

"LAWRENCE, 1912"

FADE IN:

EXT. THE MERRIMACK RIVER (WINTERTIME), MASSACHUSETTS (1912)

A very close shot on the waterway deceives us into thinking this might be an open sea.

ELIZABETH "GURLEY" FLYNN (V.O.)
1912. The year the Titanic
crashed into an iceberg.

THREE SMOKESTACKS BILLOWING SMOKE

They look like the ones on the Titanic. But as we pull back, we discover they're part of a factory along the Hudson River.

GURLEY (V.O. CONT.)
This was the time of the great
monopolies. A few enterprising
men amassed huge fortunes just
by combining companies to
eliminate competition.

EXT. MANHATTAN SKYLINE - DAY

Some grainy newsreel footage of the skyscrapers reveals New York at the height of the industrial age. In the distance to the west, we see those same smokestacks.

EXT. RAILROAD YARD, SOUTHERN ITALY - DAY

A mob of angry RAIL HANDS clashes with POLICE.

GURLEY (V.O. CONT.)
As for the rest of us, needless
to say, there were problems.
The world economy was in a
tailspin. Europe besieged by
unemployment and strikes.

A VILLAGE OUTSIDE DAMASCUS, SYRIA - DAY

Lush with groves of fruit and olive trees. But the village is nearly abandoned. THE RAMEY FAMILY (ALI, 38; MRS. RAMEY, son JOHN, 18, and beautiful daughter JULIA, 16) boards a WAGON packed with their belongings. Teary-eyed Julia takes one last glimpse of what she's leaving behind.

GURLEY (V.O. CONT.)

In Arabia and elsewhere,
villages disappeared when the
market for their agriculture
collapsed.

AN ADVERTISEMENT

blows off the back of the wagon. The leaflet depicts a happy textile worker in America toting money bags from the mill directly into a bank.

GURLEY (V.O. CONT.)

So some made the journey to
America, hearing of opportunity.

EXT. HARBOR OFF ELLIS ISLAND, NEW YORK - DAY

The steamship Canopie chugs towards Manhattan, loaded with Italian immigrants.

EXT. STEEL MILL, PITTSBURGH - DAY

A picket line of STEELWORKERS surrounds the entrance gate as Pinkerton GUARDS escort SCABS into the yard.

GURLEY (V.O. CONT.)

But we had our own labor crisis.
Perhaps the only real
opportunity in those days
existed in law enforcement...

A contingent of REPORTERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS trails behind the scabs like a swarm of mosquitoes.

GURLEY (V.O. CONT.)

... and of course, in the field
of journalism.

EXT. THE MERRIMACK RIVER - DAWN

The same stretch we saw before, but this time the view incorporates the surrounding wilderness. On shore, a DEER looks up, startled. We FOLLOW the river up to the edge of --

THE GREAT STONE DAM, LAWRENCE, MASSACHUSETTS,

where snow piles are stacked up like a log jam.

GURLEY (V.O. CONT.)

But finally a storm of protest
had gathered momentum from
around the world. And it would
come to a head in a place few
people had even heard of.

On the other side of the dam, the river branches off into a canal, and beyond that --

A CITY OF BRICK TEXTILE MILLS

is packed along both waterways.

GURLEY (V.O. CONT.)

Lawrence, Massachusetts.

INT. DYE ROOM, WASHINGTON MILLS, LAWRENCE - DAY

Ali Ramey and John submerge heavy sheets of material into boiling vats of purple dye with OTHER WORKERS.

INT. DRAWING FRAMES, EVERETT MILLS

Pretty LIS (18, Polish) is not intimidated by the lecherous FOREMAN eyeing her with a cigar in his mouth. She meets his stare with defiance: Make my day.

Down the aisle, CAMILLE TEOLI, 13, grapples with the gears, but the gears and pulleys overwhelm her. She doesn't notice her long hair dangling close to the moving parts.

Across from Camille, pretty and demure ANNA LA PIZZO 27, monitors her machines with deft efficiency.

INT. WEAVE ROOM

A stone-faced polish weaver, GRETA, waits skeptically while one of her looms is adjusted.

AT GRETA'S LOOM

An English LOOM FIXER applies soap to the belts. Beside him, the OVERSEER (O'ROURKE) looks on like a co-conspirator.

LOOM FIXER

She'll run two hours faster now.

OVERSEER

Enough to get us the bonus?

LOOM FIXER

I ain't doing this for my health.

O'ROURKE

You sure it ain't gonna chew up the cloth?

LOOM FIXER

Long as their hands keep up.

The fixer gestures behind him at Greta.

O'ROURKE

(quietly)

They're sure gonna be in a tit when the bosses announce the paycut.

LOOM FIXER

Better them than us.

INT. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES, 2ND FLOOR, AMERICAN WOOLEN COMPANY, LAWRENCE - DAY

The hand of C.E.O. WILLIAM WOOD, (50; Portuguese extraction, thick brows, groomed mustached) lays a sheet of accounting figures down on a varnished mahogany desk. A gold chain dangles from his fashionable woolen vest.

A group of college-aged STAFFERS are assembled at the surrounding desks. They look bored. MR. SHERMAN, 48, Wood's assistant, is the only attentive listener.

WOOD

The lower cost of the wool was offset in this case by the cost of the newer equipment, and naturally, the reduced output during the period of installation. But thereafter the ratios should climb, then surpass their median levels. Finally, the increased margin of profit should begin to "kick in", if everyone is doing their job. And to make sure everyone is doing their job, I have asked you to compile these reports on a weekly basis.

The young men all avert their gaze. Apparently, the dog ate their homework.

WOOD (CONT.)

It is precisely such figures I refer to when calculating your salaries. Mr. Edwards, are the new fire hoses set up?

STAFFER (EDWARDS)

Yes, Mr. Wood. Except the superintendent at Ayer Mill says the old hoses will do for another year.

WOOD

I want them replaced tomorrow, Mr. Edwards. We don't need a repeat of the Triangle Fire in Lawrence, now do we?

EDWARDS

God help us.

WOOD

That blunder cost Blanch and Harris a year's inventory. Idiots.

EDWARDS

I think they were damned lucky
to beat the manslaughter
charges.

WOOD

Baloney. The businessman doesn't
have a crystal ball.

EDWARDS

(eyeing Wood's accounting
sheet)

No, sir.

WOOD

Mr. Sherman. Hours of
operation.

In the manner of a grade school teacher:

SHERMAN

Yes, Mr. Wood. As you all know,
effective January 1st, a new
state law has lowered the
maximum workweek from 56 to 54
hours for women and children.

WOOD

I assume a notice went up in all
the departments.

Some guilty faces. Wood paces towards the window.

SHERMAN

(clarifying)

Due to the large number of
operatives affected by this
change, the new hours must apply
system-wide.

WOOD

And the first paycheck showing
the reduction shall be issued
when?

SHERMAN

Friday, sir.

WOOD'S WINDOW POV

Pretty Josephine Lis saunters past with two girlfriends. hey're on their lunch hour. She spots the spy in the window and gives him the same challenge she gave the foreman.

GURLEY (V.O.)

The son of a Portuguese immigrant, William Wood controlled an empire affectionately known by all as the Wool Trust. If the workers planned to take him on, they would need some help.

EXT. POLLY HALLIDAY'S RESTAURANT, GREENWICH VILLAGE, NEW YORK - DAY

The entrance to the popular bohemian rendezvous is adorned with nautical paraphernalia: ropes, helm, navigation equipment. Into its rustic doors stride chatting pairs of mostly well-to-do FEMALE CLUBMEMBERS. They're all dressed snugly to fend off the winter chill.

EMCEE (V.O.)

The Heterodoxy Club is delighted to have someone with us today whom the New York Times refers to as "that ferocious socialist haranguer from the East Side".

INT. UPSTAIRS FOYER, SAME

The same women pass through double doors into a hall.

GURLEY (V.O.)

(embarrassed; apologetic)
That would be me.

ANTEROOM

ELIZABETH GURLEY FLYNN (31; magnolia face, swarm of black hair loosely wrapped inside a bun) awaits the end of her introduction and other business. She wears a simple full black skirt, white blouse and red tie.

END EXCERPT

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