

THE TESTAMENT OF ANN LEE

OR

THE WOMAN CLOTHED BY THE SUN WITH THE MOON UNDER HER FEET

WRITTEN BY

MONA FASTVOLD + BRADY CORBET

EXT. NISKAYUNA - FOREST - DUSK

OVERHEAD ON -

SHAKERS (followers of ANN LEE) donning bonnets and traditional costumes, emerge from a dense thicket performing a mournful choreography like specters doomed to repeat their pattern of steps.

They each whisper a song to one another in the clearing as their paths briefly cross.

SHAKER CHORUS (V.O.)

(singing)

*Having been eye and ear witnesses
To all that our mother has done
From the first time she opened the
gospel Till she sung her final song
It seems only good to answer
The request of our brethren and
sister Make a faithful record of
Mother Ann Lee The Woman Clothed by
the sun.*

A POLYRHYTHMIC pattern formed of various sharp BREATHS, STEPS, SNAPS, AND TAPS emerges and underscores the chorus.

SHAKER CHORUS

(singing in harmony)

*The Woman Clothed by the sun The
Woman Clothed by the sun The Woman
Clothed by the sun The Woman
Clothed by the sun.*

INSERT CARD:

THE TESTAMENT OF ANN LEE

(OR THE WOMAN CLOTHED BY THE SUN WITH THE MOON UNDER HER FEET)

BACK TO:

All of the figures *but one*, disappear again as suddenly as they arrived earlier on-screen, apparitions now camouflaged by the overgrowth.

CLOSE ON -

The lone silhouette left standing on the clearing is that of a woman but her profile is mostly obfuscated by a headscarf.

This mysterious figure is our **NARRATOR**. She parts her lips and clears her throat.

INSERT CARD:

The First Song is of a Girl

1742 - 1774

Manchester, England

CROSS-DISSOLVE
FROM BLACK:

AN 18TH CENTURY MAP OF NORTHERN ENGLAND.

CROSS-DISSOLVE:

EXT. MANCHESTER - DAWN

ULTRA-WIDE ON -

The small market town and surrounding landscape of 18th century Manchester, England is nearly unrecognizable as the urban metropolis it is today.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
As one might expect of a miraculous person, Ann Lee was born on the 29th of February in the year 1736.

In the foreground, HUNTSMEN are in the fields. Beyond them are FISHERMEN in boats on the River Irwell.

In the distance, some newer buildings rise up from the horizon line of a picturesque rural scene which is unabashedly reminiscent of the works of JMW Turner.

EXT. TOAD LANE - SAME

Fields stretch out behind a simple construction of low income ROW HOUSES on Toad Lane.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

The second eldest of eight children, she was the daughter of a blacksmith and his wife residing upon Toad Lane.

Young and determined, **ANN LEE** (age 6) sporting a shock of blonde hair, bursts out of the front door with her brother **WILLIAM LEE** (age 4), in-hand.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Situated beneath the looming shadow of Christ Church, Manchester's utmost feared and favored place of Christian worship.

EXT. CHRIST CHURCH - TOAD LANE - MOMENTS LATER

WE PAN with the siblings as they cross the lengthy shadow of CHRIST CHURCH. **ANN** stops to perform a sign of the cross before carrying on...

ANN LEE (AGE 6)

Hurry now, William, or they mightn't find a space for us.

CLOSE ON -

WILLIAM picks up his pace.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Wherever she went, William followed his sister, adoringly. As William learned to keep pace, Ann and the boy's march were to be in lock-step.

INT. WORKSHOP - TOAD LANE - LATER

WE TRACK across a small workshop located inside of a wooden house. Women and children of all ages are packed in and hard-at-work crafting textiles.

DOLLY IN -

ANN prepares cotton for the looms, pausing at each step to demonstrate for WILLIAM.

ANN LEE (AGE 6)

Again, like this, brother.

WILLIAM clumsily repeats the step she's shown him.

ANN LEE (AGE 6) (CONT'D)
 That's right. You've nearly got it,
 William.

INT. LEE FAMILY HOME - EVENING

ANN's large family of eight have crammed themselves into a small room for supper.

The household is comprised of **ANN'S MOTHER** and **FATHER** who are seated beside ANN and WILLIAM, and their siblings **JAMES**, **DANIEL (A BABY ON MOTHER'S LAP)**, **MARY** and **ANN'S GRANDFATHER**.

ANN'S MOTHER
 (sings)
 Bless this food, dear lord we thank
 you.

The family joins in.

LEE' FAMILY
 A-men

ANGLE ON -

The youngest, **GEORGE**, sits on ANN'S MOTHER's lap.

ANGLE ON -

On the table before them is a meagre, simply cooked meal: small cups of beer, mutton broth and pints of milk pottage. The family additionally break apart a loaf of bread, all sharing in a reverent communal wordlessness.

INT. LEE FAMILY HOME - LATER THAT EVENING

In a static frame reminiscent of Yasujiro Ozu, each member of the family meticulously cleans the kitchen and lays out bedding on the floor for sleep. **ANN'S MOTHER hums a lullaby, while rocking the baby to sleep in her arms. ANN joins in.**

Music note: the lullaby is "Ann Lee's Song/ Beautiful Treasures" in it's simplest form.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. CHRIST CHURCH - TOAD LANE - MORNING

A SERIES OF ANGLES establish that **some time has evidently passed;**

Toad Lane and its surrounding areas have even further developed and the locality is notably busier than before... Manchester is fast becoming a city.

STEADICAM ON -

ANN LEE (age 12) walks beside her brother WILLIAM (age 8) doing their morning routine.

ANN LEE (AGE 12)
Hurry, William.

As ANN and WILLIAM turn onto the MAIN SQUARE which precedes CHRIST CHURCH, they come upon a small crowd of people that has amassed around a slender, cross-eyed but handsome, man preaching outdoors: **GEORGE WHITEFIELD**, an Anglican priest and powerful orator with charismatic appeal.

GEORGE WHITEFIELD
The coldly intellectual Church of England is more concerned with ritual and power than with the plight of the common people who are at mercy of brutal laws. A ten year old child can be sentenced to death! TO DEATH!

Several of those activated by MR. WHITEFIELD's comments 'boo,' in unity.

The growing crowd responds with outpourings of emotion. People cry, sob, shriek, swoon; all seized by a spiritual convulsion.

GEORGE WHITEFIELD references CHRIST CHURCH behind him.

GEORGE WHITEFIELD (CONT'D)
Shame! Shame!

ANN looks on with wonder.

INT. TEXTILE MILL - AFTERNOON

COTTON WORKERS finely weave beautifully printed British muslins, calicoes, and chintzes.

ANGLE ON -

ANN LEE and WILLIAM work on the line alongside other women and children weaving. Their faces are covered to protect themselves from the particles which float everywhere in their vicinity...

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Ann had great light and conviction concerning the sinnfulness and depravity of human nature. She put her hands to work and heart to god, laboring tirelessly without complaint.

ANN LEE (AGE 12)

A place for everything, and everything in its place.

The conditions are wretched, but ANN's reassuring voice maintains a graceful note.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

George Whitefield persistently preached his sermons from the steps of Christ Church. Ann yearned to dedicate herself to serving God with equal fervor.

EXT. CHRIST CHURCH - TOAD LANE - EVENING

As ANN and WILLIAM make their way home at dusk, they come across an even larger crowd amassed around GEORGE WHITEFIELD's outdoor pulpit under the trees.

GEORGE WHITEFIELD

In the face of continuous insults and persecution, I, Reverend George Whitefield, passionately preach the Gospel to arouse the workers to awareness of their rights!

Weary from the day's work, ANN can't help but be drawn into the throng of on-lookers. She's visibly impressed by the electrifying *call and response* that WHITEFIELD is able to generate from his audience.

One **MAN IN THE CROWD** calls out to be heard...

MAN IN CROWD

-what do you call yourselves?!

GEORGE WHITEFIELD

An excellent question, and I was coming to it... Because we conduct our worship by 'rule and method,' some do refer to us as Methodist.

INT. LEE FAMILY HOME - LATER THAT NIGHT

The LEE FAMILY sleep together, limbs sprawled out across one another on the kitchen floor.

CLOSE ON -

ANN is visibly uncomfortable, restless. She looks across the room to see two figures, ANN'S MOTHER and FATHER, having sex, rather indiscreetly.

ANN'S MOTHER
(whispers)
Shh. The children can hear you.

ANN'S FATHER covers his wife's mouth with a large hand as he finishes.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Ann's hatred of 'fleshly
cohabitation' dated from her
earliest youth.

CLOSE ON -

ANN turns her back on her parent's indiscretion, and demonstratively shuts both eyes. **She hums her mothers lullaby to herself. Her voice mixes with an angelic choir.**

NARRATOR (V.O.)
When she was a child her mind was
taken up with the things of God, so
that she saw heavenly visions,
instead of trifling toys.

CROSS-DISSOLVE:

- A few FLASH FRAMES of beautiful abstractions intercut with iconic 17th and 18th Century artworks depicting "heavenly" scenes. The song builds in the mix.

INT. LEE FAMILY HOME - DAWN

ANN glares at her MOTHER and FATHER over breakfast, furious with disgust. The other children appear more or less oblivious to the mounting conflict.

ANN'S MOTHER rebukes her...

ANN'S MOTHER
Ann, what has possessed you this
morning?

ANN LEE (AGE 12)
(murmurs)
You-

ANN'S FATHER replies...

ANN'S FATHER
Speak intelligibly, Ann Lee.

ANN LEE shoots him a look.

ANN LEE (AGE 12)
YOU KNOW.

The tension is now palpable.

ANN'S FATHER
What do "I KNOW?"

ANN LEE (AGE 12)
I see it. I know what you do to
her.

ANN'S FATHER abruptly stands without excusing himself from the table, and exits the room. ANN'S MOTHER starts to cry...

ANN'S MOTHER
(shouts after him)
She doesn't mean anything by it,
sweet heart!

ANN'S MOTHER pleads with her daughter.

ANN'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
When your father returns, please
apologize.

ANN LEE (AGE 12)
No.

ANN'S MOTHER
You must.

ANN LEE (AGE 12)
I mustn't.

ANN'S FATHER returns with a small whip.

ANN'S FATHER
Hands on the table.

ANN'S MOTHER does nothing more to intervene. ANN LEE does as she's told and places both hands on the table.

The other children helplessly look on in horror.

ANN'S FATHER (CONT'D)
Flat on the table.

He lifts the whip in the air and bears it down on ANN. The sound is duller, more banal than one might expect but ANN's knees immediately buckle at the pain.

A few siblings laugh nervously...

ANN'S FATHER continues whipping her on the ground.

ANN'S MOTHER
That's enough now.

CLOSE ON -

ANN's mane of blonde hair fills the frame as she shields herself from her FATHER's violence.

HARD CUT TO:

With the heavy whoosh and crack of every lash a reprisal of FLASH FRAMES of ANN'S heavenly visions appear here again like images in a zoetrope.

HARD CUT TO:

INT. MANCHESTER - JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE - MORNING

HANDHELD ON -

The top of a woman's crown, a mane of blonde hair, rhythmically nodding back and forth to the cacophony of stomping boots and good cheer. The image is disorienting, intoxicating.

VOICES in the room join in, an addictive musical din.

WE CIRCLE the woman to reveal the face of ANN LEE (age 22), but just as we've racked focus, she throws her head back, evading us again. She spins and spins, leading a wordless hymnal; a strange intersection of Gaelic melody, throat singing, and Gregorian chant.

Musical note: this is the beginning of the "Hero Pray song"

ULTRA-WIDE ON -

One hundred persons are present for the event. The furniture has all been pushed to the side of the main room to make space for a makeshift dance floor.

The venue is filled to the brim with men and women of various ages and backgrounds. They all stomp along, in rhythm.

Coming together and breaking apart, each person in the room take turns lending their voice to the melody.

INT. LEE FAMILY HOME - MORNING

All these years later, ANN's entire family are still sharing the floor of the cramped family home...

ANN looks over to her parent's bed.

ANGLE ON -

Her FATHER has aged badly and **her MOTHER is conspicuously absent.**

BACK TO -

ANN stands from the floor and carefully steps over her brothers and sister's sprawling limbs.

ANN's 14-year-old niece, **NANCY**, opens her eyes as ANN creeps out the front.

NANCY
(whispers)
I don't have to be down to the
mills for ages, do I? It's not
light yet.

ANN stops in the door frame.

ANN LEE
Shh. I want to visit my mother's
resting place on the way to the
infirmary. Uncle William will walk
with you to the mill this morning.

NANCY nods.

ANN LEE (CONT'D)
Nancy, if Uncle William's slow to
rise, clutch him by the nose. You
can blame it on Auntie Ann.

NANCY smiles.

EXT. MANCHESTER - INFIRMARY - AFTERNOON

ANN hurries towards the infirmary entrance.

Our NARRATOR cuts in-

NARRATOR (V.O.)
To be free of the mills' weary
labor, Ann, found herself in
service as a cook at the local
infirmary.

INT. MANCHESTER INFIRMARY - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

ANN stirs porridge as a **man screams** relentlessly, off-screen,
in the nearby cafeteria...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
In the scant leisure she possessed,
she yearned to find purpose amidst
the dullness of her lot.

ANN shuts her eyes and seems to whisper herself a prayer.

INT. MANCHESTER INFIRMARY - CORRIDOR - AFTERNOON

An INFIRMARY GUARD blocks ANN from departing for the day.

ANN LEE
Pardon me?

INFIRMARY GUARD
The invalids are having something
of- a collective episode, missus.

ANN LEE
How do you mean?

The INFIRMARY GUARD shrugs.

INFIRMARY GUARD
An *uprising*. I'm not to let anyone
in or out until they have the lot
of them properly restrained.

ANN exhalles...

ANN LEE
My companions are outside waiting
for me.

The INFIRMARY GUARD again shrugs...

EXT. MANCHESTER - MEWS - EVENING

ANN hurries down the cobbled mews.

EXT. MANCHESTER - MEWS - EVENING

Ann rounds a corner to the main road where she spots WILLIAM LEE (18), a grown man now, and her niece, NANCY LEE at the next corner.

WILLIAM

(calls out)

At last! We have been stood here in
the cold from sundown. Make haste,
sister! The assembly mightn't
welcome *dalliers*.

ANN reaches them, out of breath.

ANN LEE

When have you known me to *dally*,
William? There was some gruesome
commotion at the hospital.

WILLIAM

Gruesome? Was someone injured?

ANN nods her head.

ANN LEE

A patient, self-harmed. They barred
faculty from the exits until the
coroner arrived.

ANN blinks a few compassionate tears then subtly adjusts her tone in front of her young niece.

ANN LEE (CONT'D)

Here, quickly- provisions from the
kitchen.

She holds out her basket.

ANN LEE (CONT'D)

Nicked an egg for each of you, and
some bread.

NANCY

Nicked?

ANN LEE

No, dear. I saved them from waste.
Go on.

They dig in and begin peeling their eggs... WILLIAM takes ANN's arm.

WILLIAM

Let's take our supper as we tramp over mountain and moorland?

WE TRACK with them in profile as they walk.

ANN LEE

Nonsense. We'll be there early if we push on.

ANN regards NANCY, and pushes a stray hair behind her ear.

ANN LEE (CONT'D)

No time to wash up, Nancy?

She takes out a handkerchief from her sleeve and rubs off a mix of sweat and soot from NANCY's forehead.

NANCY

No, Auntie.

ANN LEE

That will have to do for now then.

EXT. MANCHESTER - JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE - EVENING

ANN, WILLIAM and NANCY approach the large Townley Estate.

INT. MANCHESTER - JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE - LATER THAT EVENING

ANN, WILLIAM, and NANCY sit in a prayer circle surrounded by other followers, all in deep meditation.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Always seeking a more harmonious consonance between her faith in God and the religious establishment, she attended a series of local revival meetings hosted by Jane and James Wardley.

WE PAN around the room to find a female minister, **JANE WARDLEY**, as she opens her eyes to speak to the group.

JANE WARDLEY

Good evening. I would be remiss if I were first not to thank Mr. John Townley for hosting us all in his beautiful home.

ANGLE ON -

JOHN TOWNLEY, the WARDLEY SOCIETY's main patron and benefactor, nods his head.

BACK TO -

JANE stands...

JANE WARDLEY (CONT'D)

For those new here tonight, perhaps you are unaccustomed to the voice and demeanor of a woman preacher, so James and I thought you might find this passage particularly illuminating. From Jeremiah-

JANE refers to a small bible and clears her throat demonstratively.

JANE WARDLEY (CONT'D)

How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter? For the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, a woman shall compass a man...

JANE stops, and turns her gaze upwards.

JANE WARDLEY (CONT'D)

Christ's spirit first appeared in a man, Jesus, but will eventually reappear, to fulfill the promise of the second coming, in the form of a woman. As we were all created in his likeness, God must be both male and female.

Finally, JANE's gaze lands on ANN.

JANE WARDLEY (CONT'D)

You there- we have not seen you before. May I ask, what's drawn you to us?

ANN stands to introduce herself to the group.

ANN LEE

I am Ann Lee. This is my brother,
William Lee, and my late sister's
daughter, Nancy Lee.

JANE WARDLEY

Yes-?

ANN LEE

We've come because-

JAMES WARDLEY interjects, pushing things along.

JAMES WARDLEY

*For he who confesses, shams are
over and realities have begun; he
has exteriorized his rottenness.
Tell us why you have come? Bare
yourself to us.*

ANN clears her throat then proceeds...

ANN LEE

Well, many times when I am about my
work, I feel my soul overwhelmed
with sorrow and I will work as long
as I can to keep it concealed and
then run to get out of sight lest
someone should pity me with that
pity which God does not.

JANE WARDLEY

Welcome to the Wardley Society,
Ann, William, and Nancy.

JAMES WARDLEY follows suit...

JAMES WARDLEY

Yes, welcome. I am Father James
Wardley and this is my wife, Mother
Jane.

WE PAN down to the ground with ANN as she takes a seat...

JANE WARDLEY

When you confess your sins, you
must labor to remember the time
when and the place where you
committed them. And when you have
confessed them, you will cry to God
to know if your confession is
accepted; and by crying to God
continually you will travel out of
your loss.

A smile turns the corners of ANN's lips upwards.

JAMES WARDLEY

James Whittaker. Please rise, and share with us your unflinching testimony.

A handsome young gentleman; **JAMES WHITTAKER**, stands to give his testimony. He takes a deep breath in and exhales.

JAMES WARDLEY (CONT'D)

Go on, James. Give your grief to God.

JAMES WHITTAKER

(blunt)

Some years ago, I have by chance seen my sister bathing- and, at once, I was filled with a tremor throughout my whole being. My body quaked at the sight of her like a split peach. It is improper because she is a child. It is wrong because she is my own flesh and blood.

DIEGETIC AUDIO FADES OUT, and our NARRATOR cuts in-

NARRATOR (V.O.)

The Wardley's had been devout quakers dedicated to the belief that true religion comes from inward experience-

JAMES continues to shake and cry as he delivers his confession.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

-but had left to form their own, more dynamic, religious community known as the Shaking Quakers, or *Shakers*, as the locals referred to them, because of the shaking and dancing that characterized their worship.

ANN turns her head curiously at JAMES WHITTAKER as he gesticulates, shakes, and begs for forgiveness.

His cries turn into a rhythmical chant, that the rest of the groups join in, the chant falls in and out over the next scenes.

MUSICAL NOTE; IMPROVISED SONG BY MRS. TOWNLEY.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Ann Lee had at last discovered a community that espoused her beliefs, and she, in turn, embraced their principles wholeheartedly.

HARD CUT TO:

INT. MANCHESTER - JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE - EVENING

MUSICAL NOTE: HERO PRAYER.

ANN, wearing a fresh costume **at a new time of day for a different gathering**, shakes herself, unabated.

CLOSE ON -

ANN turns. The camera pans, revealing Abraham. She steps toward him, entering his frame.

ANGLE ON -

ABRAHAM STANDERIN, ANN's soon-to-be husband, gazes at her, lustful.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

There, she caught the eye of a man of the same faith, Abraham, a blacksmith like her father.

INT. MANCHESTER - JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE - EVENING

VARIOUS ANGLES ON -

JANE, JAMES, NANCY, WILLIAM and JAMES WHITTAKER as they dance and pray.

ANN dances with NANCY and JANE. JANE takes her arm and leads her toward the library.

INT. STEEL MILL - MORNING

SLOW-MOTION ON -

Sparks fly behind ABRAHAM and **TWO YOUNG FARRIERS** as he hammers a section of wrought iron for a baluster on an anvil.

BACK TO:

INT. MANCHESTER - JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE - EVENING

The camera spins and spins around ANN. Each redundant gesture conjures all of the events that have led her to this moment; an eternal golden braid.

(NOTE: Editorial stitch-by-turn and a pass.)

INT. MANCHESTER - JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE - EVENING

JAMES WHITAKER enters with a group of 4, shaking the snow off their coats.

INT. MANCHESTER - JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE - EVENING

NARRATOR (V.O.)

She later married Abraham in 1762. Mary Partington, a devoted believer and Ann's closest confidante in divine service bore witness to the marriage ceremony but would ultimately prove more true to Ann than Abraham's solemn vow.

MARY PARTINGTON enters the frame and lovingly takes ANN by the arm to join her in communal dancing.

INT. ABRAHAM'S QUARTERS - EVENING

ABRAHAM watches his wife undress as he parts his lips to tell her a story. He gazes at her pensively before pulling a small book from his breast pocket.

ABRAHAM

I seized a copy of this puzzling, frequently concerning text off the person of my new apprentice.

He rests it on the bedside table.

ABRAHAM (CONT'D)

It's filled with terrible images but I find it has some philosophical value as it's a direct and unrelenting attack on the traditional clergy that is atypical of literature of this kind.

ANN LEE
Who is its scribe?

ABRAHAM
Anonymous, as far as I know.

ANN LEE
What is it?

ABRAHAM
From what I can tell, it's the story of a young girl, Thérèse, facing a religious institution rife with corruption... In the only segment I have read, Thérèse is hidden in a cupboard as she watches a fellow novice, Eradice, instructed in the ways of prayer by Father Dirrag, her confessor.

ANN LEE
Why is Thérèse in a cupboard?

ABRAHAM
It is irrelevant. May I continue?

ANN nods.

ABRAHAM (CONT'D)
He explains that Eradice has been chosen by God to experience his full presence. He goes on to request that she lift her skirts. He then applies 'the rope of St. Francis' to the nun causing her to feel all the ecstasy of an exalted religious experience.

ABRAHAM opens the copy of *Thérèse Philosophe* to an earmarked page and spins it around for his young wife to observe.

Dressed in her nightgown, ANN LEE approaches the table to get a better look at the underground publication. She furrows her brow at the sight of it.

ANN LEE
You discovered this on the person of your new apprentice?

ABRAHAM
That is correct.

ANN LEE
(concerned)
He seemed to me such a fine boy-

ABRAHAM shrugs...

ABRAHAM
Oh, he may be! He is a competent farrier but I know nothing else of him. He swears, however, not to have cracked its binding. Another friend his own age had apparently passed it along to him for safekeeping.

CLOSE ON -

The graphic engraving featured on the earmarked page shows Father Dirrag **whipping the bare buttocks of his young pupil** as Thérèse looks on in awe.

INT. ABRAHAM'S QUARTERS - LATER

CLOSE ON -

ABRAHAM whips ANN's bottom with a small broom.

ABRAHAM
(whispers)
And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth. - Revelation 12:1

ANGLE ON -

ANN turns her head, seemingly unfazed. She casually shuts her eyes.

MEDIUM ON -

ABRAHAM, is red in the face with lust.

ABRAHAM (CONT'D)
Take me in your mouth.

The timing of ANN's response is comically fast.

ANN LEE

No...

ABRAHAM, shifts his focus down again to her buttocks.

ABRAHAM

Open your legs.

ANN turns now to her back and complies. ABRAHAM moves quickly to finish between her legs.

CLOSE ON -

ANN's expression is blank. Hold on this...

NARRATOR (V.O.)

She went on to give birth to four children but all died before turning one.

ABRAHAM finishes inside of ANN and rolls off of her...

DANCING MONTAGE - JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE AND OTHER VARIOUS LOCATIONS - VARIOUS TIMES OF DAY

WE INTERCUT between major moments of the decade, and ANN LEE dancing in ASSORTED OUTFITS across the years at JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE in Manchester.

Musical note: Beautiful Treasure

INT. MANCHESTER - JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE - DAY

ANN LEE is dancing and dancing.

INT. ABRAHAM'S QUARTER'S - NIGHT

- ABRAHAM cuts the umbilical cord from a NEWBORN BABY. MARY and NANCY are by her side.

INT. MANCHESTER - JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE - DAY

ANN LEE is spinning and spinning.

ANN LEE

*O the beautiful treasures laid up
for the wise,
How precious the value, how
glorious the prize.*

MARY, NANCY and JANE join in the dance.

INT. ABRAHAM'S QUARTER'S - EVENING

- ANN lifts the child to her breast some months later but the child won't take the nipple in his mouth. She slaps the child's face once, then twice...

INT. MANCHESTER - JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE - DAY

ANN LEE shaking and shaking.

INT. ABRAHAM'S QUARTER'S - NIGHT

ABRAHAM again whips ANN's behind, a strange ritual.

INT. ABRAHAM'S QUARTER'S - NIGHT

ANN screams, birthing a SECOND CHILD. MARY PARTINGTON takes ANN's hand as she endures final stages of labor.

MARY PARTINGTON
(calls out)
Fetch us more water and rags,
Nancy; we must stop the bleeding,
at once.

NANCY stands by the door looking on at ANN, shocked and frozen in her place.

NANCY
Yes, Mary.

INT. MANCHESTER - JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE - DAY

ANN LEE dancing and dancing. NANCY and MARY is by her side.

ANN LEE
(sings)
*O the beautiful treasures laid up
for the wise,
How precious the value, how
glorious the prize.*

INT. ABRAHAM'S QUARTER'S - NIGHT

The SECOND CHILD is blue, stillborn. An OLDER MIDWIFE wraps the child in cloth.

INT. MANCHESTER - JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE - DAY

ANN LEE is dancing seven months pregnant with a fourth child.

ANN LEE
(sings)
*Far brighter than diamonds on
princes' brow.
And richer than royalty can bestow.*

INT. ABRAHAM'S QUARTER'S - NIGHT

ABRAHAM again whips ANN's behind.

INT. ABRAHAM'S QUARTER'S - DAY

ANN screams, birthing a third child. Finished, she looks relieved and joyous. MARY PARTINGTON places the infant girl in her arms... The two women weep with joy.

ANN LEE
(to Abraham)
Abraham, it's a girl. Isn't she wonderful?

INT. MANCHESTER - JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE - DAY

ANN LEE is shaking and shaking.

INT. ABRAHAM'S QUARTER'S - DAY

Snow falls outside the window. ANN's infant girl coughs in her mother's arms.

INT. ABRAHAM'S QUARTER'S - DAY

ANN looks at the dead child in bed next to her.

ABRAHAM
I have to take her now, Ann.

ANN LEE
No!

INT. MANCHESTER - JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE

ANN LEE is dancing and dancing. MARY PARTINGTON and NANCY LEE move in rhythm beside her.

INT. ABRAHAM'S QUARTER'S - DAY

ANN births a FOURTH CHILD and MARY PARTINGTON is present to assist her friend once more.

Though we are mercifully spared an image of its inevitable fate. MARY's expression wordlessly communicates despair.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
After the death of her last child
she was admitted to the infirmary
where she'd once worked as a cook.

EXT. MANCHESTER INFIRMARY - ENTRANCE HALL - EVENING

ULTRA SLOW-MOTION -

Finally, a brief sequence shows ABRAHAM admitting ANN to the local infirmary.

INT. MANCHESTER INFIRMARY - ENTRANCE HALL - EVENING

ANN looks across the entrance hall to see the INFIRMARY GUARD who had once stopped her in the hall as a young woman...

She squints at him which catches his attention but he doesn't seem to recognize her.

EXT. MANCHESTER INFIRMARY - DAY

Snowflakes fall, and the wind picks up as JANE WARDLEY makes her way toward the infirmary; she pulls her shawl tighter around her shoulders.

INT. MANCHESTER INFIRMARY - ANN'S ROOM - DAY

ANN lies in a straw bed, carved out and traumatized; a shell of her former self.

A knock comes at the door... After a moment, JANE WARDLEY enters the room.

ANN is hardly able to look over her own shoulder to JANE but speaks to her as if she's long been expecting her arrival.

ANN LEE

Mother Jane, sometimes I will go to bed and sleep, but in the morning I cannot feel that sense of the Word of God which I did before I slept.

JANE steps into bed with ANN and pulls her into her arms holding her in her lap as if she were a small child.

ANN LEE (CONT'D)

This brings me great tribulation. Then I cry to God, and I promise him, that if he would give me the same sense that I had before I slept, I would labor all night again. This I do night after night.

JANE WARDLEY

I see.

ANN LEE

Our unbearable tragedies are God's judgment upon me. I sinned by permitting my father and Abraham to persuade me, to forsake my true feelings and marry.

JANE WARDLEY

Marriage, Ann, is not a sin.

ANN LEE

I have fallen under heavy trials and tribulations on account of lodging with my husband. It is sexual sin that has caused us catastrophes. I know it.

JANE WARDLEY

James and I lodge together but we do not touch each other any more than two babes. You may return and do likewise... I will have James speak with Abraham.

Beat.

JANE WARDLEY (CONT'D)
 Come back to us, Dear Ann. You are
 not only a pillar of our community,
 but a leader, as well.

ANN's expression lightens and slowly her body begins to
 shakes in relief.

The NARRATOR cuts in-

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 With nothing left to lose, Ann
 boldly converted her suffering into
 evangelism. Over the course of
 three days, she led the Shakers in
 fervent worship.

INT. MANCHESTER - JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE - DAWN

The Wardley Society COMMUNITY MEMBERS lift ANN LEE up on
 their shoulders, exalted, once again.

Musical note; I never did believe.

JOHN TOWNLEY begins to sing.

JOHN TOWNLEY
 (sings)
*I never did believe that I ever
 could be saved without giving all
 to God?*

WILLIAM joins in, the crowd lifts him as his sings

WILLIAM/JAMES
 (sings)
*I never did believe that I ever
 could be saved without giving all
 to God?*

ANN LEE
 (sings)
*I never did believe that I ever
 could be saved without giving all
 to God?*

ANN and the others join in on the next verse-

ALL
*So I freely give the whole of my
 body and my soul to the Lord God A-
 men.*

EXT. MANCHESTER - JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE - SAME

SFX: The song from inside carries over the duration of the sequence.

WIDE ON -

Outside JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE, the street is quiet; all are observing the Christian Sabbath.

NEW ANGLE ON -

TOWN CONSTABLES on horseback gallop down an empty street. They stop outside of the TOWNHOUSE and dismount their horses.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

After three days having received numerous complaints, the local municipality had quite enough of the noisemaking.

NEW ANGLE ON -

The men each ready themselves for violence.

CONSTABLE

Constables! When Chief Magistrate Tideswell does arrive on-site, he may remain outdoors. This shouldn't be a minute...

HANDHELD ON -

CLOSE BEHIND the CONSTABLE's head and shoulders, we follow as he enters the house and ascends the stairs to a second floor landing, cautiously.

The sound of stomping and singing increases steadily as he nears the main room.

He stops at a double door waiting for his cohorts to catch up to his place.

CONSTABLE (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Here it is-

A **YOUNG CONSTABLE** comes up behind his superior, stammering.

YOUNG CONSTABLE

What to do if they resist,
Constable?

CONSTABLE
 -break their face.

AFTER AN EXTENDED, TENSE PAUSE, the CONSTABLES all burst into the room in a baleful flex of power.

Everyone starts shouting but ANN doesn't flinch.

ANN LEE
 (shouts to be heard)
 Welcome!

She faces the men and once again, having not missed a beat, begins to sing.

ANN LEE (CONT'D)
 (sings)
*I never did believe that I ever
 could be saved without giving all
 to God*

The crowd around her part like the seas to make way for the CONSTABLES.

ANN LEE (CONT'D)
*I never did believe that I ever
 could be saved without giving all
 to God?*

Terribly provoked, the CONSTABLES quickly identify ANN and violently grab her by the hair...

JAMES WHITTAKER attempts to intervene.

JAMES WHITTAKER
 Stop, at once!

The CONSTABLE hits JAMES WHITTAKER across the chin.

They pull ANN across the room then more brutally down a flight of stairs.

MARY PARTINGTON
 Ann! What are you doing?! Stop!
 You'll break her neck!

ANN CONTINUES TO SING THROUGH THE HORRIFIC DISRUPTION.

ANN LEE
 (sings)
*I never did believe that I ever
 could be saved without giving all
 to God?*

They force her outside...

EXT. MANCHESTER - JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A COMMUNITY MEMBER shouts at the CONSTABLES from off-camera.

WILLIAM
What's my sister done to deserve
that, Constable!?

CONSTABLE
(shouts back)
Disturbing the peace, and on the
Sabbath, no less!

CLOSE ON -

WILLIAM elbows Ann's husband, ABRAHAM.

WILLIAM
Do something!

ABRAHAM shrugs, uncertain of how to intervene. He shrinks back into the crowd.

INT. MANCHESTER - LANCASHIRE COUNTY HOUSE OF CORRECTIONS - NIGHT

JAILERS forcibly push ANN LEE into a cell. The cage is filled to the brim with women young and old, some very sick.

ANN LEE slams her fists against the bars. She continues on singing...

ANN LEE
(sings)
*I never did believe that I ever
could be saved without giving all
to God?*

She leans her head against the soiled wall. Dried blood covers her face and throat.

ANN LEE (CONT'D)
(sings)
So I freely give the whole of my
body and my soul to the Lord God A-
men.

The other INMATES pay her little mind.

EXT. MANCHESTER ROAD - LANCASHIRE COUNTY HOUSE OF CORRECTIONS
- EVENING

As was customary at the time, inmates solicit money and food by lowering jury-rigged bags from their cells down to passers-by on the road.

MALE INMATE (O.S.)
*Keep in exercise the principle of
mercy, and be ready to forgive your
sisters and brothers on the first
intimations of repentance!*

EXT. MANCHESTER - LANCASHIRE COUNTY HOUSE OF CORRECTIONS -
ANN'S CELL - SAME

CLOSE ON -

Inside, ANN's line of sight rakes her cell's grated window to view her groveling fellow inmates begging for provisions.

FEMALE INMATE
Please, sir, I am aching of
hungriness! Anything at all you can
spare us!

She regards them all disdainfully before turning her attention to her own withered physique; her stomach has concaved at the ribcage.

She then turns her attention to the underside of her right arm. She analyzes it closely then compares it to her left...

CLOSE ON -

ANN's developed a downy hair on the normally "hairless" parts of her underarms, a symptom of severe malnutrition called Lanugo.

ANN LEE
(sings)
*I Hunger and Thirst. I Hunger and
Thirst*

EXT. MANCHESTER ROAD - LANCASHIRE COUNTY HOUSE OF CORRECTIONS
- NIGHT

WILLIAM LEE, JANE & JAMES WARDLEY, JOHN TOWNLEY, NANCY, MARY, JAMES WHITTAKER and several other MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY (recognizable from earlier scenes in JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE), have all gathered outside of ANN's venue of imprisonment.

WILLIAM
 (calls out)
 Sister! We have brought provisions
 for you!

No response.

JAMES WHITTAKER
 We're all here! Can you hear my
 voice, sister?!

Finally, ANN's voice calls back to them.

ANN LEE (O.S.)
 (calls back)
 Is Abraham among you?

WILLIAM grimaces at JANE & JAMES WARDLEY... WILLIAM chooses his words carefully.

WILLIAM
 (calls out)
 Circumstances would not permit him
 to depart his dutiful obligations.

ANN LEE (O.S.)
 (calls back)
 Alas, leave me now to pray-

MARY PARTINGTON
 (calls out)
 -but we've bread and wine, Ann!

ANN LEE (O.S.)
 (sharp)
 Leave me now, please.

WILLIAM exhales demonstratively.

WILLIAM
 (to the group)
 All right, everyone. You heard her.

INT. MANCHESTER - LANCASHIRE COUNTY HOUSE OF CORRECTIONS -
ANN'S CELL - DAWN

From the small grated window above her, a single shaft of daylight shines down onto ANN who stands at the center of the room, exalted.

Musical note: I Hunger and Thirst.

ANN LEE
 (sings)
*I Hunger and Thirst. I Hunger and
 Thirst*

Some time has evidently passed because the light reveals her body to be even more frail and emaciated than in the previous sequence.

Her long blonde hair hangs over her face as she performs a series of mysterious slow movements. Her skin is now covered in soft thin hair.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 This is what happened to Ann Lee while she was in prison. In fastings, tears, and incessant cries to God, Ann bore such deep suffering that her earthly tabernacle was reduced until she was as weak as an infant.

She stops, and stretches her feet below her on the floor for relief...

CLOSE ON -

Upon reaching a full pointe, her toes hover an inch above the ground.

ANN LEE
 (sings)
*I Hunger and Thirst. I Hunger and
 Thirst*

INT. MANCHESTER - LANCASHIRE COUNTY HOUSE OF CORRECTIONS -
ANN'S CELL - DAWN

ANN is possessed by an unseen force... The image evokes something like an exorcism. She strokes her arms over and over until the hair covering her body begins to fall off.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

She had been seeking God for nine long years but once more she cried mightily to God for help.

ANN LEE

(sobs)

God, help me.

CLOSE ON -

A DARK-HAIRED WOMAN she looks at ANN and screams and sings.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

This time her prayers were answered by a blinding apparition. The most astonishing visions and divine manifestations were presented to her in so clear and striking a manner, that the whole spiritual world seemed displayed before her.

ANN lays collapsed on the dirt floor. She begins to sing.

ANN LEE

(sings)

*I Hunger and Thirst
I hunger and thirst
I hunger and thirst after true
righteousness
I hunger and thirst
I hunger and thirst
In what I've obtained, in what I've
obtained my soul cannot rest
I hunger and thirst
I hunger and thirst
An ocean I see without bottom or
shore. O feed me I'm hungry, enrich
me I'm poor.
I will cry unto God
I never will cease.
Till my soul's filled with love,
love, perfect love and sweet peace
I hunger and thirst
I hunger and thirst
After true righteousness
I hunger and thirst
I hunger and thirst*

CUT TO:

- A reprisal of the FLASH FRAMES from ANN's youth; beautiful abstractions intercut with iconic 17th and 18th Century artworks depicting "heavenly" scenes.

CUT TO:

- An extremely brief live-action recreation of 'Fall and Expulsion from Garden of Eden'

BACK TO:

INT. MANCHESTER - LANCASHIRE COUNTY HOUSE OF CORRECTIONS - ANN'S CELL - DAWN

NOTE: Visual effects are achieved by techniques of stop-motion animation mixed with live-action picture.

ANN's toes are now visibly supported by a glowing orb; a half-moon.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet-

ANN dons a crown of 12 stars.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

-and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.

EXT. MANCHESTER - HOUSE OF CORRECTION - DAWN

WILLIAM LEE and JAMES WHITTAKER make their way to the front gate.

INT. MANCHESTER - LANCASHIRE COUNTY HOUSE OF CORRECTIONS - CORRIDOR - MORNING

STEADICAM ON -

The JAILER escorts WILLIAM LEE and JAMES WHITTAKER down a long corridor to ANN's cell.

As they turn the corner, WILLIAM sees his sister lying unconscious on the floor.

WILLIAM

What have you done to her?!

JAILER

Ey, watch your tongue. She's received the same treatment as the rest of them. No better and no worse.

The JAILER unlocks the cell door and pushes it open for WILLIAM to rush to his sister's aid. He kneels next to her and scoops up her head.

WILLIAM

You're warm. You're breathing. Wake up, sister. Hear my voice. It's me, William.

ANN opens her eyes to him, and smiles.

JAMES bends to her and hands her a bottle of milk.

JAMES WHITTAKER

Here, drink this.

She reaches up strokes WILLIAM'S long hair.

ANN LEE

You must cut your locks brother. I need to see the Wardleys.
Forthwith.

The two men help ANN to her feet and steady her between them.

INT. MANCHESTER - JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

ANN, MARY, JANE & JAMES WARDLEY, JOHN TOWNLEY, and WILLIAM have gathered at JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE for a private meeting...

ANN's physical frailty is counter-balanced by a manic optimism.

ANN LEE

I was covered in a downy hair which I shed as I was reborn from the most astonishing visions and divine manifestations that were presented to me in so clear and striking a manner, that the whole spiritual world seemed displayed before me. In that soul-splitting moment, I felt the cause of all suffering, the mystery of all evil, revealed.

JAMES WARDLEY
What did you see?

ANN LEE
First I saw Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. I watched them defy God and commit the forbidden carnal act. Then I witnessed their expulsion from the garden by an enraged Deity. All at once I understood that there is one single cause for humanity's separation from God: fornication.

Footsteps coming up the stairs cause the four of them to pause with nervousness, when suddenly, Ann's husband, ABRAHAM, steps through the door...

ANN's lip quivers at the sight of him.

ABRAHAM
Ann.

ABRAHAM blinks a tear at her.

ABRAHAM (CONT'D)
I am contrite for coming only now. The mill's recently received a hefty contract for lattice fences downtown, you see. We've been inundated with iron and steel from the forge-

WILLIAM LEE exhales, resentful.

JANE cuts in-

JANE WARDLEY
Ann Lee was relaying to us that her earlier suspicions have been confirmed. She's discovered there is only one way for humanity to recover from its lost state.

JAMES abruptly clears his throat. Everyone, perhaps ANN most of all, waits to hear JAMES' personal response to ANN's revelation.

JAMES WARDLEY
My understanding is that to enter a new age of spirituality, men and women must abstain from all lustful gratification of the flesh?
(MORE)

JAMES WARDLEY (CONT'D)
 Self-denial by celibacy would be
 the first essential for those who
 want to gain the spiritual strength
 to reach God. Jane and I are in
 agreement with you, *Mother Ann.*

ABRAHAM squints, confused.

ABRAHAM
 Mother?

WILLIAM confirms

WILLIAM
 I love my Mother. She is my sister;
 yet she has become my Mother, and
 the Lord God made me to love her.

WILLIAM steps forward and kneels before his sister to kiss
 her hand.

ANN LEE
 During my period of incarceration,
 a sense of release swept over me
 and my whole being was suffused
 with inner harmony and peace. I
 feel that all my sins are now
 forgiven. This is the vision I
 shall carry in my heart the rest of
 my days.

JAMES WARDLEY
 Brother Abraham, come and kneel
 before our Mother Ann.

ABRAHAM approaches his wife with some ambivalence, but
 chooses to kneel before her.

CROSS-DISSOLVE:

INT. WILLIAM'S BEDROOM - MORNING

WILLIAM lays nude, tangled in the arms of young MAN.

After a beat, William sits up and moves to a small desk.

A mirror is propped up against the wall. He regards his image
 in the mirror, then his lover.

WILLIAM
 We will have to say our farewells
 tonight. You have been a great
 friend to me Jacob.

He reaches for a pair of scissors and begins to cut his hair close to the skull.

Musical note: Fighting song /I never did believe.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
(sings quietly)
*So I Freely Give the whole
My Body and my Soul
To The Lord, God, A-men*

INT. CHRIST CHURCH - MORNING

The side doors burst open and JAMES and JANE WARDLEY's followers invade Christ Church's morning mass...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And so they set forth with vigor to enlighten all of Manchester that she, Ann, Christ's second coming, was among them and here to liberate the community from the moral failings and oppressive doctrines of the Church of England.

The MEN have all cut their hair short. They stand in contrast to the long ponytails and wigs of the period.

ANN leads the charge, closely followed by MARY PARTINGTON, NANCY LEE, JAMES WHITTAKER, and WILLIAM.

The good **BURGHERS** of the attending congregation are all horrified. Women shriek, men shout!

The **CLERGYMEN** look on, helplessly.

CLERGYMAN
What is this?!

ANN ascends the steps and takes the empty pulpit.

ANN LEE
It is not I that speak; it is Christ who dwells in me-

The more they protest, the more extravagant her rhetoric becomes.

ANN LEE (CONT'D)
I have been in fine valleys with Christ as a lover. I am married to the Lord Jesus Christ!
(MORE)

ANN LEE (CONT'D)

He is my head and my husband, and I
have no other! I have walked, hand
and hand, with him in heaven.

The Shakers, shake and make noise.

CLERGYMAN

Blasphemy! Get down from there this
very instant!

BURGHERS

Blasphemy! Blasphemy!

EXT. CHRIST CHURCH - TOAD LANE - MOMENTS LATER

THREE CONSTABLES brutally push ANN to the ground and kneel on
her back.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

A **JAILED** escorts ANN, along with three other prisoners, to
court to appear before a judge.

They pass by women tipping potatoes out of sacks which sends
the spuds bouncing along the ground.

JAILED

Ey! Stop that.

Men roll whole wheels of cheese down the streets. The
CONSTABLE helplessly looks on.

INT. TAVERN - LATER

A local tavern has been modified to serve as a provisional
courtroom for the hearing.

Civil unrest is on full display here. The space is rowdy and
packed to the brim with SHAKERS. Among them we recognize;
MARY, NANCY, WILLIAM, TOWNLEY, JAMES WHITTAKER AND THE
WARDLEY'S all quarreling with LOCAL VILLAGERS over ANN's
arrest.

Tables and seating have been rearranged in a circle around
two chairs that have been placed in the middle of the sphere
to face each other.

At the center of the sphere stands a commanding figure, the
Honorable **CHIEF MAGISTRATE TIDESWELL**.

TIDESWELL suddenly hits his walking stick down on the table next to him, and shouts to be heard.

CHIEF MAGISTRATE TIDESWELL
(shouts)
Quiet down! Quiet down, at once!
Peace!

The crowd complies...

TIDESWELL regards his ledger.

CHIEF MAGISTRATE TIDESWELL (CONT'D)
Come forth, Ann Lee.

WE PAN with the JAILER as he takes ANN by her arm and moves her to one of the two chairs at the center of the room.

CHIEF MAGISTRATE TIDESWELL (CONT'D)
What is the woman charged with-?

CONSTABLE
The charge is *assault* against a Ms.
Mary Ashley.

ANN's followers shout in disapproval.

WILLIAM
'Tis a lie! My sister is a pacifist-

CONSTABLE
(shouting over WILLIAM)
And willfully and contemptuously
disturbing divine service at Christ
Church on the Sunday of the
Sabbath!

JAMES WHITTAKER
'Tis a lie!

CONSTABLE
She claims herself to be a
minister.

Back before CHIEF MAGISTRATE TIDESWELL, ANN's confidence is unwavering.

CHIEF MAGISTRATE TIDESWELL
As this is not only a civil matter,
but a religious matter, as well,
I've invited four ministers from
Christ Church to help advise on its
resolution.

FOUR MINISTERS take their place and stand reverently to the side of CHIEF MAGISTRATE TIDESWELL.

BURGHERS
She claims herself wed to the Lord
Jesus Christ!

CHIEF MAGISTRATE TIDESWELL
Quiet, now.

ANN LEE
May I speak for myself, Your
Worship?

CHIEF MAGISTRATE TIDESWELL
You may.

ANN LEE
I live in celibacy and am wed to
the Lord much like a nun of your
own church. We have rejected sinful
pleasures of the flesh and only
share our love with Jesus... And
Jesus spoke to me:

ANN now effortlessly transitions to Latin for the tribunal.

ANN LEE (CONT'D)
(sings)
*O Deus, conservator humani generis
et dator omnis gratiae spiritualis;
mitte in anulum hunc benedictiones
tuas, ut qui eam induet, caelesti
robore muniaturet perfectam fidem
et sinceram voluntatem serva
in promissione sanctae virginitatis
perseverare per Christum Dominum
nostrum-*

DIEGETIC AUDIO FADES OUT and our NARRATOR cuts in-

NARRATOR (V.O.)
According to one legend, she spoke
to them that night in twelve
languages, including Greek, Latin,
Hebrew, and French. By another
account, she spoke in seventy-two
different tongues.

SLOW MOTION ON -

The CHIEF MAGISTRATE TIDESWELL and the FOUR MINISTERS discuss what they've witnessed amongst themselves.

ANGLE ON -

THE SHAKERS: JAMES WHITTAKER, WILLIAM, MARY, NANCY, JANE AND JAMES WARDLEY are all moved to tears, astonishment and joy. They shake and quiver.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 History states as a fact, however, that Mother Ann spoke, and manifested such evident power of God, that the four ministers of Christ Church thought it only proper to dismiss her.

CLOSE ON -

ANN's wrists being unshackled.

CUE: AN ANACHRONISTIC ELECTRIC GUITAR LICK OVERTAKES THE SOUNDTRACK.

INT. TAVERN HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

ANN LEE and her followers exit the tavern triumphantly. The music in combination with Ann's newfound swagger evokes Janis Joplin and her band exiting a show.

JOHN TOWNLEY catches up to them.

JOHN TOWNLEY
 I have posted your penalties. You are free to go, Mother.

ANN nods but pays him little mind.

WILLIAM
 Thank you, Mr. Townley.

ANN LEE
 They are our penalties, Mr Townley.
 It is our mission.

JOHN TOWNLEY
 Well, yes, yes, of course.

Hordes of people form an angry **MOB...**

MOB
BOB TAIL BITCH!

The MOB throw rocks and whatever else they can get their hands on in her direction.

WILLIAM LEE emerges from the crowd raising his coat to protect his sister.

ANN LEE holds a bible to shield her forehead.

MOB (CONT'D)
*What's that you've got there,
 Draggle Tail?! A public record of
 all them cocks! On your way to the
 Punch House for the Buttocks Ball,
 now, are you?*

The MOB lay on the euphemisms.

MOB (CONT'D)
*Piper's wife! Drury Lane Vestal!
 Laced mutton whore!*

WILLIAM
 This is beneath you! Shame on you!

MOB
Shut it, Puff Guts!

CLOSE ON -

ANN LEE aside to her brother, WILLIAM.

ANN LEE
 Inventive in their reproach, at the
 very least, dear brother.

EXT. TAVERN - MOMENTS LATER

A ROCK hits ANN squarely in the forehead but she carries on...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 While some welcomed the verdict
 with joy, the thought of a woman
 preacher infuriated others.
 Tumultuous mobs pursued Mother Ann.
 They vowed not to relent until she
 was hung for blasphemy.

ANN calls out to her followers.

ANN LEE
 (shouts to be heard)
 Walk on! Do not run! Do not run.

INT. ABRAHAM'S QUARTERS - MORNING

WILLIAM LEE tends to his sister's wounds in bed.

ANN LEE
Thank you, brother.

WILLIAM
Where is your husband?

ANN LEE
The smithy; morning and night.

WILLIAM exhales, exasperated.

WILLIAM
Ah, yes. Whenever my sister is
imperiled, Abraham finds himself
predisposed.

ANN LEE
You must try and be more
understanding of him. He has been
through so much.

WILLIAM
As have you.

WILLIAM lays a cloth across his sister's eyes.

ANN LEE
Read me the morning paper, will
you?

WILLIAM nods and moves to the corner breakfast table. He picks up the paper and scans the page...

WILLIAM
There's something on George
Whitefield. The man that used to
preach outside of Christ Church.

ANN sits up in bed.

ANN LEE
What does it say? Read it aloud to
me.

INT. MANCHESTER - JOHN TOWNLEY'S TOWNHOUSE - LATE MORNING

MR. TOWNLEY is seated at the dining table for breakfast.

WE PAN UP to ANN LEE, MARY, JANE WARDLEY, JAMES WARDLEY, and WILLIAM LEE as they push a newspaper across JOHN TOWNLEY's desk.

ANN LEE
Courtesy of a Raven Messenger.

ANN glances at her brother and winks.

JOHN TOWNLEY
What am I looking at?

ANN explains...

ANN LEE
The piece on Reverend George
Whitefield-

JOHN TOWNLEY
The methodist?

ANN nods.

ANN LEE
Whitefield has returned from his
fifth trip to America.

JOHN TOWNLEY takes the paper, adjusts his glasses, and reads aloud from it.

JOHN TOWNLEY
(reads)
"With blazing eloquence, Whitefield
describes opportunities for rebirth
of the spirit in America. 'The
colonies', he says, 'will one day
gain their independence, and then
freedom of conscience will be
secured for all people to worship
God without "hinderance or
molestation.'"

JOHN TOWNLEY furrows his brow, and shrugs.

JOHN TOWNLEY (CONT'D)
Am I to continue?

MARY huffs, exasperated.

MARY PARTINGTON
You don't grasp its significance?

ANN elaborates.

ANN LEE

I have seen a chosen people waiting
for us in New England and I know
that God wants us to take the
Millennial Church to America and
that he will aid us in this
enormous undertaking.

JOHN TOWNLEY

Are you mad?

JAMES WARDLEY

Mr. Townley!

JOHN TOWNLEY

Father James, you couldn't possibly
expect me to foot this bill, or
make such a journey at my age! My
entire life, not to mention, my
trade is here in Manchester.

A long beat...

ANN LEE

I am unable to do our good work
amongst the Mancunian denizens
because their provincial hearts and
minds are spoilt. I cannot preach
without being harassed, violated,
assaulted. They will kill me,
eventually.

JOHN TOWNLEY

Mother Ann, you've my utmost
respect and admiration-

ANN LEE

Mr. Townley, it's not the dying
part which minds me. I've lost four
beautiful children with whom I
anxiously wait to be reunited...
It's the lost time. Time to spread
the word.

JAMES WARDLEY

It is the lost voice which minds me-
thank you for your time and
generous access to your home, Mr.
Townley.

The group turns to leave.

JOHN TOWNLEY

James-

JAMES WARDLEY turns back to correct him.

JAMES WARDLEY
Father James.

JOHN TOWNLEY pleads with them.

JOHN TOWNLEY
My brother-in-law, a farmer- he's attended several of our more sizable gatherings here at the house... He's shy and not a very polished gentleman, perhaps, but where there's muck, there's brass, you see.

JANE WARDLEY
Yes?

JOHN TOWNLEY
Well, he has sometimes inquired to me privately about any way he might aid in our quest here.

JANE WARDLEY
Why have you never brought this prospective sponsor to our attention?

JOHN TOWNLEY
It seemed, at the time, that we had all we need.

JAMES WARDLEY
Your brother-in-law is John Hocknell.

JOHN TOWNLEY
Yes, that's right. You've conversed with him??

JAMES WARDLEY
He approached Mother Jane and I long ago. But we boasted then of our loyalties to you.

ANN stands and she takes JANE's arm to steady herself. The two move around the table closer to JOHN.

After a beat ANN takes JOHN TOWNLEY by the hand.

ANN LEE
Our quest is here no longer.

We hold on JANE and ANN as they walk towards the door arm in arm.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 It was decided that James and Jane Wardley should stay the course in Manchester though their hearts ached on the day of their Mother Ann's departure.

INSERT CARD:

The Second is of a Woman

1774

A Hop, Skip, and a Jump Across the Atlantic

EXT. SHIP - THE MARIAH - DAWN

Land is nowhere in sight, and the wind blows about ferociously.

Many familiar faces, ANN LEE, ABRAHAM, JAMES WHITTAKER WILLIAM, NANCY (18 now, beautiful) and MARY PARTINGTON are joined by some new at the bow of a modest ship.

ANGLE ON -

ANN's new investor, JOHN HOCKNELL (40's, pug-faced) sits beside his son **RICHARD** (20's, fresh-faced).

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 Their berths aboard the Maria were obtained at little cost, the ship having been condemned. Unsound in the eyes of men, yet sufficient for those led by the Spirit. Nevertheless, it set sail from Liverpool on May 19th, 1774, under the command of Captain Smith. Their newfound patron John Hocknell's means were modest, but his devotion was boundless, he'd have moved mountains for Mother Ann, let alone, moved house.

The father and son's general appearance radiates a strong impression of **new money**.

NEW ANGLE ON -

Ann's husband ABRAHAM's expression is cryptic, as ever.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Without so much as a nudge,
Hocknell left everyone and
everything behind, aside from his
know-nothing heir, Richard, and his
billfold.

ABRAHAM spits into the sea.

REVERSE ON -

ANN LEE wraps her shawl tightly around her shoulders. Her blue and white checkered dress flaps around rhythmically in the wind.

WILLIAM places his hand on his sister's shoulder.

INT. THE MARIAH - BERTHS - LATER

ANN and her FOLLOWERS settle into their sleeping accommodations under deck. **MEN** and **WOMEN** are notably separated, sleeping on opposite sides of the room.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Abraham never did seem aught more than a mere perplexed observer of his wife's theological virtues. He had, indeed, been most uncertain regarding the voyage to America, yet at length was swayed by the promise of innovation in the working of metals upon the shores of New York.

The boat quakes wildly...

MARY hangs a sheet from the ceiling creating a temporary separation between the male and female passengers.

Musical Note; Today is my day.

ANGLE ON -

NANCY sits on her bed and undoes her corset.

NANCY

(sings)

*Today, today is my own time
 tomorrow can't be reckoned
 and what is past cannot return
 though much to be regretted.*

REVERSE ON -

RICHARD observes NANCY's nude silhouette..

RICHARD

(sings)

*Today, today is my own time
 tomorrow can't be reckoned
 and what is past cannot return
 though much to be regretted*

ANN hoists MARY up to her upper bunk then takes the bed below her.

CLOSE ON -

ABRAHAM watches the silhouette of his wife getting into bed from the other side of the sheet.

He slides up on his pillow and tips his head to the right so he might catch a glimpse of her naked breast between the wall and the edge of the sheet.

BOTH

(sings)

*Then let me well improve each day
 and lay me up a pleasure
 which will not rust nor wear away
 but dwell with me forever*

NEW ANGLE ON -

MARY PARTINGTON hangs her head down from the upper bunk.

MARY PARTINGTON

(whispers)

Mother? There is something I have been wanting to tell you.

ANN LEE

Go on, Mary.

MARY PARTINGTON
 (whispers)
 On our penultimate night in
 Manchester, following a 13
 kilometer trek on foot from Brother
 Hocknell's farm to transport his
 belongings to the ports, James
 Whittaker and I were resting by the
 roadside when a vision appeared to
 him.

ANN LEE
 Is that so?

ANN LEE smiles.

MARY PARTINGTON
 (whispers)
 He saw a large tree "whose leaves,"
 he said, "shone with such a
 brightness as made it appear like a
 burning torch." Whittaker told me
 he took this to mean that he was to
 help plant the tree of faith in the
 new world?

ANN LEE closes her eyes.

ANN LEE
 We will plant a great big tree,
 with deep and solid roots. Go to
 sleep now, Mary, and I'll be sure
 Mr. Hocknell never has you carrying
 his bags again.

MARY looks at her curiously.

EXT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - DAWN

A VISON: WIDE ON -

A majestic apple tree, its branches bowed under the weight of
 ripe, glistening apples, each catching the light

CROSS-DISSOLVE:

EXT. THE MARIAH - EVENING

The MARIAH is tossed back and forth between the waves without
 influence.

EXT. THE MARIAH - UPPER DECK - MORNING

Weeks, perhaps even months, have passed. Summer's warmth bathes the Mariah's UPPER DECK in yellow streams of light.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Mother Ann led the group in daily worship on the upper deck despite the vexation and grouse of their fellow passengers and crewmen.

ANGLE ON -

ANN and her FOLLOWERS look worn and tired as they step on to the deck for some fresh air and take their places for the morning service.

NANCY LEE

Mother, you must excuse me. I feel quite ill again this morning.

ANN LEE

You are excused.

NANCY heads for a nearby railing and bends over it to vomit...

MARY PARTINGTON moves to aid her, rubs her back.

MARY PARTINGTON

Four weeks, dear- if the skies stay kind to us! You must try and keep some food down, or you will only become more feeble.

NANCY swallows back some bile, and collects herself.

WE PAN with MARY and NANCY now who join the rest of the group for service.

ANN and her FOLLOWERS have begun to sing and dance, once again, stomping and clapping their hands, in unison.

ANN LEE

(sings)

High o'er the billows we are wafted along. Angel wing carry us.
Not one ripple to break on our song. All is peace before us.

ANN'S FOLLOWERS join in...

ANN'S FOLLOWERS
 All is concert, all is summer!
 All is concert, all is summer!
 All is concert, all is summer!

ANGLE ON -

The CREWMEN eye them now, begrudgingly. An **OLDER DECKHAND** hollers at them.

OLDER DECKHAND (shouts) Shut your bone box, besom! We are paggered of this hokum!	ANN'S FOLLOWERS (sing) <i>But by the soul that's pure and clean!</i>
OLDER DECKHAND (CONT'D) (yells) Shut it, whooperups!	ANN'S FOLLOWERS (sing) <i>But by the soul that's pure and clean!</i>

A **YOUNG DECKHAND** shouts now, too...

YOUNG DECKHAND
 Shut it, he said!

ANN stops suddenly in her tracks, and shoots a look back at the CREWMEN.

ANN LEE
 My dear Brethren, Sisters, STOP!

No one can initially hear ANN over the ruckus they're making.

ANN LEE (CONT'D)
 (shouts to be heard)
 STOP NOW, AT ONCE! We must pray for
 the Seafarers.

ANN'S FOLLOWERS all abide her... One-by-one, they turn to the CREWMEN and fall to their knees.

ANN LEE (CONT'D)
 Impoverished souls! Adventitious
 sinners! These men know not what
 they give tongue to!

YOUNG DECKHAND
 I know just what I say, missus.
Shut it!

ANN LEE
 (shouts)
 The Seafarers know not what they
 do! PRAY FOR THEM!

The COLLECTIVE MURMUR of ANN'S FOLLOWERS all speaking in tongues is disarming, even frightening.

OLDER DECKHAND
(shouts)
Stop that!

ANN'S FOLLOWERS raise the volume of their collective din.

YOUNG DECKHAND
(shouts)
STOP!

HARD CUT TO:

EXT. THE MARIAH - UPPER DECK - EVENING

Dark clouds hover aloft. The boat rocks wildly about on the larger waves.

CAPTAIN SMITH crosses frame, struggling to steady himself in the wind.

INT. THE MARIAH - BERTHS - MOMENTS LATER

CAPTAIN SMITH enters the sleeping cabin.

ANN LEE
(shouts)
Halt where you are, Captain. We are in various states of undress!

CAPTAIN SMITH respectfully stops where he is...

CAPTAIN SMITH
To whom it may concern, I am ordering ALL clamorous and disruptive noisemaking ceased, without delay!

ANN LEE doesn't seem to have heard him or is, perhaps, ignoring him.

CAPTAIN SMITH (CONT'D)
(shouts angrily)
Have you heard me?

No response.

CAPTAIN SMITH (CONT'D)
(exasperated)
I demand compliance from everyone
aboard this ship. Hear me, or I'll
have you put in irons!

No response.

CAPTAIN SMITH (CONT'D)
If they do not stop the racket, I
have vowed my crewmen to have all
your *disobedients* cast into the
sea! I am earnest!

ANN addresses her FOLLOWERS.

ANN LEE
We do fear God *more* than we fear
Captain Smith. We will conduct our
worship, as usual, with special
orison for all seafaring sinners.
And you, Captain, we shall pray for
your soul, as well.

As if on cue, a rogue wave tips the ship sideways...

Moments later, water is flooding the corridors, puddling
around the ankles of CAPTAIN SMITH who looks down in some
horror.

CAPTAIN SMITH
(shouts)
Take refuge! Do not exit your
cabins until you've received word
that it's safe to do so!

INT. THE MARIAH - CORRIDORS - NIGHT

The water now flows so rapidly, that notwithstanding all
their exertions at the BILGE PUMPS, it's gaining upon the
CREWMEN so fast that the whole ship's passengers are greatly
alarmed.

STEADICAM ON -

ANN calmly steps her way through the commotion and starts up
the stairs.

YOUNG DECKHAND
Don't go up there, missus! You'll
be sucked out to sea.

ANN LEE
The lot of you should be pleased,
then.

ANN continues forth.

EXT. THE MARIAH - UPPER DECK - MOMENTS LATER

CLOSE ON -

FROM OUTSIDE WE VIEW ANN'S FACE AS IT APPEARS IN THE PORTHOLE OF A DOOR TO THE UPPER DECK.

BRIEF FLASHES OF LIGHTNING ILLUMINATE HER GROWINGLY CURIOUS EXPRESSION.

IT SEEMS SHE'S SPOTTED SOMETHING OUT OF OUR VIEW...

PUSH IN -

ANN's lips part in spiritual ecstasy.

ANN LEE
(mutters to herself)
Cunningham.

INT. THE MARIAH - CORRIDORS - MOMENTS LATER

Below deck, CAPTAIN SMITH is ghostly white, his hands gripping the rail as if to hold himself together.

WE PAN with ANN as she descends the ship ladder and approaches the captain through knee deep water in the corridor.

ANN LEE
Captain-?

CAPTAIN SMITH
A plank has been struck loose at
the keel.

ANN LEE
Yes, my traveling companions were reasonably concerned, so I have gone upstairs to have a look through the porthole to the upper deck-

CAPTAIN SMITH

There is no way to mend it. We must all perish before morning, for I see no possible means to save the ship from sinking.

ANN takes him by the hand, **comically optimistic.**

ANN LEE

Captain, be of good cheer. There shall not a hair of our heads *perish.*

CAPTAIN SMITH regards her with a furrowed brow.

CAPTAIN SMITH

Pardon me, m'am?

ANN LEE

That is what I have come to tell you! We will arrive safely to America. Just now I saw two bright angels of God standing by the mast, through whom I received this promise of our safe-passing. I will call now on my companions to assist your crewmen!

CAPTAIN SMITH is simply too frightened to pay her any mind.

ANN LEE calls out to the CREWMEN...

ANN LEE (CONT'D)

Be brave, seafarers!

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Shortly thereafter, a large wave struck the ship with great violence, and the dislodged plank was instantly closed to its place.

INT. THE MARIAH - BELOW DECK - MOMENTS LATER

ANN and her FOLLOWERS eagerly lend a hand to the DECKHANDS at the BILGE PUMPS.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

The Shakers fervently helped the sailors at the pumps, which, as the captain noted had a miraculous effect. They were left to pray in peace for the rest of the journey.

EXT. THE MARIAH - UPPER DECK - MORNING***Musical note: CIRCULAR MARCH (SHIP SONG) ALL IS SUMMER***

ANN LEE stands resolutely at the ship's bow having organized a provisional religious service on deck. Her FOLLOWERS gather around to perform a beguiling choreography.

ANN LEE

(sings)

High over the billows we are wafted along.

Angel wing carry us.

Not one ripple to break on our song.

All is peace before us.

ANN'S FOLLOWERS join in...

THE WOMEN

All is concert.

All is summer.

While to heaven we are going.

ANN LEE

But in the desert we are leaving behind, wintry winds are blowing

THE MEN

Lo lo lo.

ANGLE ON -

A FEW DECKHANDS watch on, both puzzled and entertained, as ANN and her FOLLOWERS continue to pray, sing, dance, and shout.

CROSS-DISSOLVE
TO:

EXT. THE MARIAH - DANCING MONTAGE - VARIOUS TIMES OF DAY

NOTE: The same set, angles, and CLOSE-UPS are recycled, employing lighting and simple weather effects to achieve the passage of time as economically as possible.

ANN and her FOLLOWERS *dance and sing* as days dissolve into one another.

THE WOMEN

*High over the billows we are wafted along.
 Angel wing carry us.
 Not one ripple to break on our song.
 All is peace before us.
 All is concert.
 All is summer.
 While to heaven we are going.
 But in the desert we are leaving behind, wintry winds are blowing.*

Rain turns to hail. Frost gives way to strong winds.

THE MEN

Lo lo lo.

THE WOMEN

All is concert, all is summer.

CUT TO:

INSERT CARD:

NEW YORK

CUE: A REPRISAL OF OUR SIGNATURE ANACHRONISTIC ELECTRIC GUITAR LICK OVERTAKES THE SOUNDTRACK.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - VARIOUS ANGLES

NOTE: Manhattan had a population of around twenty thousand at the time, so is represented here as not much more than a burgeoning rural village.

Very simple VFX Layers will be combined with plates of a rural location nearby to our primary Manchester exteriors.

Three angles establish NEW YORK of yesteryear...

- North of Washington Square, rolling farmland stretches to the horizon, dotted with barns and grazing livestock.
- Along Fifth Avenue from Twenty-first Street, open meadows meet sparkling streams where children play and farmers tend their crops.

- By the Hudson River, fields extend to the water's edge, where ducks swim and fishermen cast their lines in peaceful solitude.

EXT. DOWNTOWN NEW YORK - DAY

LONG LENS ON -

ANN and her FOLLOWERS make their way from the harbor, moving through the bustling streets.

NEW ANGLE ON -

They move past a slave market, where men, women, and children stand on the auction block.

CLOSE ON -

ANN looks on at this puzzling spectacle, in horror. She asides to her husband...

ANN LEE
Are they selling them?

ABRAHAM glances past her...

ABRAHAM
Seems so, Mother.

ANN LEE
Sinful as it is incomprehensible.
Every man, woman, and child is a
child of God.

ANN shakes her head, gravely.

JOHN HOCKNELL catches up with ANN.

JOHN HOCKNELL
Mother Ann, the women are tired.
Should I look into a bedstay for
the evening?

ANN LEE
It's a terrible waste of your
resources, Mr. Hocknell. Please
hold on to your notecase.

ANN then turns back to the AUCTION SCENE, and shouts...

ANN LEE (CONT'D)
SHAME! SHAME!

HER FOLLOWERS SHOUT NOW, AS WELL...

ANN'S FOLLOWERS
SHAME!

EXT. QUEEN STREET - CUNNINGHAM HOUSE - EVENING

An elderly woman, **MRS. CUNNINGHAM** rocks in a chair on her porch fanning herself.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
On that hot August afternoon, the Shakers went in search of a wide avenue called Broad Street, where Mother Ann felt confident she would discover what her vision had revealed.

ANN LEE (O.S.)
Pardon me, are you the mistress of this house?

As **MRS. CUNNINGHAM** turns her head, **WE PAN** across the porch to ANN and the group of eight believers who stand behind her like specters.

MRS. CUNNINGHAM
I am.

ANN LEE
Mrs. Cunningham-

MRS. CUNNINGHAM stands, not to be rude.

MRS. CUNNINGHAM
You'll have to please excuse me,
I've just stepped outside to escape
the heat, you see...

Then, realizing that ANN has called her by name...

MRS. CUNNINGHAM (CONT'D)
Stay, how do you know my name? Have we made acquaintance?

ANN LEE
I am commissioned by the Almighty God to preach the everlasting gospel to America, and an Angel commanded me to this house and to make a home for me and my people. She said the name: Cunningham.

MRS. CUNNINGHAM instantly appears compelled by ANN's proclamation. She is disarmingly casual in her reply.

MRS. CUNNINGHAM
 I see. Well, Mr. Cunningham is at
 the smithy until Sundown.

ABRAHAM steps forward.

ABRAHAM
 The smithy, you say? I, too, had a
 forge of my own where we come from
 in Lancashire County in Manchester,
 England.

ANN LEE explains...

ANN LEE
 My husband, Abraham.

INT. CUNNINGHAM HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

ANN and her followers preform an **elegiac Shaker Hymn** to the astonishment of the CUNNINGHAM.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 Mrs. Cunningham was a simpleminded woman who recently faced financial hardship and began offering affordable accommodations in her home. Although she didn't posses deep faith, she had a great curiosity about the world. She felt privileged to have be chosen by a higher force which motivated her to provide discounted rates along with a warm welcome to her guests.

Musical Note; Today Today is my own time, Wordless reprise.

The hymn rises and falls in the mix over -

SLOW-MOTION ON -

ANN and her FOLLOWERS are sat at a table set for ten persons. Their hosts, **MR. CUNNINGHAM** and **MRS. CUNNINGHAM** are sat at either end of the long table.

ANGLE ON -

ABRAHAM is sat beside **MR. CUNNINGHAM** and they seem to be getting along famously.

ANGLE ON -

MRS. CUNNINGHAM continues to warm to ANN. The women laugh and make cheer.

ANGLE ON -

NANCY and RICHARD eye each other from across the table.

Hold on this, hold, hold... The tension is palpable.

Following an extended beat...

NANCY

Mother Ann, may I please be
excused?

ANN LEE

You may, Nancy.

MRS. CUNNINGHAM

(hushed, to Nancy)

Our privy is located just outside,
across the vestibule you will see a
doorway to exit through at the far
end of the corridor.

NANCY

(discreetly)

Thank you, kindly, Mrs. Cunningham.

RICHARD, sets down his napkin.

RICHARD

If you'll please excuse me, as
well, I'll step out front for some
fresh air. My equilibrium thinks me
still aboard the Mariah.

RICHARD excuses himself from the table.

INT. PRIVY - MOMENTS LATER

RICHARD kisses NANCY's throat ravenously then flips NANCY around to pull down at her skirts.

NANCY

I haven't washed-

Nothing can deter RICHARD...

RICHARD

The night of the tempest, I thought
I mightn't ever see you again.

(MORE)

RICHARD (CONT'D)
We mustn't waste another moment. We
mustn't.

He undoes his trousers and pushes his body hard against
NANCY's backside causing her to succumb to his advances.

INT. CUNNINGHAM HOUSE - DINING ROOM - SAME

JOHN HOCKNELL holds court at the table now.

JOHN HOCKNELL
We do thank you graciously for your
hospitality, Mr. Cunningham- and
Mrs. Cunningham. The men among us
shall stay only a fortnight. James
Whittaker, William, my son,
Richard, and I must leave in search
of a suitable piece of land up the
Hudson on which for us to settle.

MR. CUNNINGHAM
Have you a boatman arranged for
your journey upriver?

JOHN HOCKNELL
Is there someone you might suggest?

MR. CUNNINGHAM
I am closely familiar with a
Dutchman, a hunter, acquainted with
those macabre customs of the wild
people. They are terribly violent,
you know.

ANN LEE
Wild people?

MRS. CUNNINGHAM
(muttering)
River Injuns.

MR. CUNNINGHAM
-and to go from New York to Albany,
you consult not a timetable but a
calendar. In mild weather, you take
a boat, but when the Hudson is
frozen, by stagecoach. Either way,
it is a three-day trip.

JOHN HOCKNELL nods at this. MR. CUNNINGHAM then turns to
ABRAHAM in the neighboring chair.

MR. CUNNINGHAM (CONT'D)
And you, Standerin? Will you be
going along, too, with the others?

ABRAHAM shakes his head.

ABRAHAM
I plan to stay behind 'n seek work
here in town to aid in the support
of our mission.

JOHN HOCKNELL
Accompany me to the forge tomorrow,
and we'll see if there are gaps
which need filling.

ANN remarks...

ANN LEE
Abraham is a remarkable farrier.

ANGLE ON -

JOHN HOCKNELL is suddenly flummoxed.

JOHN HOCKNELL
Where has that boy of mine gone?

ANGLE ON -

ANN eyes NANCY and RICHARD's TWO EMPTY CHAIRS.

REVERSE ON -

JOHN HOCKNELL (CONT'D)
Pardon me, will you? Discourtesy is
so unlike him.

MR. CUNNINGHAM
(laughs)
Sounds like his breadbasket is all
tied up in knots.

JOHN HOCKNELL stands, and WE PAN with him as he steps out of
the dining room and into the antechamber.

JOHN HOCKNELL
(calls out)
Richard!?

DIEGETIC AUDIO fades out, as HOCKNELL investigates the house.

INT. CUNNINGHAM HOUSE - BEDROOM - LATER

The guest bedroom is modest but much grander than what Ann is accustomed to.

ANN is standing by the window, looking out at the night sky. WILLIAM leans against the door frame.

WILLIAM

They are not willing to forsake;
they plan to marry.

ANN LEE

Then they must leave us.

WILLIAM approaches her.

WILLIAM

Is their love so sinful?

ANN turns to him.

ANN LEE

No, it is a thing of beauty. And they can love each other deeply like I love you. The love they have chosen will not last. It will turn your body into a senseless, unsavory corpse. The desire of the flesh will fester and tear it apart. That desire is an ugly beast, and that beast destroys all that is beautiful and pure.

She lays her hands upon his shoulders, there is a genuine tenderness in the gesture.

ANN LEE (CONT'D)

Both of us have suffered on our journey. We have made tremendous sacrifices to receive the greatest love that one can experience and to give it entirely.

He wipes her tear stained-cheeks and embraces his sister.

WILLIAM

Oh, it pains me to see her go. I would force her to stay and send him away, she was left in our care after all.

ANN LEE

But that we can not William, she
must choose our way of life freely.

INT/ EXT. CUNNINGHAM HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAWN

NANCY and RICHARD stand in the hallway with their bags. Only JOHN is there to see the young couple off. He hugs his son farewell.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Regretful and ashamed. Hocknell's son Richard and Ann's niece, Nancy, were exigently forced to leave their family and friends behind without pageantry of farewell. Nine became seven.

NANCY and RICHARD exit the house, as JOHN HOCKNELL's silhouette fades away with our transition to the following scene.

CROSS-DISSOLVE:

EXT. HUDSON RIVER - DAY

A modest raft makes its way upriver carrying JOHN HOCKNELL, WILLIAM, and JAMES WHITTAKER as its cargo. The raft is operated by a **DUTCHMAN** clutching an oar with a rifle slung over his shoulder.

CLOSE ON -

JOHN HOCKNELL looks terribly depressed without his son present to accompany him.

WE PAN as he looks right to discover indigenous peoples, the **LENAPE TRIBE**, peacefully washing on the shoreline.

JOHN HOCKNELL

(suspect)

-these are the *Wild People* we have compensated you to protect us from?

The DUTCHMAN turns to him and smiles.

DUTCHMAN

The women and children redskins, yes. The *manful* redskin, yet- you have never laid eye on a more wretched brute.

EXT. NISKAYUNA - FOREST - DAY

Led by the DUTCHMAN, JOHN HOCKNELL, WILLIAM, and JAMES WHITTAKER ascend a hill exhausted.

DUTCHMAN

In two days, Mr. Hocknell, nothing seems to stir your imagination.

HOCKNELL doesn't glorify the comment with a reply.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

To the great frustration of the Dutch man, the men journeyed upstream without a clear itinerary or navigational aids, relying solely on Mr. Hocknell's instincts. The night before their expedition, Brother Hocknell had shared a vivid dream with the men featuring an expansive field with tall grass bordered by twelve large oak trees. They all believed this was the ideal place for them to settle.

EXT. NISKAYUNA - FOREST - NIGHT

The men set up camp in the woods for the night. HOCKNELL prays against a large tree, muttering under his breath.

The DUTCHMAN looks at him and asides to WILLIAM...

DUTCHMAN

(whispers)

Your friend is a bit mad, is he? He doesn't help us to cook or make camp.

Before WILLIAM can respond, JOHN HOCKNELL raises his voice having overheard the DUTCHMAN's comment.

JOHN HOCKNELL

(loudly)

I am not mad but perhaps I've become indolent in my old age. I am not cheap, however, so I have afforded myself the opportunity to do nothing. May I pray now to the almighty God in some peace?

EXT. NISKAYUNA - FOREST - DUSK

WILLIAM and JAMES pull stakes from the ground and roll up tents as JOHN HOCKNELL continues to pray against the Oak, muttering under his breath and speaking in tongues.

DUTCHMAN
Did you sleep a wink, Mr. Hocknell?

No response. JOHN suddenly stands, as if elevated by a higher calling.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Legend has it that on the third day
of the men's search, a most
peculiar thing happened.

EXT. NISKAYUNA - FOREST - DAY

WIDE ON -

The woods have gone quiet.

Suddenly, the branches part, then at once we see JOHN HOCKNELL running like mad with his hand outstretched before him and his index finger stiffly pointed like the arrow of a weather vane.

WILLIAM, JAMES WHITTAKER, and the DUTCHMAN struggle to keep pace behind him.

RUNNING MONTAGE

JOHN HOCKNELL bolts through the woods, slams through fences, crashes into swamps - never slowing, never looking back.

Musical Note: Johns Song.

JOHN HOCKNELL sings with vigor:

JOHN HOCKNELL
I am searching! I am lead.

WILLIAM/JAMES
He is searching! He is lead!

JOHN HOCKNELL
I am searching I am lead.

WILLIAM/JAMES
Va vi va vom.

- JOHN HOCKNELL stops occasionally to change course. WILLIAM, JAMES WHITTAKER, and the DUTCHMAN watch him carefully, all following close behind.

JOHN HOCKNELL
I am searching! I am lead.

WILLIAM/JAMES
He is searching! He is led!

- JOHN HOCKNELL halts at a fork, momentarily paralyzed, as if the path itself has betrayed him.

JOHN HOCKNELL
I am searching! I am lead.

With sudden resolve, he spins and plunges down a new trail.

WILLIAM/JAMES
(sings)
Va vi va vom.

JOHN HOCKNELL
(sings)
Oh God, I saw it like through a glass, my visions shall come to pass.

JAMES WHITTAKER
His visions shall come to pass!

Note; end of song.

EXT. NISKAYUNA - CLEARING - EVENING

A beautiful clearing enclosed by dense vegetation is broken in two by an S-curved brook.

JOHN HOCKNELL lays collapsed on the ground next to the stream of water. WILLIAM LEE, JAMES WHITTAKER, and the DUTCHMAN kneel next to him.

WILLIAM
(to James)
Fetch him some water, brother.

JAMES pulls a cup from his satchel and slides down the loose earth to the babbling brook.

The DUTCHMAN stands to his feet and begins happily to set up camp for the night.

CLOSE ON -

JOHN HOCKNELL smiles at WILLIAM.

INT. CUNNINGHAM HOUSE - BEDROOM - EVENING

MEDIUM ON-

Meanwhile, on a cold winter evening in New York, MARY PARTINGTON and ANN LEE knelt in prayer next to small beds placed on opposite sides of the barren guest room at Cunningham's.

Musical Note: Rhythrical breathing.

INT. CUNNINGHAM HOUSE - BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

The room is quiet and cast in softest glow of moonlight. The women lay fast asleep. Chests rising and falling in the dark.

Following a moment's tranquility...

ABRAHAM enters the room holding a small lantern. He goes to MARY PARTINGTON and shakes her awake which gravely startles her.

MARY PARTINGTON
Brother Abraham, is something the
matter?!

ABRAHAM
I need to speak with my wife in
privacy.

MARY PARTINGTON
Brother-?

ABRAHAM
Sister, take my bed. The men are
away now. Please, leave me in peace
with my wife. I will assume
responsibility for sending you
away.

MARY finally exits the room. ABRAHAM then sits on MARY's bed staring at his wife as she sleeps. He pulls out a flask which he swigs from voraciously.

ANN suddenly speaks to him without warning that she's awoken.

ANN LEE

(coldly)

Abraham, why have you come to me
here at this hour?

ABRAHAM

I have endured your sensual
abstinence for six years-

ANN LEE

You are setting a terrible
precedent.

ABRAHAM

YOU WILL NOT TALK OVER ME!

ANN LEE

(sharp whisper)

Quiet your voice!

ABRAHAM regathers himself.

ABRAHAM

I will give you a chance now to
rectify your standing in my eyes.
Go to bed with me. Dutifully. As
you once promised to.

ANN LEE

No one can reach God, while
wallowing in the lust of the flesh.

ABRAHAM

(shouts)

Enough!

ANN LEE

(sharp whisper)

Quiet! (Beat) I want to please my
husband, I do- but I cannot. My
natural instincts have died away in
love of God.

ABRAHAM

I urge you to renounce your
testimony, and live in sexual
cohabitation, like the rest in the
world.

ANN LEE

Abraham, *the exuberant bliss of-*

ABRAHAM

-the more you talk of "exuberant bliss of Divine intercourse," the more I shall drink and I shall not stop myself until I am dead.

ABRAHAM takes another swig, and steps to the window. He glances downwards to see a **LEWD WOMAN** loitering just outside the Cunningham house.

ABRAHAM (CONT'D)
(quietly, drunk, mixing
tenses and patterns of
speech)

Do those that follow thou and abide
ye's every locution know their
Mother Ann to be illiterate? Tell
me, how does one contribute to
scripture if thou cannot stable a
quill? I have kept your secrets,
Ann Lee. You will keep mine.

ABRAHAM moves to exit the room, leaving ANN shaken in bed.

Thinking herself free of ABRAHAM's violence, ANN begins to stand from bed but falls backwards when **ABRAHAM abruptly bursts back into her room holding the wrist of the LEWD WOMAN from outside.**

ABRAHAM (CONT'D)
If you do not consent to live in
sexual cohabitation with me, I will
take this woman for my wife.

ANN LEE

I will not do it if you should take
my life as a consequence of my
refusal. I am willing to do any
thing for my husband which justice,
reason, or humanity requires but I
will never consent to violate my
duty to God; and I endeavor to
prevail on you to return to your
duty and be faithful!

ABRAHAM suddenly starts screaming wildly, frightening the LEWD WOMAN and ANN in equal measure.

ANN LEE (CONT'D)
Please, quietly now. I will listen.
I solemnly vow to the Lord God I
shan't utter another word, if you
lower your voice. I will listen! I
will listen.

ABRAHAM stops then turns his attention to the LEWD WOMAN.

ABRAHAM
(quietly to the LEWD
WOMAN)

You have been paid, and you are to
be my wife now. Put me in your
mouth.

The LEWD WOMAN abides, trembling as she sinks down to her knees. As the LEWD WOMAN takes him in her mouth.

ABRAHAM (CONT'D)
Shh. Shh. You are my wife now.

He turns to ANN...

ABRAHAM (CONT'D)
Are you listening? Listen. Listen
to the beautiful music.

ANGLE ON -

ANN watches, listens, and weeps....

CUE: A stirring arrangement in song.

INT. CUNNINGHAM HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

ANN and MARY sit on the bed praying rhythmically, snow falls gently outside. Diegetic audio fades out...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
During that long, bitter winter
Mother Ann endured deep sorrow of
the soul. Her children were dead.
Her husband had left her. Her
mission to America seemed doomed.

EXT. NISKAYUNA - CLEARING - MORNING

There's a chill in the air, the season has subtly changed.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
But with the arrival of spring came
news from the men that it was time
for the women to journey upriver
and reunite with their brothers.

INSERT CARD:

NISKAYUNA

HANDHELD ON -

The MEN lead ANN and MARY through the densely wooded area and through to the clearing of their discovery.

The camp has advanced somewhat; a few more tents, fish hang to dry by the river on racks next to a small wooden dock.

She stops to take in the landscape...

JOHN HOCKNELL

From here, as far as the eye can see, Mother. It is ours... The deed is done.

WILLIAM looks skeptical.

WILLIAM

Brother Hocknell-

WILLIAM stops himself.

ANN LEE

Tell it, Brother.

WILLIAM

How is anyone meant to find us camouflaged by the pines?

ANN LEE

O my dear children, hold fast and be not discouraged. God has not sent us to this land in vain, but He has sent us to bring the gospel to this nation which is deeply lost in sin; and there are great numbers who will embrace it, and the time draws nigh.

WILLIAM

Do you believe the gospel will ever open to the world?

ANN LEE

Yea, Brother William, I certainly know it will, and the time is near at hand when they will come like doves.

WILLIAM

Mother, you have often told us so,
but it does not come yet...

WILLIAM's eyes fill with tears.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

We are so few, yet we have lost so
many.

ANN LEE

Brother William, you will go out
and preach and make our presence
known! Be patient, be patient, O my
dear children, for I can see great
numbers coming now, and you will
soon see them coming in great
numbers.

ANN nods approvingly at JOHN HOCKNELL.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

After securing the land, Brother
John Hocknell had but enough
capital left to hire help till it.
Yet, Mother Ann was eager to
welcome the farmers to the faith
and would not rest until each one
had joined.

EXT. FOREST - VARIOUS LOCATIONS AND TIMES OF DAY

- WILLIAM makes his way across various landscapes; a backpack
on his back and walking stick in-hand.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Soon thereafter, Mother Ann sent
Brother William on a quest for new
followers, wandering in solitude
and reflecting while awaiting a
sign from God.

- WILLIAM packs up camp and tosses water on the fire.
- WILLIAM pauses on his walk to take in the panorama.

CROSS-DISSOLVE:

EXT. FOREST - DAWN

DOLLY ON -

The season's changed. WE TRACK with WILLIAM through another heavily forested area typical of the American Northeast but with its own unique topography.

Fog hangs low across the moss floor, billowing between the trunks of the local White Pine. **The ambient light deepens imbuing the mist with a strange reddish-yellow color that evokes the skin of a ripe orange.**

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Then, at last, on the 19th of May in the year 1780, a series of events occurred that catalyzed William's quest.

After some time, we tilt upwards to the sky. As the earth turns and the sun begins to rise, blood red streams of light break through the branches.

EXT. LOCAL PARISH - DAY

ULTRA WIDE ON -

WILLIAM approaches a small Parish. (Plate to be painted later by Lee) The moon e

NARRATOR (V.O.)

That morning, the sky turned a strange hue. William had heard tell o' a small godly lot, certain judgment day were nigh. The strangers said that their preacher, after reckoning with stars, took this very day for the end o' all things. They bid him in to share their final moments on earth together.

ANGLE ON -

THE ECLIPSE

A seemingly infinite darkness spread across the sky.

INT. LOCAL PARISH - DAWN

A small parish is packed to the brim. There are perhaps 100 persons overflowing into aisles and past the exits huddled here together in prayer.

The room's din is a cacophony of horrid whispering, wailing, crying out.

CLOSE ON -

WILLIAM stands at the back of the room observing.

VARIOUS PORTRAITS of SLEEPING CHILDREN suggest the congregation has been gathered here overnight.

NEW ANGLE ON -

PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT stands at the pulpit. He breathes heavily nervously wiping sweat from his brow with his left hand, and gripping the dais with his right.

Behind him, through a simple stained-glass window, sunlight pours in causing a collective gasp from the congregation.

PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT

(sings)

*Fear not! The Day of Resurrection
is here. Look up to God at the
first rays of sun. It will touch
your skin like silk or fire. Now
each and every thing shall be
raised to life before God, may he
be praised and glorified!*

An INFANT wakes from the commotion and screams...

PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT (CONT'D)

(sings)

Fear not! For God shall originate that creation and then cause it to return. He has decreed the creation of all things, and he shall raise them to life again. God is powerful over all things. Look up! Look up! Look up! Fear not!

The RISING SUN silhouettes the PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT as he turns to face the light and lift his arms in an apocalyptic embrace.

PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT (CONT'D)

Here, it is, without delay! At last!

CLOSE ON -

The PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT closes his eyes. Tears stream down his face.

PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT (CONT'D)

At last! At last.

CUE: A psychedelic brew of **cymbal crashes** and **guitar licks** overtakes the soundtrack, giving the proceedings another decidedly unexpected modern flourish.

CUT TO:

The moon parts from between the earth and the sun, and the moon stops to cast its shadow over the earth... **THE ECLIPSE HAS COME TO AN END.**

The **WAILING BELIEVERS** and **CRYING INFANTS** come together with our score in a magnificent death metal crescendo.

HARD CUT TO:

INT. PARISH - LATER

"The End of Days," as it was foretold, has not come.

The congregation is wild with mistrust; shouting and yelling, some cry out in relief, others in fear.

A **LOCAL FARMER** exclaims...

FARMER
We sold off cattle!

PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT
Hold your words, brother!

A **YOUNG MOTHER** is on the verge of hysteria.

YOUNG MOTHER
What now? What does it mean,
Father? What now?!

PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT
Hold your words! Please!

Another **MAN** calls out...

MAN
Charlatan!

The PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT tries to calm the crowd but his attempts are fruitless.

WILLIAM makes his way through the crowd to the alter.

The crowd quiets down. PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT looks grateful for the distraction.

A **MAN** calls out...

MAN (CONT'D)
 Who is this character? What are you
 peddling?

WOMAN
 Shh!

PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT
 This is Father William. He
 represents the Christ's Second
 Appearing.

WILLIAM joins the PASTOR behind the Alter now. He puts his hand on his shoulder.

WILLIAM
 Shall we discuss our course in your chambers?

INT. PARISH OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

The PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT hovers over his desk frantically flipping through papers, almanacs, diagrams of the sun and moon. He uncovers a Metonic Calendar and adjusts its wheel. He holds it to the light for more clarity...

A young deacon, **DEACON TALMADGE BISHOP**, is standing near the door, dismayed shouts coming from the angry mob beyond its threshold.

WILLIAM sits relaxed on a chair observing the two.

PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT
 I do not understand. The maths are unambiguous. There were countless signs! All led here. What have I missed? Are my calculations mistaken? Or, perhaps the Lord has taken pity on us all?

DEACON TALMADGE BISHOP
 Father, could it be that-

He struggles to find the correct way of phrasing his doubts...

DEACON TALMADGE BISHOP (CONT'D)
 -the *cataclysm* of your sermons is-

PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT
 Make no words, Deacon Talmage Bishop. I must think.

PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT sits and places his head in his hands.

PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT (CONT'D)
 I require consultation from our
 neighboring parishes. We must
 journey to them, at once, and
 collect their insights.

WILLIAM
 Your neighboring ministers are of
 ill repute, Father.

He looks to WILLIAM and sighs.

PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT
 St. Paul says it is not a shame for
 a woman to speak in churches, and
 though I remain dubious, I feel
 drawn now to hear her speak. What
 is this curious red light in the
 sky, I will ask her. What is this
 strange atmosphere?

DEACON TALMADGE BISHOP
 Not only does she speak, she is an
 elder in her church? Isn't that so
 Brother William?

WILLIAM
 All that I have told you is true,
 but I advise you to go for your
 self and speak to Mother Ann.

The angry mob's loud cries for outside the door seems to sway
 him more than William's words.

PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT
 Yes, I must go for myself and see.

The DEACON sighs.

EXT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT and DEACON TALMADGE BISHOP approach the
 gate to the MODEST SETTLEMENT that ANN and her FOLLOWERS have
 built.

The two men are greeted by ANN LEE, weathered but the same,
 at the gate with a lamp.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

The community of believers which the misguided young pastor had amassed soon merged with those of Mother Ann... Following *the Dark Day*, the sun rose again and shone down on The United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing.

CUE: Urgent strings and percussion overtake the soundtrack.

INT. LOCAL PARISH - DAWN

Musical Note: WILLIAM'S SONG/ BOW DOWN, O ZION

WILLIAM stands at the altar of Pastor Reuben Wight's church, his arms outstretched and shaking.

WILLIAM

(sings)

*Bow down O Zion
and pray unto Heaven
That God in his mercy
return unto thee
Bow down O Zion
and pray unto Heaven
That God in his mercy
return unto thee
Oh, fall on the rock!
Each one and be broken
Mother's devotion
To set you all free
Oh, fall on the rock!
Each one and be broken
Mother's devotion
To set you all free.*

One by one, the congregation joins him in awe.

CONGREGATION

(sings)

*Mother's Devotion to Set us all
Free
Mother's Devotion to Set us all
Free
Mother's Devotion to Set us all
Free
Mother's Devotion to Set us all
Free.*

INSERT CARD:

The Third is of a Mother

1774 - 1784

A New World

GROWING AND BUILDING AT NISKAYUNA MONTAGE

A montage takes us through the years of settling in at NISKAYUNA.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

The news of religious liberty
stirred up many a sect in America,
most preaching doom before
paradise. But Ann's word:
Paradise through toil and chastity,
were a far simpler promise to
fulfill.

- Having absorbed the PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT's followers, the NEW FOLLOWERS cut their hair in the fashion of the Shakers. WILLIAM and ANN oversees the proceedings. ANN clutches brother's arm.

- Women dress in bonnets, alongside MARY PARTINGTON.

- MARY and five women work on one side of a field, while JAMES and the men work on the other. Together, they clear and drain the land.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

The first winter proved most
trying. As they broke the land, the
swamp yielded its serpents and
stinging pests. Soon sickness
spread, and fever took hold..

- ANN and MARY wave at WILLIAM as he sets out on an other pilgrimage, walking stick in hand.

- A **MOHICAN WOMAN** shows ANN to dry seeds on a piece of fabric in the sun.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

The Shakers kept friendly with their neighbors, knowing them to be skilled in woodworking and willing to trade teaching for goods.

- MOTHER ANN and JOHN HOCKNELL sit with a **MOHICAN TRIBESMEN** learning Wood Joinery

NARRATOR

Do all your work as though you had a thousand years to live, and as you would if you knew you must die tomorrow. She would say.

- MARY, JOHN HOCKNELL, and FOLLOWERS plant crops under the white hot sun.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Like all true leaders, Mother Ann never asked her people to do anything she would not do herself.

- MOTHER ANN and her FOLLOWERS erect simple but beautiful constructions using crude instruments.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

The Shakers knew that the best way to reach God was by laboring, tirelessly always striving for perfection. Naught could dampen Mother Ann's zeal. With indefatigable faith, they toiled side by side to raise a lasting home, little mindful of the war that raged about them. At last, she had raised a sanctuary for her people.

INT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - MEETING HOUSE - DAY

PASTOR REUBEN, DEACON TALMADGE BISHOP, and the new congregation sit in a prayer circle surrounded by other followers, all in deep meditation.

WE PAN around the room to ANN LEE and WILLIAM as ANN opens her eyes to speak to the group.

ANN stands... JOHN HOCKNELL who nods his head.

ANN LEE

For those new here with us who are unaccustomed to a woman preacher.

ANN refers to a small bible and nods to WILLIAM who stands to read.

WILLIAM

*For the Lord hath created a new
thing in the earth, a woman shall
compass a man.*

He stops, and turns his gaze upwards.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Christ's spirit first appeared in a man, Jesus, but has reappeared to fulfill the promise of the second coming, in the form of a woman, our Mother Ann.

He takes ANN's hand.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

-and, as we were all created in his likeness, see, God must be both male and female.

ANN turns her gaze to a **YOUNG WOMAN, ELIZABETH HALE**, and speaks to her directly.

ANN LEE

To those wedded cohabitants here today, you must forsake of the marriage of the flesh, or you cannot be married to the Lamb.

The ELIZABETH looks away, shyly, unable to bring herself to speak.

PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT nods, then speaks.

PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT

If you have attained to that of God which we have not, we should be glad to share with you, for we want to find the best way to be saved...

The group murmurs in agreement.

WILLIAM

If you are ever saved by Christ, it must be by walking as he walked.

PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT nods in agreement.

PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT

We have had the power of God upon us, received light and conviction, and have felt great tribulation for our sins; after which we have felt great love and releasement, and thought ourselves converted, and born of God! Is not this of Jesus Christ?

ANN LEE

Yes yes, *it is* my brother and husband- it is us both, you see. The gifts and calling of God are given to souls in nature's darkness, not because they have repented, but they are intended to lead souls to repentance.

YOUNG WOMAN

What is this repentance?

ANN turns to her.

ANN LEE

To leave off committing sin is the only repentance which God accepts; and this, can no one do, short of making an honest and faithful confession of all the sins ever committed in your whole life, to the faithful witnesses of Christ.

The YOUNG WOMAN looks horrified.

ELIZABETH

I..I don't know where to begin.

WILLIAM chimes in, pushing things along.

WILLIAM

Bare yourself to us, girl.

ELIZABETH gazes at her feet and shakes her head "no". PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT interjects.

PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT

It is God alone that can forgive sins; where, then, is the necessity of confessing them to man?

WILLIAM turns to him.

WILLIAM

God has established that order for
all souls who have committed sins,
that they must confess their sins -

He gestures to ANN...

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
-before His chosen witnesses.

He picks up the Bible once more.

PASTOR REUBEN WIGHT
Are you perfect then? Do you live
without sin?

ANN tilts her head.

ANN LEE
We have left off committing sin,
and we live in daily obedience to
the will of God.

She turns to ELIZABETH.

ANN LEE (CONT'D)
You needed be frightened, girl, we
do not bite. Brother William tells
me you have born seven children yet
at such a young age.

YOUNG WOMAN
I have.

The YOUNG WOMAN keeps her gaze turn down at her feet.

ANN LEE
And did you receive them all with
equal joy?

She inhales, steadies her breath

ELIZABETH
No.

ANN LEE
Is that so?

ELIZABETH
Well....Once.... or perhaps twice
when I went to fetch water, I would
have a thought...

ANN rest her hand on her shoulder.

ANN LEE

Go on.

YOUNG WOMAN

It is to shameful to speak of.

ANN LEE

*For she who confesses, shams are
over and realities have begun; she
has exteriorized her rottenness.*

ELIZABETH

(hesitant)

Routinely, see, when I would go out
to fetch some water, a terrible
thought might come on as I cradled
our infant boy, an overwhelming
impulse surged through me; the
desire to release him into the
depths of the well and leave,
seeking solace from the undoubtedly
ceaseless wailing in the woods
behind the wash shed.

She clears her throat then proceeds...

ELIZABETH (CONT'D)

In that moment the longing for
tranquility and silence felt
stronger than the will to live.

An empathic smile turns the corners of ANN's lips upwards.

WILLIAM

Give your grief to
God.

JOHN HOCKNELL stands to his feet and begins to shake and yell. WILLIAM follows suits, shaking and crying out. THE ELIZABETH gesticulates, shakes, and begs for forgiveness.

The cries quickly become a rhythmical chant that the rest of the groups join in, the chant falls in and out over the following scenes...

EXT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - NIGHT

MOTHER ANN leads her followers in expressionistic shaking, dancing, and worship at night. **One man notably, runs through the fields, partially undressed.**

Musical Note; Rhythrical breathing

ANN calls out...

ANN LEE
(shouts)
More love, Sister! More love,
Brother!

WHITTAKER and HOCKNELL move together in a cluster, holding their hands as if supporting something unseen.

JAMES WHITTAKER
(shouts)
This is our altar, and our altar is love; none can build this altar or sacrifice upon it, but the pure in heart and such are we; therefore, we will sacrifice on our altar, and we will love each other!

The entire congregation responds with shouts of joy.

EXT. FOREST - DAWN

The season's changed to fall.

WE TRACK **with WILLIAM** through a heavily forested area.

EXT. TOWN - MORNING

LONG LENS ON -

WILLIAM preaches to a small but gathering crowd.

WILLIAM
We have labored for years, in the work of the regeneration and have risen with Christ. We have traveled with him in the resurrection.
For the light and power of God was revealed to our Mother, Ann Lee, and *through her* reveals to those who receive her testimony such sensible effect in giving them power over all sin, and filling them with visions, revelations, and gifts of God, that she was received and acknowledged as the first spiritual leader!

EXT. TOWN - DAY

LONG LENS ON -

WILLIAM preaches to a different group of gathering onlookers at a later time of day.

WILLIAM

If you are ever saved by Christ, it must be by walking as he walked. If you have committed sins you must confess them to those witnesses in whom Christ has taken up his abode.

EXT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - EVENING

WILLIAM LEE arrives home from pilgrimage; he's aged and weathered. He observes the extraordinary progress his sister has made at the settlement.

NEW FOLLOWERS wave at him. A stranger to him calls out...

SHAKER MAN IN THE FIELD
William, the Elder?!

WILLIAM smiles, furrows his brow.

WILLIAM
Yes, Brother, it is I? Have we made acquaintance?

SHAKER MAN IN THE FIELD
(zen)
I feel that I have known you.
Mother Ann is expecting your return from pilgrimage.

WILLIAM eyes a NEW SISTER as she calls out to a group of CHILDREN playing in the fields. They all hurry towards her.

INT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - MEETING HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER

ANN LEE hangs her brother's coat on a peg rack.

ANN LEE
A place for everything, and everything in its place.

ANN then kneels at her brother's feet to wash them clean as MARY PARTINGTON sets down a bowl of freshly prepared warm water and tallow soap.

WILLIAM

There are so many children?

ANN LEE

We found that there are a great many who need caring for and plenty who have none.

MARY PARTINGTON

Some come with their mothers alone, some with their fathers as well.

ANN LEE

All little ones are free of sin. Later, they can choose for themselves to stay pure or not.

WILLIAM smiles at her.

ANN LEE (CONT'D)

(smiles)

Now, tell us now, Brother, you have our undivided attention.

WILLIAM

The devil is a real being. As real as a bear. I know, for I have seen him and fought with him, but I have encountered and gathered a many righteous brother and sister, also... I have amassed a following across towns near and far; a community of persons who long to be in the presence of their Mother Ann.

ANN LEE asides to MARY PARTINGTON and several other women nearby.

ANN LEE

Fetch us another pail of water.

ANN looks to him.

ANN LEE (CONT'D)

We have made a great advancement during your absence.

WILLIAM

That, I can see. Imagine my delight at this land tilled, edifice erected, new faces in every and all direction. It is exactly as you said it would be.

CLOSE ON -

The soles of WILLIAM's feet are badly blistered.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Mother, I've seen a vision; a large black cloud rising as black as thunder. A wartime is coming.

ANN places hot plasters onto the skin to raise WILLIAM's blisters. She then drains them methodically using a hot needle point.

ANN LEE

You are not wrong.

WILLIAM winces at the pain as he pulls a note from his pocket.

WILLIAM

On my travels, I obtained a pamphlet published by a *Mr. Valentine Rathbun, Minister of the Gospel*, which he signs as the public's *REAL friend and humble servant!* It concerns me greatly. May I read from it, Mother?

ANN LEE

You may.

WILLIAM

(reads)

To obtain instruction from the woman preacher, Ann Lee, I went to Niskayuna and gave her a lengthy relation of my life. In return, she made me many wonderful promises... Shakerism is a religion of bluff and its adherents are fanatics. I myself beheld the following, and know, therefore, whereof I speak. They meet together in the dead of night and have been heard two miles away by people. They run about in the woods and elsewhere, hooting and tooting like owls while some dance, and make such a bedlam as only the insane can thrive upon-

ANN LEE sighs.

ANN LEE

Yes, he was here for the winter but was not well-suited for our community and was asked to leave. Brother William, this is to be expected. We have long endured such slanderous conceits.

WILLIAM

This is different. It goes on and on but hear this:

WILLIAM continues reading...

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Most of those who join Ann Lee's movement are urged to cry out against the military defense of the country, against fighting the common British foe! Ann Lee's scheming religion is not only treasonous, it is also aimed at breaking up life as we know it! She causes husbands and wives to part! I am convinced the spirit which prevails over this new scheme is the spirit of witchcraft! Ann Lee is Satan in the guise of a sweet angel of light. Some of the women Shakers strip naked in the woods-

MARY scoffs at this, and uncharacteristically interjects...

MARY PARTINGTON

(defensive)

That is BECAUSE the brethren pulled off their coats, or outside garments, to labour, or as the world calls it - 'dance'; and in warm weather the sisters being lightly clothed, they would report we 'danced' naked! And you know how apt the ignorant and vulgar parts of mankind are to misrepresent what they see! If one told they danced part naked, or with but few clothes on, another in telling the story, would leave out that part-

WILLIAM

It is not the baseless accusation
of vulgarities which concerns me,
Sister Mary! For treason: Mother
could be jailed, or worse.

ANN stands, wipes her hands on her apron, and somewhat
naively exclaims...

ANN LEE

Not long ago, a General came along
with two magisterial gentlemen on
horseback declaring that they
required we take an oath of
allegiance to the country, and join
them in the fight for this nation's
independence.

WILLIAM

And, what did you reply?!

ANN LEE

I merely explained that the people
of this community will never do
them any hurt for we are well-
wishers to the country! And that we
will do all the good to the country
that we are able to do!

WILLIAM nods approvingly.

WILLIAM

Good. That is good.

ANN LEE

-but, I also made explicit that we
are unwilling and unable to 'kill
the devil with the sword.'

WILLIAM sighs and stands.

WILLIAM

Hear me. We must hide you, Mother.

ANN LEE

William, sit down. Do not be rash.
Rest now.

WILLIAM

Please, I beg you to hear me! They
will return for you-

ANN LEE
Rest. All will be clear as crystal
glass on the morrow.

EXT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - DAWN

ULTRA-WIDE ON -

The SETTLEMENT is quiescent at dawn.

NOTE: For the following sequence, we are taken through a day in the life of SHAKERS at the settlement.

The quick succession of images and short scenes is to demonstrate much of the ingenuity and inventiveness that the Shaker Community exhibited.

Musical Note: I Love Mother.

It is eerily quiet, save for the song and a rhythmically heightened diegetic audio highlighting daily tasks such as sweeping the floor, peeling a potato, plowing the fields, etc.

INT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - DWELLING HOUSE - DAWN

It is still dark when ANN LEE awakens. The wind can be heard rattling branches in the surrounding forest area.

ANN LEE regards MARY and **TWELVE SHAKER WOMEN**; all still asleep on husk mattresses.

She lights her bedside candle, and moves across the room to start a fire.

INT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - DWELLING HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

ANN lee, MARY PARTINGTON, and the other SHAKERS begin to dress in preparation for the day's work. Every gesture is quick and meticulous.

ANGLE ON -

The women have finished dressing and swiftly move to leave the room. One young girl, **PATSY (African American, 19 and very pregnant)**, lags behind.

ANN stops, and turns to her from the room's threshold.

ANN LEE
 Put your hands to work and heart to
 God, Dear Patsy.

PATSY smiles, honored to be noticed by ANN LEE.

PATSY
 Yes, Mother.

PATSY takes up her broom and sweeps each corner of the room vigorously.

PATSY (CONT'D)
 (sings)
*Oh my pretty Mother's home, sweeter
 than the honey in the comb" and
 "Come love pretty love come, come,
 come, Come love pretty love, I want
 some!*

INT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - MEETING HOUSE - MORNING

TWO YOUNG BOYS (10 & 8) pull a BELL ROPE. It chimes loudly!

EXT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - MEETING HOUSE - LATER

The outside doors of the MEETING HOUSE burst open. **Two rows, one of MEN and one of WOMAN, stream from the exits;** out of breath and faces rouge from the physically active morning worship.

INT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - KITCHEN - MORNING

MARY, PATSY and another **OLDER WOMAN** stand by the stove preparing a simple breakfast of bean porridge and root tea.

INT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - DINING HALL - LATER

A **GROUP OF FOUR** are left cleaning the room after the morning meal.

ANGLE ON -

TWO WOMEN wipe down the long wooden tables, as TWO MEN hang all the chairs upside down onto peg racks neatly organized across the available wall space.

SHAKERS
 (speaking in unison)
*I love mother I love her way
 I love her gospel
 Precepts to obey*

*The king may have his throne
 the miser his gold
 The monarch his palace
 And the princess her home*

INT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - KITCHEN - LATER

As young PATSY washes dishes. WE PAN ACROSS AN INTRICATE PIPE SYSTEM fabricated for running water.

PATSY
 (sings)
*I love mother I love her way
 I love her gospel
 Precepts to obey.*

EXT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - FIELDS - LATER

The sun is HIGH IN THE SKY at MIDDAY. JOHN HOCKNELL leads a HORSE WITH A PLOW.

JAMES WHITTAKER follows behind him with a bag of seeds. **TWO YOUNG BOYS** follow closely behind him to pat down the earth.

INT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - KITCHEN - MIDDAY

MARY PARTINGTON bakes meat pies with the assistance of a rotating rack called a ROTATOR. The ROTATOR makes it possible to bake a dozen or so at a time.

CLOSE ON -

TWO YOUNG GIRLS (5 & 7) are washing potatoes at the table. They gaze at MARY PARTINGTON as she utilizes a POTATO PEELER (a modern invention of the Shakers).

GIRL
 Sister, what is the contraption you make use of?

MARY PARTINGTON
 It removes the skin, see. An object of our Brothers at the Smithy's invention.

They look at her as if she were a magician.

GIRL
May I see mother later, please?

MARY PARTINGTON
Mother Ann will be here for supper.

The GIRL bites on her lip.

GIRL 2
She meant *our* mother.

MARY takes the little girls hand.

MARY PARTINGTON
Sister Martha will also be at supper.

INT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - DINING HALL - LATER

The same TWO MEN and TWO WOMEN featured earlier in the DINING HALL are now preparing the room for a lunch service. Taking the chairs off the walls and setting the table with silverware.

SHAKER MEN
(sing)
*I love mother I love her way
I love her gospel
Precepts to obey.*

INT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - MEETING HOUSE - LATER

The SHAKERS enter the MEETING HOUSE again for WORSHIP, organized in TWO ROWS by their sex.

INT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - WORKSHOP - EVENING

JAMES WHITTAKER and ANN LEE stand hunched over a few drawings. An **OLDER BUILDER** is showing them PLANS for an addition to the house.

BUILDER
I've added south facing casements for the dwelling houses.

ANN LEE
Yea, two on either side, but no columns, and rid it of the gratuitous millwork.

INT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - MEETING HALL - LATER

TEN MEN AND TEN WOMEN is hanging up the last chair on the peg rack.

SHAKERS

(sings)

*The king may have his throne
the miser his gold
The monarch his palace
And the princess her home*

*I covet none of theirs
For I've the gospel call
And a kind loving mother
Which is better than them all*

All but ONE leave.

He takes his CANDLE LANTERN and exits...

We hold on the empty room for a short beat. Hold on this, hold, hold.

INT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - ANN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

ANN gets into bed, leans over to her bedside table, and blows out her candle.

All goes dark again...

EXT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - MORNING

ULTRA-WIDE ON -

A **GENERAL** and **FOUR ARMED GUARDS** gallop across the property.

EXT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - MEETING HOUSE - LATER

LONG LENS ON -

ANN LEE exits the main DWELLING HOUSE and surrenders herself to the GENERAL and ARMED GUARDS.

DIEGETIC AUDIO FADES OUT as SEVERAL SHAKER WOMEN beg at the feet of the ARMED GUARDS not to take her away.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

The Elder, James Whittaker, traveled at once to inform the Governor of New York about Mother Ann's imprisonment, harsh treatment and sufferings. The Governor, George Clinton, pronounced disapproval of jailing persons for their pious beliefs, and due to lack of treasonable evidence, he believed the woman should be freed, and thus Mother Ann was joyfully received home by her faithful children.

ANN LEE submits herself to being arrested and is peaceably led across the yard to a horse.

BROTHERS and SISTERS alike look on in despair.

INT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

HOCKNELL lies in an adult-sized cradle. PASTOR RUBEN, ANN and WILLIAM sit by his side. He is very ill.

WILLIAM

We traveled day and night, brother Hocknell, Mother is here now.

PASTOR RUBEN

He has taken neither food nor drink since yesterday.

ANN LEE

We came fast as we were able.

HOCKNELL opens his eyes and looks at her, he attempts to speak but a bad cough prevents him.

ANN LEE (CONT'D)

Rest brother.

He shakes his head no. She hands him a cup and he takes a small sip.

JOHN HOCKNELL

Last month, God's gift cured my whooping cough, but it remanifested as these blisters on my hands to signal that my work here was not yet done.

(MORE)

JOHN HOCKNELL (CONT'D)

He spoke to me and said, "I have work for you to do, and when you have done your work, the same cough will return to you and take you out of this world." So we labored until we finished the second dwelling house, Mother.

ANN takes his hand in hers.

ANN LEE

The house is beautiful, Brother John.

INT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - HALLWAY - MORNING

Snow falls heavily outside.

ANN moves to the bell rope and rings it twice. Her movements are labored - she has aged.

She crosses to the window and gazes out at the houses - all that they have built.

ANN LEE

(Sings)

How can I but love my dear faithful children, who're willing to bear and suffer with me. When I was on earth and in a cold prison I cry'd out to my God to remember poor me. I was distressed and in a stone prison, and none but my God to protect me from harm.

CROSS-DISSOLVE:

A MAP OF THE NORTHEASTERN COLONIES DEMONSTRATES THE PLACES ANN AND HER FOLLOWERS TRAVELED ON PILGRIMAGE.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Having again lost six precious months of her lifetime to a term of incarceration she soon set forth on a spiritual crusade to spread the gospel throughout New England; a two year journey traveling hundreds of miles, suffering indescribable hardships, and persecution.

EXT. PETERSHAM FOREST - EVENING

ALL IS WHITE in deep winter.

WE PAN with a SMALL CARAVAN led by ANN LEE, WILLIAM, JAMES WHITTAKER, and MARY PARTINGTON who travel by sled across the SNOWY TUNDRA.

EXT. PETERSHAM FOREST - SHATTUCK HOUSE - EVENING

It is evening now and the snow falls heavy as the SMALL CARAVAN arrives at a scatter of crude wooden huts clinging to the side of a mountain. Smoke rises thinly from stone chimneys.

THE SHATTUCK FAMILY stand waiting for them by the large door of a makeshift church.

JAMES WHITTAKER
Ye watched, for ye knew not which
hour we would come!

ANN LEE
(calls out)
It is good to watch, and you should
always watch!

The patriarch of the family, **MR. SHATTUCK** steps up to greet them.

MR. SHATTUCK
Welcome, Mother. It is an honor to
host you.

WILLIAM
I am pleased to see you again
Brother Thomas.

MR. SHATTUCK
We have made great progress. I
think you'll be delighted to see
how many have accepted our
invitation this night!

WILLIAM helps ANN off the sled.

INT. PETERSHAM FOREST - SHATTUCK CHURCH - LATER

The church is rough-hewn - walls of weathered timber merging with the mountain rock itself, its surface exposed and adorned with faded religious paintings.

The main assembly area is divided by a small alcove where ANN sits - almost like a figure on display.

There is an air of theatrics; ANN LEE, MARY PARTINGTON and the **WOMEN OF THE SHATTUCK FAMILY** (who are hosting the assembly) all gather around ANN with other SHAKER SISTERS nearby.

WE PAN with WILLIAM LEE and JAMES WHITTAKER as they step out of the partitioned area and into the larger room.

The space is overflowing with **CURIOS SPECTATORS** and FELLOW SHAKERS, alike.

MARY leads the crowd in a wordless Hymn.

WILLIAM
(calls out)
Good evening! Make room! Make room, and move closer!

She pauses as WILLIAM speaks, but the followers continue softly.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Seeing that so many have come to join us this night, please exercise patience in passing through to sit in the presence of our Mother Ann.

THE CROWD begins to push forward into the partitioned area.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Forbearance, I say!

WE PAN BACK with WILLIAM as he takes his place next to ANN. He stands reverently with a lit candle in his grasp.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
(calls out)
We have founded six new settlements at New Lebanon in New York; Enfield in Connecticut; and Hancock, Harvard, Shirley, and Tyringham in Massachusetts! And now, at Petersham! There shall be a place for each of you!

A **YOUNG MOTHER** approaches ANN LEE with her **TWIN DAUGHTERS**.

YOUNG MOTHER
Mother, is it really you?

ANN LEE
Yes, Child.

She turns to the two charming **TWIN DAUGHTERS**.

ANN LEE (CONT'D)
 Do not be frightened, lassies. It
 delights me so to make your
 acquaintance. Come nearer to me. I
 am your Mother.

The YOUNG MOTHER urges them to move forward.

YOUNG MOTHER
 Do not be shy.

ANN LEE
 They must find themselves
 befuddled! Let me explain, I am
 your Mother and your mother's
 Mother.

WILLIAM
 (calls out)
 We shall erect edifice here at
 Petersham! I call on you Brothers
 and Sisters, to aid in this
 endeavor!

THERE IS A SUDDEN FLURRY OF ACTIVITY AND FRIGHT. A MAN IN THE CROWD cries out..

MAN IN CROWD
You will never build here!

ANN turns to her friend MARY PARTINGTON, woefully concerned.

MARY reacts and stands to get a better look at the back of the Assembly Room.

The WINDOWS ARE FLUNG OPEN and, all at once, the CANDLES ARE KNOCKED OUT, except for the one WILLIAM is holding.

In darkness, **THREE RUFFIANS** rush through the crowd from the front of the room, pulling down the partition, and piling on ANN LEE.

They seize ANN, trying to wrench her away—but THE SHATTUCK WOMEN, MARY PARTINGTON, and SEVERAL OTHER SISTERS lock arms around her, refusing to let go as the THREE RUFFIANS drag and pull.

WILLIAM
 Stop this disgrace, forthwith! Take
 your soiled hands from my sister's
 skirts!

ANOTHER RUFFIAN standing by WILLIAM turns to him and strikes him across the face, he falls to the ground.

He points to ANN..

ANOTHER RUFFIAN
She is not a she at all! Her sex
must be examined.

MRS. SHATTUCK throws herself over ANN, holding her down with all her strength. No matter how hard the THREE MEN beat and pull at her, MRS. SHATTUCK does not move — she will not yield.

RUFFIAN
Take the Brother!

The THREE RUFFIANS turn their attention to WILLIAM and begin to pull him through the CROWD more successfully.

FOLLOWING A SHORT STRUGGLE, they pull him by his feet out an open window.

ANN LEE
Stop! I beg of you. Mrs, Shattuck,
please let me go to Brother
William!

MRS. SHATTUCK moves off ANN who scrambles to her feet.

EXT. PETERSHAM FOREST - SHATTUCK CHURCH- NIGHT

WIDE ON -

The panicked crowd runs from the house as a group of **YOUNGER RUFFIANS** light branches on fire and throw them inside open windows.

Smoke billows from the exits.

EXT. PETERSHAM FOREST - SHATTUCK CHURCH - NIGHT

The house is in ruins.

CLOSE ON -

The THREE RUFFIANS have tied WILLIAM and JAMES WHITTAKER to a tree. Their backs have been violently whipped, ripped to shreds. **WILLIAM is unconscious.**

ANGLE ON -

ANN has been badly beaten, her lip is swollen and bloodied. TWO YOUNG RUFFIANS hold her arms while the older RUFFIAN removes her skirts.

ANN LEE
No, please.

YOUNG RUFFIAN
What is she? What is she?!

The RUFFIAN grips her crotch, and moves his face close to hers. **ANN remains defiant confronted by him.**

RUFFIAN
A eunuch, I reckon. There is no phallus. Did you cut it off, witch?

ANN LEE
I forgive you for your sins and I will pray for your souls.

ANGLE ON -

THE SHATTUCK FAMILY, MARY PARTINGTON and the other SHAKERS are forced by MEN to watch on, helplessly.

ANN LEE (CONT'D)
Pray for them, Mary!

Far off, **A GUNSHOT RINGS OUT.** The RUFFIANS pause, some look worried.

ANGLE ON -

JAMES looks towards ANN, and cries out...

JAMES WHITTAKER
(shouts)
Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

ANGLE ON -

The MEN let go of ANN and she falls to her feet.

RUFFIAN
She has all the right parts, but she is not a woman.

He wipes his hand in the snow.

RUFFIAN (CONT'D)
Rank, she is. It is. Whatever you are.

YOUNG RUFFIAN

I see clans gathering not far off,
coming in numbers and carrying
rifles.

ULTRA-WIDE ON -

WE HOLD on the morbid scene as the RUFFIANS depart, leaving
the SHAKERS to tend to their wounded.

EXT. WOODS - MORNING

The CARAVAN OF SNOW SLEDS moves gracefully through the TUNDRA
traversing forest paths.

OVERHEAD ON -

ANN and WILLIAM, brother and sister, lay side-by-side in the
sled. Their faces are badly swollen and crusted over with
dried blood.

ANN reaches for her brother's hand. He opens his eyes and
looks at her. He attempts to speak but ANN stops him.

ANN LEE
(Whispers)
Rest, William.

She looks at the peaceful snow covered forest, as it rushes
past.

ANN LEE (CONT'D)
(sings)
*Down to the deep and rolling river
Of Jordan I will go. I would be
baptized again. I would not stand
alone. Gospel parents can you bless
me. Will you breathe for me one
prayer. Holy angels, guide my
spirit. Keep me ever in thy care.
Gospel parents can you bless me.
Will you breathe for me one prayer.
Holy angels, guide my spirit. Keep
me ever in thy care.*

After a moment, she adjusts her body and lets her hand fall
out to the side of the sled to trace a line in the snow.

CLOSE ON -

Small traces of blood drip from ANN's fingers, leaving a trail of red drops like breadcrumbs along the snowy path.

CROSS-DISSOLVE:

EXT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - DWELLING HOUSE - DAY

SPRING HAS SPRUNG. It's a new season.

Musical Note: DOWN TO THE DEEP AND ROLLING RIVER

CLOSE ON -

PATSY (no longer pregnant) hangs linens on a line as she sings...

PATSY drops the a linen, when she spot something in the horizon line.

PATSY
Mother!

REVERSE ON-

ANN'S CARAVAN moving towards the house.

ETX. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - APPLE ORCHARD - DAY

ANN LEE rocks back and forth singing under her breath in unknown tongues. **HER DAYS APPEAR TO BE NUMBERED.**

MARY PARTINGTON heads towards her, faster than usual, a pep in her step.

MARY PARTINGTON
Mother-

ANN LEE speaks, lost in thought, not seeming to have heard her friend and Sister, MARY PARTINGTON.

ANN LEE
Sister Mary, how beautiful this tree is now.

ANGLE ON -

The APPLE TREE.

ANN LEE (CONT'D)
But some of the apples will soon fall off; some will hold on longer.
(MORE)

ANN LEE (CONT'D)

Some will hold on till they are half grown, and then fall off, and some will get ripe. So it is with souls who set out in the way of God. Many will set out very fair, and soon fall away; some will go further, and then fall off; some will go further still, and then fall; and some will go through.

BACK TO -

MARY PARTINGTON

Mother Ann, I have the most wonderful news!

ANN turns to her, suddenly lucid.

MARY PARTINGTON (CONT'D)

General Cornwallis was surrounded and forced to surrender the British position at Yorktown to the American, George Washington! It's perhaps occurred a long while ago but news has reached us only now. See, this is why the seasons have been so peaceful at Niskayuna!

ANN LEE slowly slips down to her knees to pray.

ANN LEE

Thanks be to God. All tyrannical and oppressive governments shall be overthrown and destroyed, and mankind enjoy Just and equal rights in all matters civil and religious.

MARY PARTINGTON

Mother, let me help you back to your chair.

MARY PARTINGTON kneels to aid her and lift her back to her rocking chair.

ANN LEE

(smiles)

You must take great care of God's earth. Cultivate the land. Yield her increase and develop her beauty. This must be done in a spirit of love. The earth yields most to those who love it.

MARY PARTINGTON
Yes, Mother.

ANN furrows her brow.

ANN LEE
Sister, has Brother William settled
in? He has not come yet today to
visit me.

MARY sighs.

MARY PARTINGTON
Brother William departed this earth
last winter, Mother.

ANN LEE
(woeful)
Ah, yes, that's right. Sister, I
was confounded because just moments
ago, I saw my brother William
coming in a glorious chariot to
take me home.

DIEGETIC AUDIO fades out...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Mother Ann, did succumb to her
injuries, in time.

INT./EXT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - VARIOUS TIMES OF DAY

Musical cue: BEAUTIFUL TREASURES returns here.

A SERIES OF SHOTS move us through the preparations for ANN'S BURIAL:

- A CARPENTER constructs a coffin.
- Linens for the coffin box are sewn.
- ANN LEE's body is washed.
- A hole is dug.
- ANN's body is placed in the coffin.

INT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - MEETING HOUSE - DAY

**Musical Note: THE CHORUS Of SHAKERS sing and rejoicing
"BEAUTIFUL TREASURES"**

A hundred SHAKERS sing and dance in a circular formation.

SHAKERS
(sings)
*Oh the beautiful treasures.
Laid up for the wise.
How precious the values.
How glorious the prize
Far brighter than diamonds On
prince's brow. And richer than
royalty, Can bestow.*

INT. NISKAYUNA SETTLEMENT - MEETING HOUSE - DAY

MARY PARTINGTON sits beside the coffin of her dear departed friend. The room is quiet, solemn.

JAMES WHITTAKER enters and takes a seat beside her.

MARY PARTINGTON
A place for everything, and
everything in its place.

FADE TO BLACK.