

SCIENCE FICTION THEATRE

An entertaining and educational presentation modeled after the famous radio theatres of the 30's, 40's, and 50's. Delivered by live presenters before an audience of seniors.

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Los Angeles, California – February, 1949

Open set, Studio B

Live Radio Show

Written by John Waters and Harry E. Paisley

Announcer:	Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to Science Fiction Theatre. Tonight's performance of Science Fiction Theatre will be a special presentation celebrating President's Day. Our stars tonight will be: Harry E. Paisley as George Washington, and Keith McKenzie as Abraham Lincoln. Our special sponsor for tonight's performance will be...Alka-Seltzer.
Commercial Speedy: Jingle:	Alka-Seltzer. You worked too hard. You ate too much. Plop, plop... Fizz, fizz... Oh, what a relief it is. Plop, plop... Fizz, fizz... Oh, what a relief it is. What a relief.
OPENING MONOLOGUE Narrator:	It's late February, 1797. George Washington is in his final weeks as President, and he is in a reflective mood.

<p>Washington:</p>	<p>In two weeks, John Adams will be taking office as our new president. Will Adams carry on, and will this country continue to grow and prosper? Or will this just be an experiment gone terribly wrong?</p> <p>This experiment began when we broke from Great Britain and declared our independence, and fought a six-year war against the greatest army in the world. The war ended in 1781 with this great army surrendering, and a new nation being formed. I became the first president because Adams was so disliked. And now in two weeks he will be our new president. Some have asked me to be president for life; but I felt we got rid of one king and did not need another.</p> <p>I can't stop thinking...have I done everything I could in the last eight years? Will we be able to keep the momentum of what we have worked so hard for over the years? Or will we break up and become 13 separate countries? The New England states are already talking about breaking from the Union.</p> <p>I just don't know.</p>
<p>SFX: Bell chimes 7 times</p>	<p>It's only 7 pm. Why am I so tired?</p>
<p>Narrator:</p>	<p>Finally the president falls asleep from pure exhaustion. When he awakens, he does not recognize his surroundings.</p>
<p>Washington:</p>	<p>What is going on? Where am I? I don't recognize anything in this room.</p>
<p>Narrator: SFX: horse-drawn carriages, train whistle</p>	<p>As he looks out the window, he can see carriages pass and hears a train whistle. But he recognizes nothing.</p>
<p>Washington: SFX: footsteps</p>	<p>I must be in another part of town. Oh my God! I've been kidnapped! Where am I? Where is my wife? Martha! Martha!</p>

Narrator:	Just then a tall man with dark hair and beard, wearing a stove-pipe hat enters the room.
Washington:	Who are you? And how dare you kidnap the president of the United States?
Lincoln:	President? I am the president. Wait a minute...that picture on the wall! You're George Washington. But you have been dead for years.
Washington:	Do I look dead?
Lincoln: SFX: paper rustling	No, but take a look at this.
Narrator:	Lincoln shows Washington a newspaper dated 1864.
Lincoln:	Look at the date on this paper—1864. How is it even possible for you to be here? And if by some miracle you <i>are</i> here, for what earthly reason?
Washington:	I don't know, but there must be a reason. Please. Sit down. We need to talk.
Announcer:	And now a word from one of our sponsors.
Jingle:	Hot dogs. Armour hot dogs. What kind of kids love Armour hot dogs? Skinny kids. Fat kids. Kids that climb on rocks. Even kids with chickenpox love Armour hot dogs. The dogs kids love to bite.
Announcer:	Now back to our show.
Washington:	Is this the presidential residence?

Lincoln:	Yes. We call it the White House.
Washington:	Why do you call it the White House?
Lincoln:	After the building was burned by the British in 1814, they painted it white to cover up the smoke damage.
Washington:	Burned by the British? What happened?
Lincoln:	In 1812, the United States was back at war with England. They called it the Second War for Independence.
Washington:	How did it come about? Why did it happen?
Lincoln:	They were upset with the outcome of the Revolutionary War and began attacking our cargo ships and pressing the crews into the British Navy.
Washington:	I am so happy our country has survived.
Lincoln:	Well, that is not exactly the case. We are in the fourth year of a war that may tear this country apart.
Washington:	The British again?
Lincoln:	No, but let's talk more about that later.
SFX: knocking Narrator: SFX: bell tolls 12 times	There is a knock at the door.
Narrator: SFX: door closing	It's the steward bringing lunch. He brings enough for two.
Lincoln:	Would you care to share my lunch?
Washington:	Yes, I'm famished.
Narrator:	As the two men sit down to lunch, their conversation continues.

Lincoln:	Is it true that you chose the site for the Capitol Building?
Washington:	Yes, because I could see the site from my home in Mount Vernon.
Announcer:	And now this from our sponsor.
Jingle:	Double your pleasure Double your fun With Doublemint, Doublemint, Doublemint gum.
Narrator:	After lunch, the two presidents retire to the library to continue their conversation.
Washington:	I still don't know what I'm doing here, or how I got here or why; but can you tell me more about what's been going on for the last 67 years...especially the second war with the British?
Lincoln:	Well, as you know, Britain and France continued fighting each other, off and on, after the United States became independent. We were trading with both countries, but the British didn't want us doing anything with France, and they started kidnapping our sailors. By 1812, things had gotten so bad that Congress declared war.
Washington:	That had to be a terrible risk. We were still a very young country and I'm sure we didn't have much of a military.
Lincoln:	A lot of people were against it, especially in New England. And the nation was badly humiliated in 1814, when the British Navy sailed right up the Potomac and burned most of Washington, including the Capitol and this house. President Madison almost got captured, but he managed to escape.
Washington:	Madison? James Madison became president? How did we survive that?

Lincoln:	That's right. I forgot, you were close to him, and then you weren't.
Washington:	He tried to kill the Jay treaty back in 1795. That would have led to a disastrous war with England. So he went along with declaring war?
Lincoln:	Yes. He asked for the declaration, so people were calling it Madison's War.
Washington:	I'm not surprised. So, how did the war end?
Lincoln:	After they left here, the British attacked Fort McHenry in Baltimore, but our men beat them back. One of our people was a prisoner on an English warship, and he watched the battle all night long. In the morning, he was so happy to see that our flag was still on the flagpole, he wrote this really great song. He called it the "Star Spangled Banner". Our soldiers also beat them in New Orleans. And then the British got tired of the fight, so they signed a peace treaty on Christmas Eve, 1814.
Washington:	New Orleans? The French city that was taken over by Spain? Why were we fighting there?
Lincoln:	That's another long story. So much has changed since your time. France managed to get all of Louisiana back in a secret treaty in 1800. Then in 1803, President Jefferson bought the whole territory from Napoleon, who needed the money to fund his battles in Europe.
Washington:	So Jefferson did win in 1800.
Lincoln:	Yes. He served two terms and was followed by Madison, who also served two terms.
Washington:	So Jefferson and Madison's Democratic-Republicans won the day?

Lincoln:	Yes, but the concept of political parties took hold, and I know you warned against that, but that's the way it's been ever since.
Announcer:	And now, another word from one of our sponsors.
Jingle:	Brusha, Brusha, Brusha it's a new Ipana With a brand new flavor Its dandy for your teeth Brusha, Brusha, Brusha New Ipana toothpaste Brusha, Brusha, Brusha
Announcer:	And now back to Lincoln and Washington.
Washington:	Tell me more about Louisiana.
Lincoln:	As you know, it was a huge territory. It doubled the size of our country. And with lots of encouragement from Jefferson, a great westward migration began. People wanted to be independent farmers, and with land grants from the federal government, it didn't take long for the entire Louisiana territory to be populated.
Washington:	So the country is now twice as big?
Lincoln:	Even bigger than that. Jefferson believed that western expansion was critical to our nation's survival. So in addition to the Louisiana Purchase, he sent two explorers, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, to learn as much as they could about lands west of the Mississippi River.
Washington:	The same Lewis who helped us end the Whiskey Rebellion?
Lincoln:	Yes, one and the same. They went all the way across the continent, through the Rocky Mountains and ended up at the Pacific Ocean.

Washington:	Then what?
Lincoln:	Westward expansion continued to grow. But not without problems, and the biggest problem of all was slavery.
Washington:	Slavery? Is there still slavery?
Lincoln:	Oh yes. And that gets us back to the current war that I told you about earlier.
Washington:	A war about slavery?
Lincoln:	Yes, but let me give you a little more background. As the land west of the Alleghenies became more populated, more states were created and added to the Union. Now we have 36.
Washington:	36 states! So this great experiment in democracy <i>has</i> succeeded!
Lincoln:	I wish with all my heart that I could say you're right, but right now that's very much in doubt. Incidentally I'm from one of those new states—Illinois, just east of the Mississippi. We became a state in 1818.
Washington:	Oh my goodness, that's only 21 years from now.
Narrator:	Long pause. Lincoln gives him a funny look.
Washington:	I mean <i>my</i> now. So tell me...why am I not right about our success?
Lincoln:	Well every time a new state wanted to join the Union, there was a big argument about slavery. The slave-holding states wanted to make sure they didn't become outnumbered and lose their clout in Congress, so they wanted any new state to authorize slavery. But more and more northerners came to believe that southern slavery threatened their own economic interests by giving the southerners an unfair advantage, and they resented the power that southerners had in Congress.

Washington:	Oh my goodness, I never would have imagined anything like that could happen.
Lincoln:	Now that you mention that, let me ask...why didn't you and the others put an end to slavery right in the beginning?
Washington:	It would have created quite a rift, and there's no way we could have gotten agreement on the Declaration of Independence. Besides, there was a lot of talk in England about ending the slave trade, and we all thought that slavery would just die out.
Lincoln:	Well it sure didn't die out. England did abolish the slave trade in 1807, but not slavery. And plenty of illegal slave trading continued. Plus, over here, there were more than enough children of slaves to meet the plantation owners' needs.
Washington:	If only we had known...
Lincoln:	We reached a compromise of sorts in 1820 when Maine was admitted as a free state and Missouri as a slave state. And we established a boundary so that no state north of the 36°30' parallel would allow slavery. But that only applied to the Louisiana Purchase, so once we got west of there, it broke down.
Washington:	How did we get west of there?
Lincoln:	Well it's a long story, but migration continued all the way to the Pacific. To the north, we negotiated with the British for years, and finally were able to reach an agreement that the boundary between us and Canada would be the 49 th parallel, all the way to the sea.
Washington:	And what happened in the western lands to the south?
Lincoln:	The southwest was more complicated. Thousands of Americans moved into the Mexican territories of Texas, New Mexico and California. In Texas, they teamed up with locals of Spanish

<p>Washington:</p>	<p>descent and won their independence. Soon they asked to join the Union. Then we went to war with Mexico and gained all the territory west of Texas to the ocean.</p>
<p>Lincoln:</p>	<p>Mexico? Texas? My head is spinning. Please just tell me what's going on now with the war over slavery.</p>
<p>Washington:</p>	<p>Over the past ten years or so, there have been heated arguments, compromises, battles, even bloodshed. When I entered office three years ago, my intent was to stop the spread of slavery. I promised to keep it out of the frontier territories. But both sides were dug in really hard and there was no turning back. First all the southern states seceded, including Texas. Then they attacked a Federal fort in South Carolina and the war was on.</p>
<p>Washington:</p>	<p>And after four years, it's still going on?</p>
<p>Lincoln:</p>	<p>Four horrible years. I'm not even going to tell you about all the pain and suffering and anguish we Americans are inflicting on each other. I'm trying desperately to bring this war to a close, but I've had a problem with commanding generals. I need a general-in-chief who can get things done.</p>
<p>Washington:</p>	<p>I know a little something about that.</p>
<p>Lincoln:</p>	<p>You certainly do. Please tell me what qualities I should be looking for.</p>
<p>Washington:</p>	<p>The most important is perseverance. Tenacity. The ability to hold on and keep pushing forward even in the toughest of times.</p> <p>And next is the ability to earn the respect and admiration of the troops. A good general does that by showing respect and appreciation to his troops, and treating them so well that they will walk barefoot across frozen rivers and through the snow for him. That's the reason I was able to prevail.</p>

Lincoln:	I think I know the man I'm going to choose. He has exactly those qualities, and he's overcome some very difficult times. His name is Ulysses S. Grant.
Washington:	U. S. Grant. Now that's appropriate.
Lincoln:	I have to go now. Thank you so much. I don't know how this happened, but I hope we meet again.
Narrator: SFX: door closing	Lincoln gets up and leaves the room.
Washington:	How long am I going to be here? That was an exhausting conversation. I'm so tired.
Narrator:	Washington falls asleep again. When he awakens to early morning light, he is back in his own bedroom, with Martha asleep at his side.
Washington:	Did all that really happen? The man in that silly hat who said he was president? More wars? A war about slavery? I hope it was just a dream.
Announcer:	Now a final word from our sponsor.
Jingle:	Rice-A-Roni, the San Francisco Treat Rice-A-Roni, the flavor can't be beat One pan, no boiling, cooking ease A Flavor that is sure to please Rice-A-Roni, the San Francisco treat! (Ding, Ding)
Announcer:	Tune in again next week, same day, same time, for another episode of Science Fiction Theatre. Good night everybody.