

Scandal Sisters is a historical novel based on the true story of two Gilded Age sisters who turned scandal into strategy. Bold, witty, and defiant, they sued millionaires, shocked society, and rewrote the rules—long before Instagram.

Scandal Sisters

By Kimberly Sheeter

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KIMBERLY SHEETER

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Nora Kent
Webster Apartments
419 West 34th Street
New York City

January 15, 1932

Miss Catherine Poillon
c/o Knights of Columbus Hotel
50 East 87th Street
New York City

Dear Miss Poillon,

Allow me to reintroduce myself—we met at my baptism. My mother, Marianna Kent (née Murray), was a school friend of yours at Emma Willard. She grew up near you on Lincoln Avenue. Sadly, I lost her this year.

She often spoke of the dazzling Poillon sisters—celebrated for their wit, charm, and bold spirits. I can't tell you how often she laughed, remembering your sister Charlotte carrying a choirmaster with a broken ankle out of the woods. The weaker sex, indeed. (I wasn't surprised to learn your sister stepped into the ring with Gentleman Jim Corbett.)

I write to you now as a daughter of Troy and a journalist. I have followed your adventures in New York and Paris, in the courtroom and in the press. I know better than most how stories are shaped—and misshaped. I suspect you do, too.

After my mother's passing, I discovered something unexpected. Tucked into the back of her Bible was an envelope labeled "Kitty & Lottie." Inside were yellowed clippings—carefully folded.

The first one I read was a *New York Sun* article about your stay on Blackwell's Island. I won't pretend I didn't keep reading.

I have so many questions. The more I read, the more convinced I became that the real story—*your* story—remains untold.

The Scandal Sisters.

That's what they call you. But is that who you are?

For the past decade, my career has been devoted to uncovering the truth behind public figures. Inspired by our school's motto, *To be rather than to seem*, I want to hear that truth—from you.

Would you and Charlotte meet with me? No conditions, no pretense—just a conversation. Given your devotion to one another, I believe her perspective would be invaluable.

We can meet at my residence on West 34th Street next Wednesday at three o'clock. But if another place feels more suitable, name it.

With or without my involvement, I suspect your story is far from over.

With warm regards,
Nora Kent
Class of 1921,
Emma Willard

Attached Clipping

The Sun, New York, New York—March 12, 1908

POILLONS IN PEN AT LAST.

Writ of Habeas Corpus Denied and They Go to the Island.

The Poillon sisters started on their way yesterday afternoon to the Blackwell's Island penitentiary to serve out the three-month sentence for defrauding hotels. Before they were taken in charge by the Warden Flynn, who had them in custody, Catherine let out a volley of Poillon language in the Supreme Court and Charlotte stuck out her tongue.

Early in the day, Justice O'Gorman dismissed the application of their lawyer, Greenberg, for a stay of sentence pending an appeal to the Appellate Division. Greenberg, who had obtained momentary assistance for his clients on a writ of habeas corpus, started to talk about his clients' rights. Justice O'Gorman interrupted to remark that he would deny the application and fine the Poillons or their lawyer \$10 costs. By and by the sisters were brought before Justice FitzGerald in the Supreme Court on another writ of habeas corpus. Justice FitzGerald dismissed the writs, and Warden Flynn's man took the militant sisters away.

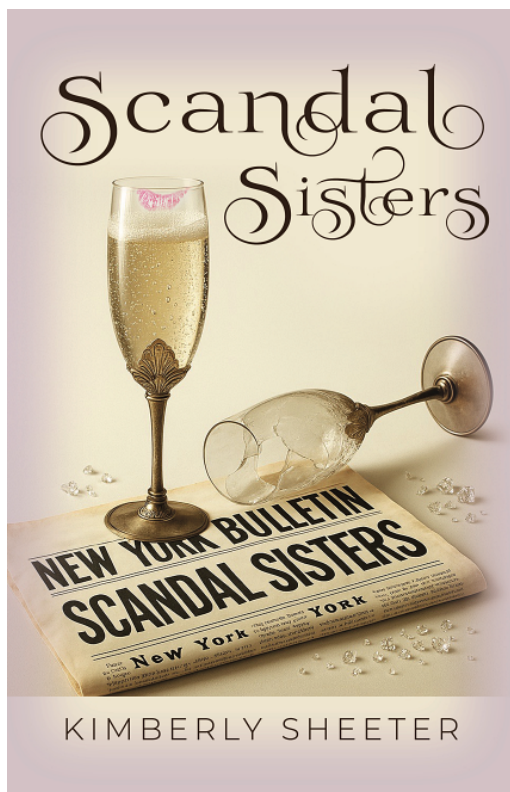
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