

Extract from *Ghost Gypsy* by Sharon Muiruri Coyne

*VIOLET, a young Traveller, has travelled back in time to find out about her heritage and how Gypsies became involved with the Suffragette movement over 100 years ago. She travels with GRANNY, our Ghost Gypsy. LOTTIE and GEORGINA are suffragettes and PRICILLA, a local Gypsy woman.*

Scene 5: The Suffragettes

PRICILLA: Know how to drive a wagon?

LOTTIE: Hadn't thought through the challenges of the road. To be honest Pricilla, I have always wanted to travel in a Gypsy caravan, the wind in my hair. So romantic ...and here we are with a real Gypsy. I've fantasied about such an adventure. All that freedom... the true bohemia life.

PRICILLA: Freedom? that's what all this 'votes for women' is about?

GEORGINA: Absolutely! Well done Pricilla

PRICILLA: Really? Thank you, Georgina for your condescension. Freedom... hmm... I'll tell you what's it really like. Imagine, having to cope in the rain with nowhere to dry your clothes. Your children sleeping under the wagon on the earth, mud and stone. Poverty... not hunger strikes ... real grinding hunger. Many don't survive on the road, especially the infants. Being driven hounded out from place to place. We aren't welcome... strangers, some are good to us , but most think of us as dirt to be kicked around... nothing but vagrants (pause). So yes I'm coming with you for my people. You play at being Gypsies we live it.

LOTTIE: I'm sorry, so sorry I didn't mean to offend I just...

PRICILLA: I know you meant no harm. But other people have written our history usually so-called scholars and romantics -but they don't have a clue how hard it is on the road.

LOTTIE: I am embarrassed by my ignorance.

GRANNY: Pricilla, don't be too heavy with these ladies. They've good hearts. And they have paid you well for loan of the wagon.

VIOLET: But they deserve it. They have no idea.

PRICILLA: There's no space for sentimentality.

GEORGINA: Look here, I know Lottie got a bit carried away... And she will never say this herself but she has given up everything, so that women like you and I will one day have the vote. She has been cut off from her family. Her husband, a highly respected banker in the city has disowned her. She doesn't have a penny to her name. Lottie knows pain and hardship. She was imprisoned after one protest. Can you imagine what prison is like for a woman? She has been humiliated and shamed...

PRICILLA: I see... well. That took courage. I admire you for that Lottie. But if you want to fight for equality it needs to be everyone. We all need to have a voice and be counted (pause). Come on its getting dark. We have work to do ladies!