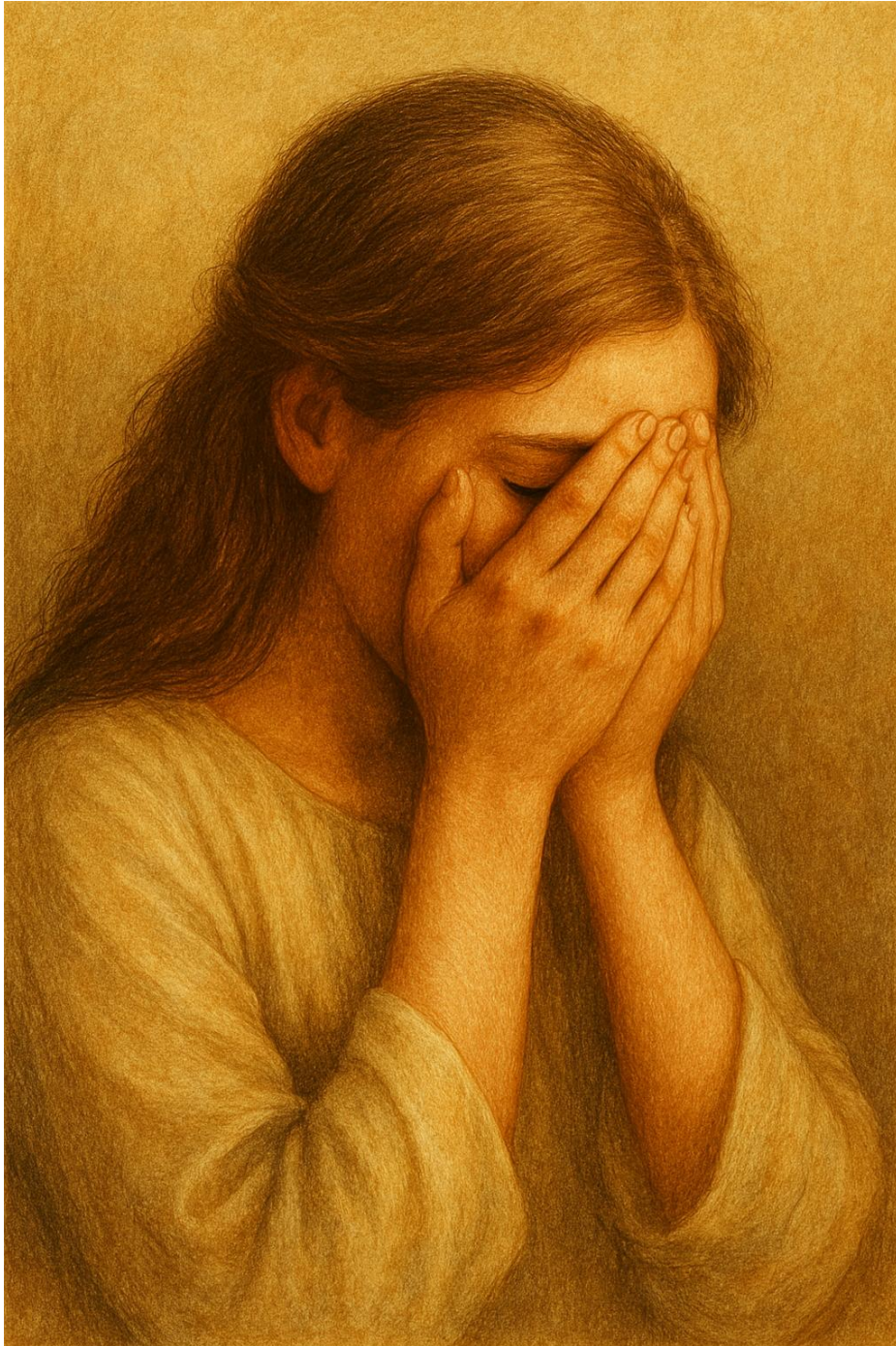


IV: Abortion Bans are the Cruel Cutting Edge of the Autocratic Sword



“This was never just about abortion, or our bodies, or reproductive health. Abortion is a democracy issue, an economic issue, a workers’ rights and racism issue. It’s a speech issue and a parents’ issue.”

Jessica Valenti: Abortion: Our Bodies, Their Lies, and the Truths We Use to Win

In late 2024, as a professional courtesy, I told my contact at an organization where we were partway into an 18-month values and culture initiative that I was working on an independent study comparing the temperance crusade that resulted in Prohibition during the last century with the anti-abortion crusade of today. The next morning I received a one-sentence email terminating the contract effective immediately, in violation of a 30-day cancellation clause. This was one of the precipitating factors in my decision to retire ahead of when I had planned.

The ultimate irony is that the people who most need to read my monograph *Prohibition 2.0* are those who are sincerely devoted to the “pro-life” cause. *By adopting virtually page-for-page the politicized, punitive, draconian, and cruel playbook of Prohibition, anti-abortion crusaders have guaranteed that their abortion bans, almost exclusively enacted and upheld by legislative and judicial bodies dominated by white Republican men, will face the same fate of repudiation and repeal.* That handwriting is already on the wall in states like Florida, Missouri, Wisconsin and Iowa where Republicans have gone to such great lengths to impose total abortion bans that contravene the expressed will of the people.

By choosing to enact extreme and draconian abortion bans, and to enforce them by threatening doctors with prison for providing care they deem to be medically necessary, these white Republican men have guaranteed that abortion ban horror stories will vastly outnumber stories of women who end up being happy about having been forced to carry an unwanted pregnancy. This too is already happening. There are *already* hundreds of horror stories of women and their families being harmed by Republican forced pregnancy laws (Amanda Zurawski, Kate Cox, Adriana Smith, Hadley Duvall, Chloe Partridge, Elisabeth Weber, Porsha Ngumezi and – *already!* – hundreds of others).

By contrast, there are precisely ZERO stories of women who are thankful that the state forced them to carry an unwanted pregnancy. See for yourself. Use any search engine and look for post-Dobbs happy outcome stories – there are none. Since the stated goal of anti-abortion crusaders is to prevent the more than one million abortions that occur in the United States *every year*, the horror stories will accumulate by the thousands. Each and every one of these stories will add to the weight of the GOP’s Abortion Albatross that I write about in this section.

Abortion bans are the canary in the coalmine of the Trumpian assault on our democracy. Because a majority of Americans believe that abortion should be legal in all or most cases, once the political tide turns, as it inevitably will, the only way Republicans can prevent repudiation and repeal of their abortion bans is to impose upon our nation the patriarchal rulership envisioned by Project 2025 and imagined in *The Handmaid’s Tale*.