

HERSTORY Empowers

Michelle T Clemens, St. John's

**Better for Us All (an excerpt)**

**SCENE 5**

Sound of the hymn *Amazing Grace*. Marie wears her "Votes for Woman" sash as she places a wreath on her mother's grave.

**MARIE**

Mom, I missed you something fierce today. You should have been there. It was a proud moment. Men and women together. Lined up, taking their turn. There were some mutterings among the men and the odd woman too, about how we didn't belong. But we all held our heads high and kept our peace, as we went inside. I got to admit I was nervous. It's 1928 and I finally had an election I could vote in. I had every right to be there, but like in my dream, I expect to be hauled off and pushed outside the door. When I got my ballot in my hand, I was shaking. Me, fifty years old and trembling in front of this boy, young enough to be my grandson. I read it twice through and thought of you, and all the women who never had the chance. I marked my X so firm I nearly went through the paper. Imagine - my first vote and I nearly spoiled my ballot.

Marie moves with agitation, then goes back to the grave and lays her hand upon it.

**MARIE**

..... It's the start of it Mom. Our little Helen was all fired up to go and vote herself this morning. She wouldn't accept she was too young. "Wasn't I a girl," she said. "I follows all the papers?" She looked at me with that little determined face of hers and insisted that I change all the rules for her. (Pause) She'll do it. Her strong mind and her powerful will. She'll change the rules.