Just this year the Women's Trade Union League, a national association, has been organized. We hope that it will unite women from all classes to work toward better, fairer working conditions, a minimum wage, normal working hours...

MARY ANN WOODWARD [1849]

Yes, the hours for women of the working class are atrocious. They are forced to work horrendous hours, all night long, in many cases.

BESSIE SEELEY [1903]

It hasn't changed in my time. Women continue to work under the worst conditions.

PERMELIA PEASE [1853]

They shouldn't be working in the first place, a woman's place is in the home.

The women fall silent. Permelia looks around the ceiling does a real double take at the electric lights and crosses her hands over her chest. This leads Mary Ann and Antoinette to look up. Bessie Seeley follows their gaze.

BESSIE SEELEY [1903]  
 Oh! Oh! And then there's that!  
 The electric light bulb. Nicolai  
 Tesla, Thomas Edison... electricity?

ANTOINETTE BROWN BLACKWELL [1853]  
 Well we know about Benjamin Franklin.  
 But that was just a curiosity.

BESSIE SEELEY [1903]  
 Now many homes and almost every store  
 are illuminated by electricity.  
 Please don't be alarmed, but there  
 have been further inventions... The  
 phonograph records a person's speech  
 on a flattened disc.

MARY ANN WOODWARD [1849]  
 Whatever for?

BESSIE SEELEY [1903]  
 Well Thomas Edison was trying to  
 improve the telephone.

Silence.

BESSIE SEELEY [1903] (CONT'D)  
 (makes a motion  
 bringing something  
 to her mouth and ear)  
 The telephone. Alexander Graham  
 Bell... And just this year, Marie  
 Curie won the Nobel Prize for the  
 discovery of Radium. It will cure  
 cancer! Oh, my ladies. You are  
 shortly going to be quite amazed.

This table freezes and their light is taken out.

Lights come up on the center table, Eliza Cooper, Sylvia  
 Newport, and Emma Biddlecom Sweet.

ELIZA COOPER [1864]  
 (Covering her mouth;  
 laughing)  
 "Washing... Machine?" What do you  
 mean? How does it work?

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]  
 Well I don't have one, probably never  
 will, but I hear that it runs on  
 electricity, you put your clothes in  
 it and just walk right away. And  
 dammit, nobody but the rich folk can  
 even afford a toaster. MMMmmmm I  
 wanna get my hands on one of those.

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]  
 So they even use the electricity for  
 something as mundane as making toast.  
 What just a minute, you are in 1914,  
 correct?

Sylvia nods her head.

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895] (CONT'D)  
 So in just twenty years we advance  
 that much? I wish Women's rights  
 would advance that quickly.

ELIZA COOPER [1864]  
 Emma, tell me more about this cousin  
 of yours. What are the two of you  
 trying to do?

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]  
 (Gratified)  
 Well... Susan B..

ELIZA COOPER [1864]  
 Oh yes, the Anthony daughter who was  
 working on abolition!

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]  
 (annoyed)  
 Yes, she did but that was decades  
 ago. My cousin has long been  
 interested in women's rights -  
 including the same right to vote as  
 men. Even the Negro has the right to  
 vote..

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]  
 Only our menfolk!

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]  
 Yes. The point is, even a people  
 who were enslaved for a century,  
 with little to no education to speak  
 of, have the right to vote. Surely  
 women are just as worthy and capable  
 as a man to cast a ballot for the  
 most suitable persons running for  
 office - whether that office is local  
 or the highest in the land!

ELIZA COOPER [1864]  
 There are women elders among our  
 various congregations. We, Friends,  
 have always taken the view that women  
 have just as much sense as men - if  
 not more!

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]  
 You don't say?! I've met very few  
 Quakers, though there was a Quaker  
 settlement started in Farmington  
 nearly a century ago.

ELIZA COOPER [1864]  
 (As close to annoyed as a Quaker can  
 get) Yes, well, first, we call  
 ourselves FRIENDS, not Quakers... second  
 it is a "MEETING", not a church... .

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]  
 I see... in my time and in my church,  
 women are allowed little opportunity  
 to express our views. I am fortunate  
 enough to have a husband who disagrees  
 with this. In addition to my duties  
 as my cousin Susan B. Anthony's  
 secretary, I've even been able to  
 accompany her on some of her lectures.  
 We feel we are making progress and  
 are hopeful that women's suffrage  
 will be achieved in her lifetime!

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]  
 Don't count on it.

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]  
 Wait - why? That's right... you are  
 nearly twenty years ahead of my time...  
 What do you know?

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]  
 Do you really want me to tell you?

ELIZA COOPER [1864]  
 I wouldn't advise it. If God wanted  
 us to know what's ahead, he would  
 have given us all the gift of  
 foresight.

Lights down on this table.

Laughter is heard from SL. We see Ann Collins, Gert Garner  
 Correll and Venus doubling over in laughter at the bar.

ANN COLLINS [1970]  
 Well Venus, you can really knock  
 them back! I wasn't even sure you  
 could drink... Being a statue and  
 all.

The three women sip Vodka Martinis.

GERTIE GARNER CORRELL [1950]  
 And you certainly know how to make a  
 Vodka Martini, Ann. These are  
 delicious.

ANN COLLINS [1970]  
 If you like these, one of my favorite  
 restaurants on Sodus Bay makes a  
 great Bloody Mary. It's called  
 Connelly's Cove.

Gertie's gravelly laugh again escapes her.

GERTIE GARNER CORRELL [1950]  
 Connelly's Cove?!? We just sold  
 that to the Connelly's. My husband  
 used to build boats there! Building  
 them there up until just last year.

ANN COLLINS [1970]  
 Ed... Is your husband's name Ed?

GERTIE GARNER CORRELL [1950]  
 Yes, Ed Correll. Wait a second,  
 what did you say your name was again?

ANN COLLINS [1970]  
 Ann Collins, from Lyons.

GERTIE GARNER CORRELL [1950]  
 Yeah... And what year are you in?

VENUS RISING [1913]  
 Oh by Jupiter, you two know each  
 other!

ANN COLLINS [1970]  
 I used to do a lot of sailing on the  
 bay with my first husband, so you  
 might have known me as...

GERTIE GARNER CORRELL [1950]  
 Smith! Ann Smith. I always thought  
 it was a fake name.

ANN COLLINS [1970]  
 Yes, well that marriage didn't work  
 out so well. He was fooling around.  
 I should have shot him, but I divorced  
 him.

GERTIE GARNER CORRELL [1950]  
 You know Ed and I have been together  
 quite some time and it hasn't always  
 been an easy ride, but I don't think  
 I could find a reason to ask for  
 divorce. It's just not done.

ANN COLLINS [1970]  
 Well, Gertie, it was 1955, and no,  
 it wasn't common. But it's 1970 for  
 me now and it get's done more and  
 more. Women just don't stick with a  
 man who doesn't treat her right  
 anymore.

Ann holds up her glass and Gert seems to think that line is  
 worth a toast. Venus moves around to the side of the bar.

VENUS RISING [1913]  
 I think life would be boring with  
 only one man adoring you.

Ann and Gert look down at the floor.

GERTIE GARNER CORRELL [1950]  
 Venus you're leaking...

Venus looks down. We see the bottom of the toga is wet.

VENUS RISING [1913]  
 Well, maybe I've been up on that  
 pedestal longer than I thought...

Ann cracks up.

ANN COLLINS [1970]  
 Maybe you drank more than you thought!  
 You're not going to fall apart at  
 the seams and crumble away now are  
 you?

GERTIE GARNER CORRELL [1950]  
 Venus you done ruined that curtain  
 you're wearing. You know Ann, I  
 liked you from the minute you pulled  
 that curtain down. Never use 'em  
 myself.

ANN COLLINS [1970]  
 We have so much in common! My  
 daughter gets mortified when I take  
 my makeup off in front of the window  
 because I take my top off to do it.  
 I say let them look if they want to.

VENUS RISING [1913]  
 Mortified! You should have heard  
 the women in Wolcott at my unveiling!  
 You would have thought that the women  
 had been taught never to look at  
 look at themselves at all. Well at  
 least I can be myself around you  
 two...

(MORE)

VENUS RISING [1913] (CONT'D)  
 (start to take off  
 the toga)

Venus, Ann and Gertie freeze as Katherine Wykle, Mildred Taylor, Agnes Snook and Fern Huxley Palmer come to life.

AGNES SNOOK [1931]  
 She is taking off the toga! They shouldn't even be drinking, it's been against the law for over a decade.

KATHERINE WYKLE [1940]  
 Prohibition is over in my time. Has been since 1933.

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974]  
 Except for those poor people in Williamson, it's still a dry town.

AGNES SNOOK [1931]  
 Well those people in Williamson have some sense. I remember what it was like before prohibition, seeing many family problems because of alcohol. Men who couldn't afford it in the first place, spent their whole weeks salary at the saloons and then came home and beat their wives and children.

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974]  
 And it never really gets any better. I have no idea how we made it to the moon in '69...

Agnes Snook freezes with her tea cup in the air.

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974] (CONT'D)  
 ..You know the migrants have a lot of problems with alcohol.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]  
 The moon, huh?  
 (she chuckles)  
 I served on the Migrant Labor committee in the Assembly and while I was there, I tried to get State Aid for Migrant Labor. I was the only committee member from a rural area. Can you imagine? All the rest were from cities.  
 (looks at Fern)  
 The moon, you say? Damn.  
 (MORE)

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960] (CONT'D)

You know the commies sent that dog  
up in a spaceship in '57. Talk about  
cruelty. Never did come back down.

Agnes blinks and her cup still in mid air.

AGNES SNOOK [1931]

Excuse me... D-D-D-Did you..

KATHERINE WYKLE [1940]

(Cutting off Agnes)

Please can we not talk about something  
so far fetched! I thought that the  
earth would be invaded before we  
made it to outer space ourselves!  
Oh, please, just leave me with Jules  
Verne.

AGNES SNOOK [1931]

Ladies!

(Agnes sets her teacup  
down so forcefully  
and quickly that it  
breaks.)

We flew to the moon???? And you  
just tossed that sentence off?

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974]

Agnes, calm down... But it was a  
rocket.

AGNES SNOOK [1931]

Honestly this must be the greatest  
accomplishment of all times and you  
said it like it was just a DRIVE TO  
NEWARK!!!! Why are you not all  
amazed.

KATHERINE WYKLE [1940]

Well half the United States was fooled  
by a radio broadcast just a couple  
of years ago. Orson Wells, little  
green men. Honestly...

AGNES SNOOK [1931]

You are just all drunk. See! See  
what happens when you bring alcohol  
back! D.T.'s! Hallucinations.

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974]

Possibly we should turn the  
conversation back to the plight of  
the Migrant Farmworker.

Agnes sits slowly down with prim resignation.

KATHERINE WYKLE [1940]  
 (Katherine picks up  
 the cue)

I lived on a farm for the last ten years. We had mostly what we needed, because we grew it ourselves and had no children. But, of course the depression hit many of the other farmers hard.

AGNES SNOOK [1931]  
 (finding solid ground)  
 Yes. The depression. We have just entered into the depression. So it's over then?  
 (looking at Wykle)

KATHERINE WYKLE [1940]  
 1940, not really.  
 (turning to Mildred)

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]  
 1960, yes. The depression really ended and the country got back on it's feet. It was a hell of a time. Hit the minorities hard. Because they were firing the colored people and giving their jobs to whites. Half of all of the colored men were out of work. If it weren't for farm labor they'd of had nothing. It was back to cotton picking..

Silvia Newport comes alive.

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]  
 Even though I live up the Maxwell Community, and always lived free, I am not blind to the fact that slave labor just comes under a different name now...

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]  
 And that's the truth. In 1940 there was a report by Edith E.Lowry Council of Women for Home Missions. "Migrants of the Crops, they starve that we may eat." That tells you what the state of farming wages were for those laboring on farms.

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]  
 Then the plight of the colored folk never improves?

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974]

I'm sorry, not even in my time.  
Although we now have Puerto Ricans  
and Mexicans laboring as migrant  
farm workers. As far as your rights,  
we just went through the worst times.  
Riots and protests. Civil rights  
for blacks are what everyone is  
talking about now. And I'm in 1974,  
but really you want to go back to  
December, 1955.

Looks at Mildred.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]

Sylvia, her name was Rosa Parks.  
She was tired and her feet hurt and  
she refused to give up her seat to a  
white person on the bus.

(Sylvia looks perplexed  
at the word "bus")

Bus.. Like a trolley. What she did  
wasn't legal. They jailed her. For  
not giving her seat to a white person.  
Black people boycotted the buses...  
didn't ride em. Didn't want to have  
anything to do with "separate but  
equal" anymore. After that,  
segregation on public transport was  
outlawed by the Supreme Court.

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]

Good for her!

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974]

And now we are in the midst of a  
major Women's rights movement.

Emma Biddlecom Sweet comes alive.

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]

As are we.

Antoinette comes alive.

ANTOINETTE BROWN BLACKWELL [1853]

Yes, the women. Tell us about Women's  
Rights in your time.

Everyone comes alive.

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974]

Well, we burnt our bras.

MARY ANN WOODWARD  
[1849]

ANN COLLINS [1970]  
That was just silly.

What's a bra?

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974]  
 They... it's... they... it holds  
 up... I mean in... Uh, it's a bust  
 corset.

Snickers from table one.

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974] (CONT'D)  
 But more importantly, the burning of  
 the bra was symbolic of freedom. Of  
 escaping the old mor-es and  
 conventions of a bygone era.

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]  
 Bygone era? You think you were the  
 first? We burned our corsets in  
 1874. I'm sure that whatever a bra  
 is, didn't kill women. The corsets  
 were pulled so tight that women  
 couldn't even breath.

Mary Ann Woodward and Kate look down and look at each other.  
 Some of the women realize that they would be wearing a corset.

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895] (CONT'D)  
 Are you both wearing corsets?

Kate and Mary Ann nod.

ANTOINETTE BROWN BLACKWELL [1853]  
 I'm wearing one too.

KATHERINE WYKLE [1940]  
 "Corsets were a sort of torture  
 chamber imposed on us by men in the  
 wicked hope of making us literally  
 the weaker sex..." I read that once.

ANN COLLINS [1970]  
 Why don't you take them off.

MARY ANN WOODWARD [1849]  
 I'd feel naked...

KATE FOX [1853]  
 (looks down again)  
 We'd probably breath better.

Antoinette is the first to actually unbutton her skirt, lets  
 it drop revealing her corset and knickers. She turns to  
 Eliza for help.

ELIZA COOPER [1864]  
 Oh, I think not...

ANTOINETTE BROWN BLACKWELL [1853]

(to Eliza)

My friend, Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell has long told me about the unhealthy nature of corsets. Please assist me.

Eliza does so. Kate and Mary also drop their skirts and they all start to undo their corsets.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]

(In an aside to  
Katherine Wykle)

Don't tell her, but Antoinette marries Elizabeth's brother.

Both women smile.

The three women are about to drop their corsets in a heap on the floor when the Busboy comes back out.

This time, he carries a microphone. He stops, the exact action ensues as before. He looks around, taking in the corsets. The three women immediately hide them behind their backs and try to cover themselves. The Busboy slowly goes to the podium and sets the wireless mike down. He exits, awkwardly.

The women drop their corsets, pull up their skirts and sit. The Mound Girl walks over to them and squats near them with curiosity.

MARY ANN WOODWARD [1849]

I knew that wouldn't be a good idea.

ANTOINETTE BROWN BLACKWELL [1853]

If my congregation finds out, I could get run out of town.

ANN COLLINS [1970]

Well if there's to be men here, I guess I need to freshen up my lipstick...

Ann rumages through her purse to find some lipstick. In doing so, she places some of the items in her purse on the counter. During the following pages, many of the women dump out their purses to show their contents as they continue to converse.

AGNES SNOOK [1931]

And besides, with all the rest of the clothes you wear, no one will ever know that you're not wearing them.

ANTOINETTE BROWN BLACKWELL [1853]

I would love to write a book about the discriminatory nature of one sex toward the other. I wonder if it also happens in the animal world?

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]

Probably, child, probably. You know the only time they ever let us work outside the house is when the menfolk leave for war or when they don't wanna pay hardly nothin'. Right now, they got lots of us girls in the factories - they can get us fer half what they pay men fer the same work.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]

You're right. During WWII that poster of Rosie the Riveter was propoganda for women to get out and work.

GERTIE GARNER CORRELL [1950]

Yes! Rosie was great!

(She does the pose)

Women even played professional baseball during WWII. The women's teams.

KATE FOX [1853]

You have got to be kidding me!

ANTOINETTE BROWN BLACKWELL [1853]

Wouldn't you know all that, being a medium?

KATE FOX [1853]

I'm not a seer, I don't 'see' the future!

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974]

No, but every one of us here sees into some of your futures. Like I see the downfall of the Nuclear Family.

GERTIE GARNER CORRELL [1950]

And that would be sad but a relief at the same time. What they portray us as, the little housewife, with her two little perfect children.

ANN COLLINS [1970]

But really she was just tied to the stove and the vacuum cleaner. The only outings were to the garden clubs.

GERTIE GARNER CORRELL [1950]

Oh yes, the clubs are fine, you can't  
rock the boat too much serving in  
the garden club.

MARY ANN WOODWARD [1849]

I would be happy to serve in a club.  
Or have a, what did you say? Vack-  
oom cleaner? Sounds incredible!  
What's a vack-oom and how do you  
clean it??

ANN COLLINS [1970]

(looks at her)  
No, vacuum, it cleans your carpets...  
Magically.

Mary Ann looks at her, wide eyed.

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974]

Right now, Women's Lib is on the  
forefront of every woman's mind.

ANN COLLINS [1970]

Speak for yourself. You're only  
four years in my future. I am already  
liberated. I work and have a family.

VENUS RISING [1913]

Did you say you were an artist?  
That doesn't really seem like work  
to me...

ANN COLLINS [1970]

Now just a second, Venus. I have to  
find the commissions, promote myself,  
make appointments to see the owners  
of the horses. It certainly is work.  
How many of you have children and  
work?

Sylvia and the Mound Dweller raise their hands.

SYVIA NEWPORT [1914]

You don't think takin care of your  
husband and your house, and having  
children is work? It's work enough!

Mildred and Katherine Wykle, the two politicians look at  
each other.

KATHERINE WYKLE [1940]

I never had children of my own, my  
husband had one, but he was long  
grown when we married.

(MORE)

KATHERINE WYKLE [1940] (CONT'D)

The children I taught in my early life felt like my own, but I probably wouldn't have gone into politics if I had had a family.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]

Me either. Glad I did though. New York's state flower is the rose because of me. Jackson and Perkins were the largest producers of roses in the world.

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]

Fern, what are your causes in your time. You must have received the right to vote by 1974? You all seem to be able to work?

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974]

Equal rights, labor laws, equal pay! That's what we're fighting for. We can work, but we aren't paid the same as men doing the same job. We want to be treated equally. We want our school age girls to be able to play the same sports as the boys. And Emma, yes, we do have the right to vote.

BESSIE SEELEY [1903]

Yes, the vote? When do we get to vote?

PERMELIA PEASE [1853]

Vote? Why do we need to vote.

Everyone looks at Permelia.

KATHERINE WYKLE [1940]

I highly doubt that I would have been elected without the 19th Amendment. Women were able to vote at the State level in NY in 1917.

ANTOINETTE BROWN BLACKWELL [1853]

1917... And nationally?

AGNES SNOOK [1931]

1920.

KATE FOX [1853]

So I'll get to vote!

Emma Biddlecom Sweet looks at her sadly, Kate doesn't notice. Emma turns to Eliza Cooper and shakes her head.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]

I have voted in every election I could. As a matter of fact I was even a three time delegate for the Republican National Convention where I later became a presidential elector and voted for the Eisenhower/Nixon ticket.

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974]

(snickering)

Well I wouldn't say that too loud now. He should be called Tricky Dick. Got caught with his hand in a burglary, violating campaign laws two years ago and every day you read the papers there is some new scandalous revelation.

ANN COLLINS [1970]

I don't get involved in politics, but are you sure, he and Agnew seem to be very good president and vice president... Very charismatic and Agnew is such a golfer!

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974]

Agnew had to resign! There is talk of impeaching Nixon, but I think he's going to resign too. Word is that Vice president Ford would pardon him anyway.

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]

Wait!! Agnew and Ford, two vice presidents? When did Nixon become president? Did he beat Kennedy?

ANN COLLINS [1970]

No, he beat McGovern....

MILDRED TAYLOR [1960]

(wondering who McGovern  
is)

There has to be some sort of mistake. I can't understand, nor believe what I'm hearing. He won but now they are impeaching him? Yes, politicians bend the truth, but... stealing?

KATHERINE WYKLE [1940]

The men always have their secret handshake, back room dealings in politics, but worthy of impeachment?

FERN HUXLEY PALMER [1974]

I can't imagine that any President in the past, present or future could do anything near what they are accusing Nixon of.

The 17th woman walks through the door, it is Susan B. Anthony.

SUSAN B. ANTHONY

What about a President accused of collusion with a hostile foreign government? Ladies... you were that close to having a woman president... Oh, and Sylvia, we did have a negro president, he did some pretty amazing things in his two terms.

(she smiles. )

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]

Susan? Do you know something of what is going on here. We seem to be from all different years.

SUSAN B. ANTHONY

Right here, in this place it is now 2017, the 21st century.

KATE FOX [1853]

If it is 2017, are we all dead?  
(Looking at the Mound Girl)

Susan looks at the mound woman, who runs up to Susan and hugs her.

SUSAN B. ANTHONY

Tuta-nap-sum... Yes, I see you.

(she looks at the other women)

No, you are simply outside of time, a tea out of time. I sent you all invitations, except one of you...

(She looks at Ann)

Though none but Kate and I can see her, Tuta-nap-sum is here as both a reminder and a lesson. She lived over 10,000 year ago, the last era than men and women lived and worked together as equals. Just think of it... it has been done, it can be done again.

(pause)

I'm also here to remind you of your own history. Because when people forget, history does repeat itself.

(MORE)

SUSAN B. ANTHONY (CONT'D)

Who here can tell me they know the name Lizette Hotchkiss Parshall? Yes, you know who Mr. Hotchkiss is. Yes, You may even know who Parshall is. Yes, the men always seem to live on in history. But the women, fade.

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]

Forgotten? How could anyone forget Lizette?

SUSAN B. ANTHONY

They have. Out of the entire women's movement that hundreds, perhaps thousands were involved with, my name is the only one remembered. So let me remind you: Lisette was from Lyons, a widowed mother of three at just 31. Raised the children alone, traveled the world with them..

EMMA BIDDLECOM SWEET [1895]

It's because of her you spoke in Wayne County. In 1895 she is a major force in the movement.

SUSAN B. ANTHONY

Yes, right up until her death in 1913.

(Emma reacts)

Her name even appears on the Suffrage Memorial Tablet placed in the New York State Capital Building in Albany in 1931.

AGNES SNOOK [1931]

(To herself)

1931... Why have I not heard this?

SUSAN B. ANTHONY

Now, in 2017, it's the one hundredth anniversary of Women gaining the right to vote in the state of New York! And Lisette has long been forgotten. But her work lives on. So, I was the one who sent your invitations. Because I wanted you to meet one another. I saw something in each of you. Every one of you is a strong woman in your own right, you have all accomplished much. I know that, if you could have, every one of you would have been right there beside me..

(MORE)

SUSAN B. ANTHONY (CONT'D)

Like Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Like  
Lucretia Mott, and so many  
others...even Matilda Joselyn Gage.  
Fighting for everyone's right to be  
her own woman. Our fight was about  
more than a woman's right to vote.  
We succeeded in that fight, but there  
are many more battles yet to be won.  
Go back to your own times, the work  
is still not done. Never forget.

All the ladies turn to the audience:

ALL

Never forget.