

## Scene 8: Homewood

*(BETTY and EDITH sit; BETTY reads while EDITH embroiders.)*

BETTY: It says here that the pope has beatified Joan of Arc.

EDITH: Just what we need. More ammunition for the suffragettes. I suppose he'll beatify this Mrs. Pankhurst next.

BETTY: Mother, please. We agreed. No talk about the suffragettes while Con is here.

EDITH: As I recall, it was the two of you who agreed. I said nothing on the matter. And this is my home, after all.

BETTY: If nothing else, you did agree to allow her to convalesce here. I believe keeping the peace will help speed that process along.

EDITH: And she would not need to convalesce were it not for the damned suffragettes. They have filled her head with nonsense, ideas of glorious martyrdom.

*(CONSTANCE enters, unseen by EDITH.)*

BETTY: *(seeing CONSTANCE)* Mother...

EDITH: They have turned my daughter into a criminal.

CONSTANCE: They have not, Mother. It was my choice. And I am not a criminal.

EDITH: *(turning)* Constance. I didn't...

CONSTANCE: *(moving to EDITH)* My darling Mother, you have no idea how hard it was to hide my thoughts and intentions from you, how it pained me to do this thing without your knowledge, your sympathy, or your help.

EDITH: And you have no idea how much it hurts to have your child treat her life so carelessly, to give it over to a pack of zealots interested only in her name.

CONSTANCE: This was my decision alone. I was not pressured or asked. It was my idea to join them in Holloway. And even if they had said no, I would've found a way to

join anyway. Not that it mattered. With the name Lytton, the government won't treat me with anything other than kid gloves. Try as I might, I'll never be like the others.

EDITH: How can you be so careless, Constance? How can you be so reckless with-

CONSTANCE: With the family name, Mother? Is that what has you concerned?

EDITH: How can you be so reckless with yourself, dear? How can you treat yourself so poorly? You have no idea how worried I am, thinking of you in those cells, with your heart. I want suffrage, too, my dear, I want equal rights for women. But I don't think I have it in me to sacrifice my dear child for them.

*(Beat.)*

CONSTANCE: I know you can't forgive me now, Mother, but I hope someday you will. Whatever you feel towards me, whatever I do, I shall always be your most devoted and loving daughter.

*(CONSTANCE turns to leave.)*

EDITH: *(sardonic)* There's my little Joan of Arc.

*(CONSTANCE exits.)*