

"America, Come"

In the summer of 1920, Carrie Chapman Catt and countless other suffragettes marched to Tennessee. They needed 36 states to ratify the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution, and this was their final hope. As president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, Carrie knew what was at stake. She had devoted her entire life to the cause. But a crisis was upon them. Against the backdrop of a war, a pandemic, poverty and lack of access to education, the movement never gave up the fight.

We must continue to honor this legacy.
- Aoife O'Donovan

Music and Lyrics by Aoife O'Donovan
Text inspired by the lives, letters and speeches of Carrie Chapman Catt and Woodrow Wilson

Arranged for orchestra by Tanner Porter Commissioned by the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra

Lyrics

ALL MY FRIENDS

All my friends, all my friends will meet the end someday
So I sing this song for them to guide them on their way
Through the violet highs and the ochre lows
My load feels heavy most days
All my friends

I always knew and so did you that we were going to war
Years have passed I'm trying to remember who it's for

If we reach thirty six, or if the door gets slammed
at least I know we've tried
for all my friends...

Marching on, the Tennessee dawn is lifting oe'r the fields
Steady on, America, you know it's time to heal
If you open your arms you'll feel us, warm and ready for
the change all my friends...

CRISIS

Gather round, girls,
lemme tell you about the crisis that is here
And at the end I almost see
I see our final victory
I know that we don't all believe that it'll be what it'll
be
But a crisis 'tis indeed, like a boulder gath'ring speed

And if we fail to act upon it
It might mean the chance has been lost
and we will have to wait to win

It's 1916, we're talking war and battle cries
Oh women dry your eyes- gotta rise up and fight

You may be troubled and bewildered and stricken with grief

But you can solve it! Fix these knotty problems! Try to breathe.

'Cause if we fail to act upon it
It might mean the chance has been lost
and we will have to wait to win

oh America look up at that north star- one day it'll come down

the time has come to shout aloud
in every city and village and town
the woman's hour has struck
the woman's hour is now

there was a man in West Virginia
and someone asked him what he thought
he said "we've been keeping women down so long it would feel so queer to not"
if someone asked his wife the same question and here is what she'd say "we've been down so long we gotta stay this way"

therein lies the movement of those who say NAY

Oh America look up the star is getting nearer
It's time to shout aloud to everybody who can hear us
The woman's hour has struck the woman's hour is now
The woman's hour is here

WAR MEASURE (Woodrow Wilson)

Carrie - I got your missive and I'm with you girl
I welcome the opportunity to say that I agree:
The time is nigh for your admission to the suffrage

The services of women during this crisis
Must be repaid- lead ya to paradise it's
Over there

Carrie - as for this country I only hope
That the senate will give an answer,
Unmistakably making you able to use your voice
and cast a ballot

If they pass this amendment to our constitution
We are gonna be talking about revolution
It's over there...

We need you in our vision of affairs-
your skills are beyond all compare
You got sympathy and insight-
your shoulders bear the weight of the world

The women of our country fair have beating hearts
and dirt in their hair
We gotta show them that we trust them

as much as we need them now

Do it now!

Carrie- I see you standing on the precipice
I begging of you, keep fighting for true justice
and you'll find the the laws of the land
will soon be in your favor

I am telling you this is a war measure
We can't win the Great War without this treasure

womenkind! womenfolk!
we're not wheels without spokes
let them vote, let them vote
Let them vote!

DAUGHTERS

Here in the dark
Everything that once was becomes a tiny spark
Looking back from the next century
What will they see?

The names of the girls who laid the stones
Names long forgotten- never scribbled in tomes
They were strong and indestructible
Their hearts were full

Now the edifice of women's liberty
It is almost complete
But protected and serene the rich women are still
Honing their malevolent skills
Growing bolder in their treachery
Selling for free

There are those who are willing to vilify
Their sisters 'cross the land- they declare them too quick
to cry
Saying don't trust them with the privilege
Don't even try

Will we ever be ready for a victory?
Or sit and watch the country as it bleeds?

The enemies of our cause they try to stop us
But before the vote is won,
we can't leave the fight to the daughters of our daughters
So we go into the fray, shoulders bare, feel the fire and
liberate

Women in schools and counting houses, in shops and on the
farm they're all around us
They got babies crying at their breasts, sun sinks in the
west

The veins of these women are not filled with milk and water
These are mothers of bold American daughters
They are not afraid. They're lying in wait

Listening for the bugle call to send them in
Suffrage is the only way to end.

The enemies of our cause they try to stop us
But before the vote is won, we can't leave the fighting to
the daughters of our daughters
So we go into the fray, shoulders bare, take the punches to
our faces
Feel the fire In our bones, and liberate

When will we be ready for this victory?
Will we ever be ready for this victory?

AMERICA, COME

What is the democracy for which the world is battling
And for which we offer up our man power, woman power,
money power, our all?

The world does not wait for such as these
nor does liberty pause to heed the complaints of
man or woman.

She does not wait for those

who have a special interest to serve,
nor a selfish reason for depriving other people of freedom.

Holding her torch high
Lady Liberty points onward and upward says "America, come."

(Holding her torch high... America!)

Suffrage is coming -- you know it

Some of you are old I know
Are you willing that those who take your place might blame
you for not keeping pace?
Is there any gain for you, or gain for the nation to delay?
Don't drive us away, don't wait...

What is the democracy for which the world is battling
and for which we offer up our man power, woman power,
money power, our all?