

## 43 Plays for 43 Presidents Audition Sides

CHOOSE THREE. ALL SIDES ARE FOR MALE OR FEMALE ACTORS,  
EVEN MALE CHARACTERS

## GEORGE WASHINGTON

*(Biblically, speaking of his presidential coat)*

Do not partake of that which is forbade. And do not grab for this coat when I put it back on this rack, for whomever grabbeth this coat seeketh the office and office-seekers shall seek personal greatness above the goodness and rightness of these United States. God demands that the office shall seek the man. Not the other way around. So be it, or this vulnerable little country will swallow itself up, and foreign devils will tempt us into eternal damnation.

## BEN FRANKLIN

*(Massachusetts accent, in the style of a comedy roast for Thomas Jefferson)*

What could I say about Thomas Jefferson? Someone once said he was ‘the greatest man and ornament of the age and country in which he lived.’ Oh, wait! You said that about me. You are so... Jeffersonian. “If you would not be forgotten as soon as you are dead and rotten, either write things worth reading, or do things worth the writing.” But I could quote myself all day; I’ve got loads of them. Let’s get back to Tom.

## NARRATION

*(Straightforward, clear)*

Harrison left medical school when he ran out of money and decided to join the army. His reputation as an Indian fighter led to an appointment as Governor of Indian Territory by John Adams, with the understanding that he was to secure legal claim to as much Native American land as possible. Over the next 12 years, Harrison systematically stripped Native Americans from their land utilizing alcohol, trinkets and treaties to steal millions of acres from local tribes.

## NARRATION

Once upon a time there was a quiet girl from New Hampshire, who met a handsome, outgoing man. And although she longs for a quiet home and a quiet life with many children, when the man and the woman married, she was swept away by a team of horses to a gloomy boarding house in Washington, DC.

## LINCOLN

Let me tell you what is coming. After the sacrifice of countless millions of treasure and hundreds of thousands of lives you may win Southern independence, but I doubt it. The North is determined to preserve this Union. They are not a fiery, impulsive people as you are... But when they begin to move in a given direction, they move with the steady momentum and perseverance of a mighty avalanche.

## ANDREW JOHNSON/LYNDON B. JOHNSON

*(Both presidents have the same monologue, the aftermath of a traumatic event.)*

There is a feeling that you get when you wake up from a nightmare and you're not quite sure yet if you're really awake because even though you know you're in a different place than you were just a moment ago you still have that feeling of horror, you've brought that feeling with you and you start to think that the horror is real and danger is real and everything is exactly as it happened in your nightmare.

## NARRATION

*(Talking about Ulysses S. Grant, delivered like an Old Western TV show)*

His father tanned hides. Growing up, from his room, he could hear the dying squeals of animals and the smell of guts and drying hides at the shop across the street. He became ill at the sight of blood and could only eat his meat if it was cooked well done.

## NARRATION

*(Straightforward)*

By the end of the day on November 7, 1876, it looked like a clear victory for Tilden, the Democratic candidate. Hayes went to bed that night, having conceded the election. Upset with the election results, Daniel Sickles, a Republican, decided to go to the theatre that night in New York. On his way home around midnight, Sickles decided to stop by the election headquarters to check the returns. After checking the numbers, he realized that if Hayes could capture South Carolina, Florida and Louisiana, he would win the Electoral College and therefore the election.

## WOODROW WILSON

*(Professorial)*

A lecture on myself. Professor and President of Princeton, which I also attended. Governor of New Jersey. Ran for President. Taft and Teddy split the vote and so I got elected. Fun interesting fact: the only President to ever have a Ph.D.

Got re-elected: “He kept us out of war.” But due to unlimited submarine warfare, we went to war. Now here is the irony, I was sworn in on March 5 and less than one month later asked Congress to declare war on Germany. But I had to make the world “safe for Democracy.” Fun interesting fact: I established daylight savings time... to save fuel.

## WARREN HARDING

*(straightforward, defeated)*

I’m a man of limited talents from a small town. I don’t seem to grasp that I am President. I am not fit for this office and should never have been here.

## NARRATION

*(straightforward)*

Roosevelt won his fourth term in 1944 and died in Warm Springs, Georgia in 1945. It was Lucy Mercer, his lifelong mistress, who with him as he died. Eleanor arrived later that day, learning of Lucy’s presence on the car ride over. It was then that she realized with certainty that Roosevelt had not kept his word to stop seeing Lucy back in 1918, when Eleanor first discovered the affair.

## BILL CLINTON

I am speaking. I am speaking and I am feeling. I am feeling the things that you feel, and I am feeling them deeply. Your needs. I feel that, the things you need. We all need things. For all us Americans, there are things that we need. And while I am feeling, I understand, I understand what is happening and I understand what you’re feeling.