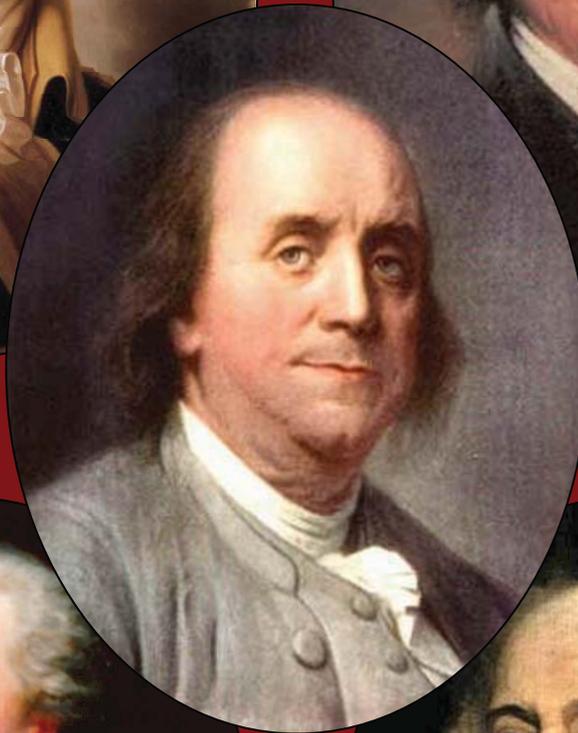
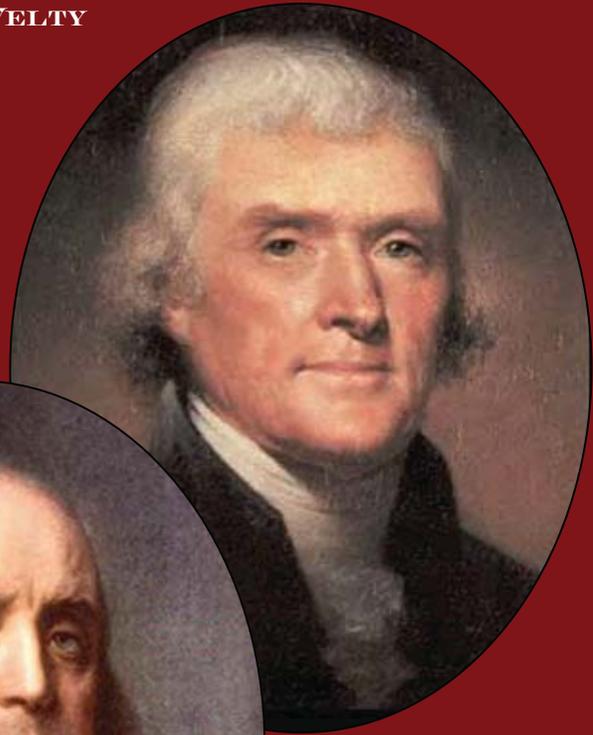


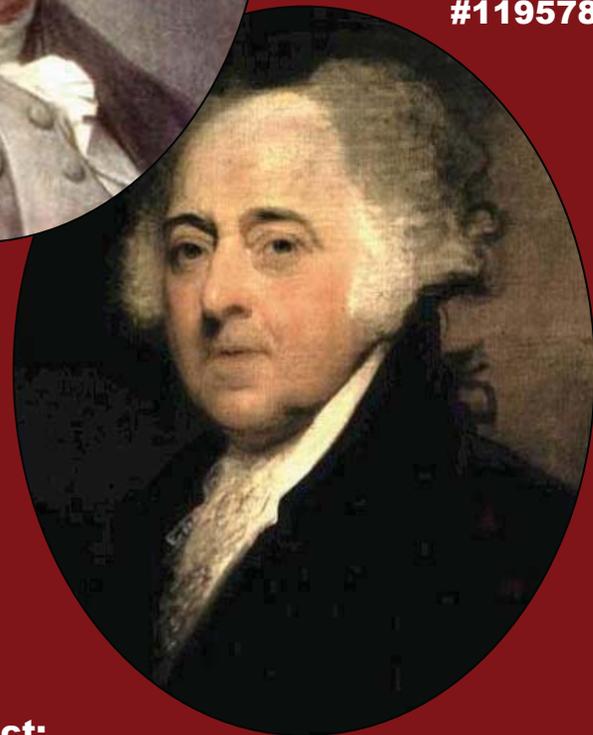
Founding Fathers

AN ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY BY
CHARLES WELTY



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Founding Fathers

An Original Screenplay by
Charles Welty

(with some dialog from the
writings of Carl Japikse)

Additional material by
Ralph Archbold, J. Nathan Bazzel,
Dean Robert Malissa, Ian Rose,
and Steven "Skecky" Perlman

What if George Washington, Benjamin Franklin,
Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton and
John Adams were given a remarkable gift:
to come forward in time to see how their
"Grand Experiment" in republican democracy
turned out? Would they like what they find?

A Note on the Politics

"Founding Fathers" lampoons Republicans, Democrats and
Libertarians with equal and unrelenting delight.

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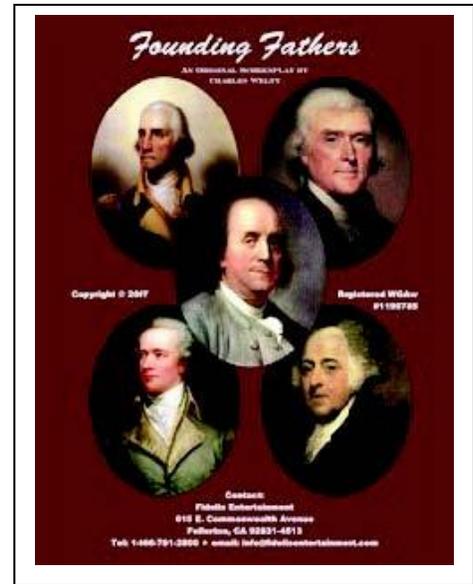
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Founding Fathers

An Original Screenplay by Charles Welty

Story Summary: What if George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton and John Adams were given a remarkable gift: to come forward in time to see how their “Grand Experiment” in republican democracy turned out? Would they like what they find?

Story Synopsis: Five men seek shelter in the canopy of a covered bridge during what appears to be a lightning storm: GEORGE WASHINGTON, THOMAS JEFFERSON, JOHN ADAMS, ALEXANDER HAMILTON and BENJAMIN FRANKLIN. As they move onto the bridge, the horses pulling the carriage are reluctant to pass over the bridge. Hamilton, in the driver’s seat, urges them on. They pull out of the storm that rages around the bridge and into a vortex at the end of the covered bridge. They emerge out into the daylight. Except for the time change, everything appears to be normal. Colonial folk in the appropriate period dress greet them as if nothing was wrong.



Our Founding Fathers step down from the carriage and enter a local tavern. Everything looks as it should. But when a 21st century car pulls up to the tavern, and out hop two young people in contemporary dress, we learn that our Founding Fathers have come forward to 21st century Colonial Williamsburg. The young people, SALLY ERICKSON and RICHARD LAWTON are engaged. She is a criminal defense lawyer; he is a technician at a medical lab, working on his doctorate in genetics.

Through a series of amusing adventures, we find out that the five men are exactly who they claim to be. But what they find in 21st century America is not what they expected. It’s a nightmare of welfare states and big government to their 18th century sensibilities. They are arrested for sedition by ARNOLD BENEDICT, a prosecutor for the Department of Homeland Security.

Sally and Richard work together to prove the Founding Fathers are who they say they are and, with the advice of ASTRO-PHYSICIST DR. HUGH ROSS, they arrange the return of the Founding Fathers to their own time.

Founding Fathers is biting political satire with a serious lesson: we have strayed far from the intents of our true Founding Fathers. And it’s not too late to return, like the prodigal son, to our senses.

Founding Fathers

A Treatment for an Original Screenplay
by Charles Welty

Act One

A furious nighttime thunder storm is raging at George Washington's Mt. Vernon estate. A carriage pulls up to the entrance of the mansion. The DRIVER steps down and approaches a BUTLER at the front door. He asks for ALEXANDER HAMILTON and JOHN ADAMS, who identify themselves. The driver reminds them that there is some matter of urgency, and then asks for Dr. Franklin and Mr. Jefferson.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN and THOMAS JEFFERSON come out of the mansion and nearly run into Hamilton. There is a tense moment between Jefferson and Hamilton. We will find that the politics of these two, and indeed in some areas among all of the Founding Fathers, are in conflict among each other throughout our story.

As Franklin and Jefferson head through the rain to the carriage, GEORGE WASHINGTON comes out of the mansion carrying his battle sword and wearing his traveling clothes. He marvels that Hamilton insists on driving the carriage. "I'd rather face the elements than that... Virginian," Hamilton laments. Washington laughs wryly because he and Jefferson are also Virginians. Adams is from Massachusetts.

Washington and Adams head out into the rain. "Virginians!" sighs Hamilton as he goes after them. "Politicians!" responds the driver to himself as he carries the remaining luggage out to the carriage.

At the carriage, Hamilton closes the door after Washington and Adams. He mounts the driver's seat as the driver puts the last of the luggage on to the luggage rack. Hamilton cracks the reins across the backs of the horses, calling out "Let's roll!" The carriage pulls out into the night leaving the driver to warm himself in the mansion.

And the carriage moves out into the night. The storm is getting worse as the carriage pulls through the night rain, passing trees whipped by the winds and illuminated by flashes of lightning. The side lamps on the carriage glow dimly through the gloom as a lightning bolt shatters a tree beside the road. "Gentlemen! Hang on!" cries Hamilton to his companions in the carriage. "Hang on, indeed!" exclaims Franklin, grabbing a firm hold to one of the side straps in the carriage.

The carriage moves forward as the road curves ahead to the right. An enormous covered bridge comes into view, illuminated by the lightning. Its roof is slick with rain. Franklin recommends they stop on the bridge for a while to get out of the rain and to let the horses rest.

While stopped on the covered bridge, Washington peers ahead through the mist. He sees a spinning vortex begin to form. Jefferson sees it, too, as does Hamilton. Jefferson invites Franklin and Adams to take a look as well. They are puzzled, and alarmed at what they see. Hamilton looks behind them, and notes another vortex forming behind them. "Our retreat has been compromised, too, gentlemen," he tells them. They are trapped!

Hamilton, at the reins, pushes forward. "Onward, to glory!" he cries, and the carriage moves across the bridge and into the vortex. As the two spinning halves of the vortex merge, they disappear. The whinnies of the horses and the alarmed cries of the riders in the carriage echo to silence. The storm instantly dissipates and leaves a clear, moonlit night in its stead.

The Founding Fathers awaken underneath the branches of an enormous shade tree. They are on the outskirts of a colonial village, about fifty yards from a tavern. Franklin notes that his pocket watch says it's after two o'clock. "In the afternoon, sir!" complains Adams. Franklin notes the watch has a 24-hour dial, and it says two o'clock in the morning, not in the afternoon. Jefferson chides him for his new-fangled watch. "I'll not be dictated as to what to do or when to do it by a collection of cogs and wheels," Jefferson says. Hamilton notes the tavern in the distance and they all clamber down from the carriage. They could all use a drink about now.

The tavern turns out to be a typical tavern of the late 18th century. Hamilton orders five pints of ale as Washington, Jefferson, Franklin and Adams enter. The proprietor of the tavern is puzzled by this. He asks if there has been a change in the performance schedule. "Performance schedule?" Washington asks. A tavern boy enters and whispers something to the proprietor, who asks Franklin about the carriage. Franklin pulls out a half-penny coin and offers it to the boy to take care of the carriage. The boy is astounded when he looks at the penny. "Gee, thanks, mister! Nobody's ever given me a real Colonial coin before!" This statement puzzles the Founding Fathers and the proprietor, but for different reasons.

Susan, a waitress, bring the ales for the Founding Fathers. They are surprised to find that the ales are served quite chilled, as it was the custom in their day to serve ale warm. The Founding Fathers give a resounding toast to democracy. Then Franklin, always curious, asks Susan about the little box that he sees in her apron.

As they take a long drink from the glasses of ale, Adams sees the shocker first. He steps back, holding his drink in alarm as a brand new 2014 Dodge Caravan pulls up to the bay window in front of the tavern. Susan pulls out the small box, a remote control, and aims it at the fireplace. The fireplace bursts into flames and the “painting” about the fireplace turns out to be a flat screen HDTV. The picture converts into a live newscaster commenting on the upcoming presidential election for the second decade of the 21st century.

Needless to say, our Founding Fathers have received the shock of a lifetime. Franklin comes out of his daze first. He downs the last of his ale and steps outside to see this miracle. “Fantastic! Unbelievable! I had no idea your transport was so advanced here in...” Franklin gushes. “Where are we, anyway?” Franklin asks the young couple who are driving the minivan.

It turns out that the Founding Fathers are in Monty’s Tavern at Colonial Williamsburg. The driver is Richard Lawton, a med student working in the field of genetics and DNA. His partner is Sally Erickson, an attorney with the public defender’s office in Philadelphia. They are on a vacation.

Each of the Founding Fathers introduces himself. Washington is the last one to do so, as he exits the tavern. Erickson and Lawton don’t know what to think of them. Then Franklin asks the question we expect him to ask: “Miss Erickson, Mr. Lawton, would you mind telling us... what year is it?”

On the road to Philadelphia, Erickson and Lawton grill the Founding Fathers, who steadfastly maintain that they are who they say they are, even if they don’t know how they got there. Erickson and Lawton decide to stop at a Philadelphia hotel for dinner. While there, Erickson runs into an old friend, DR. HUGH ROSS, an astrophysicist from Cal Tech, in Philadelphia for a science conference. Dr. Ross joins them for dinner, where he speculates that some kind of temporal displacement has pulled them forward in time. That’s if they are who they say they are, and that’s not proven yet, of course. In any case, Dr. Ross thinks it’ll make a great story and offers to introduce the Founding Fathers to a television producer friend of his in New York.

After a brief discussion on the nature of time and affecting the future, they decide to retire for the night. As Dr. Ross picks up the dinner check, Lawton collects the wine glass from each of the Founding Fathers.

After the others leave for the rooms that Dr. Ross books for them at the expense of the network, Lawton asks the waitress to bring him a small box and a marker. He marks each wine glass and puts them carefully into the box. Then he picks up Sally’s wine glass, marks it with her initials, and puts it into the box with the other glasses. He’s going to do a DNA test on the glasses.

Act Two

The next morning, the hotel manager wheels in a cart with seven new computers and a network router for Erickson and her guests. Room service brings up a hearty breakfast. It’s all been paid for by Dr. Ross’ network buddies.

Down the hall, the Founding Fathers prepare for their new day in the 21st century. Franklin plays with an electric lamp and wonders how it works. The others advise him to leave it alone. He doesn’t, of course, with humorous results.

Lawton brings the Founding Fathers to Erickson’s hotel room, where the computers have been set up. After breakfast, their introduction to the 230 years of American history begins. They are introduced to the computers and the Internet, and we begin a music montage with “Revolution” by The Beatles as Sally and Richard introduce the Founding Fathers to the Internet. It’s catch up time.

Jefferson examines a web page about the history of American architecture. Hamilton examines a web page on the War of 1812. Adams looks at a web page about the history of beer making in America. Franklin studies a web page about the history of electricity. Washington looks at a web page about the construction of Washington, DC. Jefferson examines a web page about the argument about slavery with some degree of thoughtfulness. Adams looks at a web page about food and food preparation. Hamilton examines a web page about the history of American banking. Washington examines a web page about the start of the American Civil War. He is shocked at what he sees. He gestures to Jefferson and Erickson helps the others surf to the web page about the Civil War. Hamilton, Jefferson, Adams and Franklin call up the same pages on their computers.

Later that day, the Founding Fathers take a tour of modern Philadelphia. We see them at Independence Hall, Christ Church, Liberty Bell Hall, a shopping mall, Geno's Steak House, and a local tavern. They become the hit of the city, and television news crews carry their story all over the nation.

Back in their hotel room, the Founding Fathers tell Erickson and Lawton that they cannot go on their "television talk show" because the American people would not like what they have to say. But Erickson and Lawton encourage them to do so, anyway. "What we've seen isn't what we hoped for our American posterity," Washington laments. The Founding Fathers are encouraged to tell the American public the truth, "Right from the horse's mouth, so to speak," Erickson says.

They will have to travel to New York to make the talk show deadline. Washington points out that it would take a half a day with their modern freeways. "Nah, just an hour's commuter flight," she replies. "Flight?" inquires Franklin with an enthusiastic tone.

At the Philadelphia airport, Erickson and Lawton note that Washington is carrying his battle sword. They make him take it off and place it in his luggage. "No weapons allowed?" asks Jefferson. "A federal rule. To prevent a hijacking," Erickson responds. "A hijacking?" asks Adams. "Sort of like a highwayman in the sky," Lawton responds.

"Well, there's only one way to handle a highwayman," Hamilton points out. Adams responds with some degree of firmness: "Correct, sir. You arm all the passengers and shoot the hijacker."

"Case closed," answers Franklin.

But they reluctantly turn in their weapons. And each of the other Founding Fathers puts a surprising amount of firearms, swords, and other assorted weapons into the luggage. "I... recently returned from New York," laments Jefferson.

At the security screening, a TSA worker stops Erickson, Lawton and the Founding Fathers from boarding. It seems they don't have a picture ID. And the ID has to have a government issued portrait. Erickson rummages in her purse and pulls out some cash. She hands it to each of the Founding Fathers. Lawton cannot believe what she is doing.

Franklin steps up to the TSA worker, holds up a \$100 bill. "Franklin, Benjamin. Late of Philadelphia." The TSA worker looks at the bill, looks at the portrait on the bill, shrugs her shoulders, and lets him pass. The same for Hamilton with his \$10 bill, Jefferson with his \$2 bill, and Washington with his \$1 bill. Adams has no bill. Jefferson steps back through the security gate, turns his \$2 bill around and points to the group portrait on the back of it. "Actually, he's right here!" Together, Jefferson and Washington pull Adams through the gate to the cheers of the waiting passengers. As Erickson, Lawton and the Founding Fathers head for the concourse, the other passengers break out in chants of "No more IDs" and other assorted complaints. A riot ensues.

On the airplane, we see a bored Lawton and Erickson, and other bored passengers. But Hamilton peers warily down to the ground. He covers his eyes quickly, then looks again. Washington looks curiously down to the ground. His expression is one of amusement. Jefferson looks down to the ground, then around inside the aircraft, then down to the ground again. He shakes his head in wonder. Adams looks stiffly straight ahead, not daring to look down. A flight attendant offers him an ale. She pours it for him. He takes it, he gulps it down, Franklin, enthusiastic as can be, smiles and laughs as he looks down. He points to the ground and gestures to everyone around him, thrilled at what he is experiencing.

At JFK, a shuttle bus takes their luggage to a hotel. Erickson, Lawton and the Founding Fathers take a cab van to Ground Zero. Everyone is moved at what Erickson and Lawton describe at the memorial site, even though the scene is MOS.

At the TV studios, the host of the talk show introduces the Founding Fathers to the American public. "Five mystery men... they call themselves the Founding Fathers and they claim to be the real George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton and John Adams."

In Washington, DC, Arnold Benedict, a prosecutor for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, is not happy at what he sees on the television interview. He punches up a name on his computer. He finds that Secret Service Agent Charlene "Charlie" Stryker is in New York. He picks up a phone and says "Tell Charlie I said to get over to Fox... on the double. Charlie's got a new assignment."

Back in New York, the talk show interview is over. Invitations are pouring in as Lawton fields the calls. The Libertarian Party wants to draft Franklin to run for President. Stryker approaches Erickson. As Stryker is wearing dark sunglasses, even inside the building, Sally is startled by her imposing and emotionless appearance.

Lawton tells the Founding Fathers they are going to go on national television again, this time to chair the national Presidential debates. Stryker is not pleased with this. She tells Erickson that she has been assigned as their bodyguard for the duration of their stay. It seems that if this really is George Washington, her job is to protect him. And Jefferson. And Adams. They all were president at one time. Stryker confirms her job is to also report everything she sees.

In Philadelphia, the Presidential debate is all set up. The Founding Fathers arrive in Lawton's minivan. All of them emerge wearing dark sunglasses, just like Stryker. As they get out of the van, they are approached by... the Founding Fathers, look-alike actors who portray the original Founding Fathers on the streets of present-day Philadelphia. It's a "photo op" for them all. Stryker escorts Erickson and the real Founding Fathers into Independence Hall, where the Presidential debate is to take place. Lawton is conspicuously absent; he is working on some tests.

Washington looks around the hall. "Very little in your America is real anymore, is it?" Washington laments to Erickson. She says nothing in response. What can she say? He's right.

And the debate begins. The Founding Fathers have learned their cues well. Washington is the first to speak: "Two hundred years ago, we fought a war to establish freedom and liberty in these United States. I'm George Washington."

"But freedom and liberty are not land or gold... objects you can pass from generation to generation without depreciation or exhaustion. I'm Thomas Jefferson."

"Freedom and liberty are intangible qualities. Once you have gained them, there are only two things you can do with them. I'm Alexander Hamilton."

"You can preserve them by the utmost of vigilance and sacrifice, or you can lose them! I'm John Adams."

"And from what we have seen of this time, Americans believe themselves to be possessed of the great gift of freedom. But little do you know how little of the original gift is left. I'm Benjamin Franklin."

"Tonight! The Presidential Debates!" proclaims Washington again. "And we, your humble servants, have the privilege of presiding over them."

And so the debate begins. And both candidates are rebuffed by a series of challenges by the Founding Fathers. "But for this debate, we're not asking their positions on the issues," Adams proclaims. "No, by now, we've all heard that."

Hamilton continues, "No, tonight we, the Founding Fathers, will hold the feet of the Presidential candidates to the fire."

Franklin sets the mood, "Both political parties will answer to history... tonight, live on national television! What did you do with the freedoms bequeathed to you through the blood of your countrymen?"

A rousing series of reposts between the candidates and the Founding Fathers follows. Franklin uses a crude illustration of farting as an example of how Americans don't know how to deal with the unpleasantness of life. They turn to the government for answers. Jefferson's conclusion, a citation from Shakespeare, echoes all of the opinions of the Founding Fathers: "A plague on both your houses!" Jefferson declares to the unanimous applause of the Founding Fathers and the studio audience. And so the Founding Fathers sum up the lessons that Americans should have learned from their history.

Franklin tells America, "My brethren and countrymen, if you cherish freedom and liberty, you are going to have to learn to fart."

Adams says, "Stop running to the government to protect you from every possible calamity."

Hamilton says, "Take on the responsibilities of human living for yourself, and tell the government to get out of your life!"

Jefferson responds, "Take possession of your voice and start decrying the loss of freedom in this country."

Franklin adds, "Write to your representatives and tell them that you want the government to give back the freedoms they have stolen from us."

Jefferson retorts, "Write to the papers, and tell them that freedom of the press isn't worth a nickel unless it serves the people."

Adams adds, "Speak freely to your friends and colleagues, and awaken them to the loss of freedom in this nation."

Washington points out, "And when you are criticized, as you will be, remind your critics that you have the right to speak your mind."

Franklin ends with “And if they shout you down, as they will, then inform them that since they insist on being asses, you will henceforth communicate with them with the appropriate part of your own anatomy. And turning to face them from the posterior, let them know where you stand. Let every fart count as a peal of thunder for liberty.”

The democratic candidate complains, “You can’t say that word on national television!”

Franklin ignores the democratic candidate, “Let every fart remind the nation of how much it has let pass out of its control.”

Not to be outdone, the republican candidate complains, too: “The FCC will fine this station!”

“Let them!” exclaims Franklin. “Ours is a small gesture, but one that can be very effective.”

“Especially in a large crowd,” laughs Jefferson.

“So fart, and if you must, fart often. But always fart without apology. Fart for freedom, fart for liberty, and fart proudly!”

The appearance of the Founding Fathers as chairmen of the Presidential debate is a smashing success nationwide, and even worldwide, but not with everyone.

In Washington, still at his late night office, protecting the American people from themselves 24 hours a day, Arnold Benedict is not happy. “We have to silence these “Founding Fathers” or send them back to their own time,” he tells his aide.

“We don’t even know how they got here! What if we can’t send them back? They’re booked on every talk show in the country. In high definition television! And around the world by satellite!”

“If we can’t silence them, or send the Founding Fathers back to their own time, there’s only one solution,” Benedict tells his aide.

“The British crown couldn’t silence them over 200 years ago! What chance does anybody have now!?”

Benedict holds up his hand, demanding silence. “If we cannot silence them, if we cannot send them back to their own time, then... for the sake of order... for the sake of our liberty, for the sake of America and her own survival... If we cannot silence these... these seditionists... then the Founding Fathers... must die.”

He stares impassionately out the window as a look of alarm crosses the face of Benedict’s aide. “I’m going for an arrest warrant. Call Stryker. Have Charlie bring in the Founding Fathers. The charge... sedition. That’s the one I want to see stick. The penalty for sedition is still on the books. The penalty is death.”

Benedict considers his aide’s horrified reaction. “Hey, I’ll show some respect for history. Let’s try them in Philadelphia.”

Act Three

At Independence Hall, the Founding Fathers are exploring their old digs. Adams is actively searching for something as he knocks on various wooden panels. “Looking for beer?” asks Franklin. “You’re thinking of my second cousin, Samuel. He’s the braumeister of the family,” responds Adams. His drink of choice has a bit more substance to it, it seems. Adams finds the correct panel. He moves some molding strips into a certain position and a panel springs open. Adams removes a tray holding an ancient bottle of brandy and six snifters.

“Vintage 1778. A very good year, I recall,” says Jefferson. They reprise their toast to democracy.

Erickson comes in and she is not happy. She asks for a drink, too. She downs it, then tells the Founding Fathers, “Now we’re in trouble.”

A cadre of DHS agents bursts into the room. Stryker extends her hand, demanding Washington’s battle sword. Erickson tells Washington that they will fight the problem... in court. Washington tells Stryker, “You have sworn to protect the President of the United States.”

“There is some question...” responds Stryker. Erickson volunteers to represent the Founding Fathers as their attorney. The DHS agents arrest the Founding Fathers. Stryker personally puts the handcuffs on Washington. Washington’s eyes say it all: his is a restrained anger and he almost wears the handcuffs with pride.

At the Independence Hall in Philadelphia, now dressed as a courtroom, a crowd of several thousand people surround the building. A Court TV reporter summarizes the issues: “We’re here outside the hallway of the courtroom where the trial of the century is now in the final day of testimony. The Department of Homeland Security’s Chief Prosecutor, Mr. Arnold Benedict, has pushed through an indictment of sedition against the mystery men that some citizens actually believe are the ‘Founding Fathers.’ Some observers are saying the speed at which this trial has come together is indicative of the usurpation of power by the Federal government.

Others are saying its speed is an indication of the system working as it should... quickly, efficiently, and without prejudice.”

And the trial of the century continues. Benedict calls the Founding Fathers to the stand. Erickson objects: “A defendant cannot be forced to testify against himself.” Jefferson, in an aside to Hamilton, says “At least they still have that correct.”

But Judge Horowitz says he has not ruled on the identity of Erickson’s clients. “Miss Erickson, your clients have maintained what appears to be an impossibility before this Court. They claim to be five of the founding fathers of this country. This, clearly, cannot be. Whoever these men are, it is imperative that this Court learn the truth. Objection overruled!” He tells Benedict to proceed. “The defendants will take the stand.”

Erickson starts to object again, but Washington interrupts her. “I am a man of honor, sir,” he tells the judge. “No doubt,” is Judge Horowitz’s wry reply. “We shall all take the stand,” Washington tells the court.

The bailiff prepares to swear in the Founding Fathers. “What? No Bible?” objects Washington. Benedict responds, “We haven’t required sworn testimony on one of those for decades.”

Franklin replies, “I say, sir, that is one of the many symptoms of what has gone astray in your America.” Adams agrees: “Hear, hear! We should like a Bible, sir!”

Washington asks Erickson to hand him his traveling bag. The bailiff searches it and pulls out a well worn travel Bible. He examines the contraband, then hands it to Washington, who passes it to the other Founding Fathers. “Upon all that is sacred, Your Honor...” is Washington’s reply.

Franklin adds his own reply: “Upon all that we hold dearest to life itself...” And Adams, Hamilton and even Jefferson declare, “We all swear upon our sacred honor to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me, God!” And the audiences in the hallway and outside the courthouse cheer, where the proceedings can be seen on large HDTV screens.

“Yeah, yeah... whatever. Let’s get on with it,” is Benedict’s irreverent reply.

In Lawton’s medical lab, a color laser printer spits out the results of Lawton’s DNA tests on the wine glasses from the restaurant. We see the colorful onscreen comparisons of six separate DNA tests. And Lawton’s sixth test is Erickson’s DNA compared with the others. There is a match with Jefferson’s. He picks up a phone, makes a call. He asks whoever it is to meet him in the parking lot of the courthouse. He grabs the printouts and heads out the door.

Back in the courthouse, the Founding Fathers are on a roll. They speak without notes, and without prompting by Erickson. “You have called us as witnesses,” Franklin tells the court. “But it is you who are the witnesses! You have left your first love, as the Good Book says.”

Hamilton adds, “No one follows the Constitution any more. Not the judiciary. Not the Congress. And certainly not the Executive Branch.”

And Jefferson continues, “Executive Orders, indeed! More like a dictator’s whims! As I have written, on every question of constitutional construction, let us carry ourselves back to the time when the Constitution was adopted, recollect the spirit manifested in the debates, and instead of trying what meaning can be squeezed out of the text...”

“...Or invented against it!” Adams interrupts. And the other Founding Fathers agree!

Jefferson continues: “...Or invented against it, let us conform to the probable one which was passed.”

Adams holds up the Bible, upon which the Founding Fathers have taken their oath. “A country decays from within. It forgets the lessons of history. Of the blood of its founders. And the hope of its convictions.”

“Have you not seen? Have you not read... the lessons of the past?” Jefferson asks.

Washington continues: “And the faith that forms the bedrock of its foundations? Without these, our nation flounders, like a ship sinking in a storm.”

And Hamilton responds, “We must rescue that ship! Rescue her, I say! Turn her away from the rocks upon which she must surely find her own destruction.”

Franklin adds his own comments: “Your Honor... ladies and gentlemen of these United States... our nation, like any nation, must follow a path. And that path begins... indeed, began... in bondage, like the Israelites of old. Her taskmasters, the crown of King George the Third. And from bondage, she traveled...”

“From bondage to spiritual faith. And from faith to great courage,” continues Washington.

Hamilton continues, “Indeed, sir! And from courage to liberty. From liberty she has moved to great abundance.”

And the audience agrees with them.

But Adams is not finished. He adds, “And then from abundance to complacency. From complacency to apathy.”

But now the audience members look from one to another, obviously feeling guilty.

Jefferson digs the knife in deeper; “And then from apathy to dependency... your own “social security”. You look for government to solve your every problem. And that inevitably leads a people from dependence back again into bondage.”

Franklin concludes, “That’s correct. Do you know who said these things, Miss Erickson?”

She shakes her head. Franklin looks at the prosecutor. He has no reaction. And the judge just shakes his head.

“Well, I’ll tell you,” Franklin continues. “We said these things. Not in so many words as now, but search our letters, our journals.” He shouts to the audience in the court room. “Read them for yourselves! Are you not free men? Can you not read our works? Do not their sacred words live still?”

And then Washington quotes from one of his famous letters: “Can you not see? The preservation of the sacred fire of liberty and the destiny of the republican model of government are justly considered as deeply, perhaps as finally, staked on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people!”

Adams continues: “From what I’ve seen, I’d say these words are just as true in this time, as in ours.”

“And perhaps more so,” adds Hamilton.

Jefferson concludes: “And, indeed, from what we’ve all seen, America is back where we started... in bondage.”

Washington continues the thought: “America is in slavery all over again! A personal income tax, indeed!”

“Homeland Security! Bah!” replies Franklin

Adams continues: “In spite of our many differences, we are all agreed on this. We have rights antecedent to all earthly governments; rights that cannot be repealed or restrained by human laws; rights derived from the Great Legislator of the Universe.”

Jefferson continues, “Indeed, sir! The strength of our federal republic stands or falls on the strength of its people and the Laws of Nature.”

“And Nature’s God,” Hamilton adds. The Founding Fathers are nodding their heads, all in agreement for once.

But Benedict objects to all of their testimony: “Your honor, all of this testimony is... irrelevant in America today.”

Erickson jumps up to respond, but before she can say anything, Franklin interrupts her, standing up. “Your honor, in our day, we hold these Truths to be self-evident...” he cries out.

Jefferson continues with the famous Declaration: “...that all Men are created equal...”

Adams continues, too, “...that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights...”

And Hamilton continues: “...that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness...”

Washington adds, “That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men,”

And they all complete the famous preamble to the Declaration of Independence: “...deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed!”

The people in the hallway are cheering now. The Founding Fathers look from one to another, encouraged by the response. They all sit down again.

In the hallway, Lawton tries to enter with his DNA test results. He is thwarted by other court room bailiffs, but Stryker intervenes. “Admit him!” she snarls.

Back in the court room, Benedict objects “to all this rhetoric about religion. It is highly prejudicial.”

But Washington stands, gesturing for silence. “Of all the dispositions and habits, which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.”

Hamilton stands as Washington sits. “The sacred rights of mankind are not to be rummaged for, among old parchments, or musty records. They are written, as with a sun beam in the whole volume of human nature, by the hand of the divinity itself; and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power.”

Now Adams stands as Hamilton sits down. “Hear, hear! We have no government capable of contending

with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.”

And then Jefferson stands as Adams sits down. “And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with His wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just: that his justice cannot sleep forever.”

Washington looks over at Franklin with a raised eyebrow, then he gestures for Franklin to say something. Franklin replies, “Well said, Thomas. Nothing to add, General Washington, of my own words. But I think of the words of Mr. Adams’ second cousin, Samuel. If you love wealth greater than liberty, the tranquility of servitude greater than the animating contest for freedom, go home from us in peace. We seek neither your counsel, nor your arms. Crouch down and lick the hand that feeds you. May your chains set lightly upon you, and may posterity forget that you were our countrymen.”

The people in the courtroom are silent now, as they react with looks of guilt. The people in the hallway react the same way, too. Washington nods, turns to address the court, and takes a deep breath. “You want the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?” Washington looks over at Franklin, then his gaze passes down to Jefferson, Hamilton and Adams. Each one nods solemnly in encouragement.

“Then it’s past time for the American people to face the truth.” Washington stiffens, then speaks loudly, with boldness. “I am late of service to these United States as commander of the Continental Army. And now as its President, the first!” He raises his right hand. “And as Providence as my witness, and on my honor as a gentleman and a Christian, I do solemnly swear that we are who we say we are. I am George Washington, president of the thirteen United States.”

Franklin stands and raises his right hand: “And I swear before the throne of Almighty God, that I am Benjamin Franklin, late of Philadelphia!”

Jefferson stands, too: “I am Thomas Jefferson, of Virginia! Late of Monticello.”

“And I... am Alexander Hamilton, late of General Washington’s service at Valley Forge, now serving as the Secretary of the Treasury!”

“And I am John Adams, now in service to Washington as his Vice-President.”

Washington continues: “And we all... to a man... swear before God and Country, and before the people of these United States of America, and before the entire world... we have told the truth!”

Jefferson adds: “As to how... or why... we have been sent here, we do not know.”

And Franklin closes their argument with “And as we have said to one, so say we to all... it’s not too late for change.”

The audience in the courtroom and outside in the hallway goes wild.

Lawton approaches the defense table and hands the medical report to Erickson. He passes a copy to Benedict and to a Bailiff, who hands it to the Judge. The Judge takes the report while he bangs his gavel, demanding silence in the court. His efforts are useless.

Lawton has to shout above the noise of the crowd. “The DNA tests! They’re complete! And there’s no question about it! It’s a match, Sally! To fifteen decimals! The DNA never lies! These men are who they claim to be!”

Erickson gasps to Jefferson, “Then... you’re... you’re my great... great, great, great... grandfather!” Jefferson takes her into a grandfatherly embrace with a soft smile.

The Judge bangs his gavel over and over again. “On its own motion, the court orders this case dismissed! Bailiff! Release these men forthwith!”

The Founding Fathers stand, shaking one another’s hands as the tumult in the courtroom continues. Benedict grabs one of his lieutenants, spins him around with a shout above the tumult: “I don’t care what the judge said. Take them into custody outside. We’ll find another justice to sign the warrant.”

In the confusion, Erickson and Lawton grab the Founding Fathers and herd them toward an exit, away from the crowd. They move slowly through the crowd, heading toward a rear exit.

But Stryker blocks their way. Stryker pulls her duty weapon, holds it at her side. Erickson, Lawton and the Founding Fathers come to a complete stop.

Stryker, still holding the weapon at her side and listening to Benedict’s filtered voice through her headset, cocks her duty weapon.

Washington restrains Franklin with a gesture, then turns to Stryker as Lawton addresses her. “The DNA. You heard?”

Stryker nods. “I heard.”

Washington addresses Stryker. “Agent Stryker, once in a great while, an individual and a nation have an opportunity to do what is right in the sight of Almighty God, but what is illegal or wrong according to the laws of humanity.”

Adams continues: “Or one can do what is wrong in the sight of God...”

Jefferson adds: “But demanded by the laws of man.”

Franklin says: “We have all faced that time in our day, young woman. We had to choose what was right before the throne of heaven, but what was wrong before the throne of Britain.”

Hamilton adds: “Before whose throne will you bow?”

Finally, Washington closes: “Choose ye this day, whom ye shall serve.”

Stryker listens for a beat to Benedict’s filtered voice in her headset. Then she pulls the earpiece out. “I am an officer in the United States Secret Service... sworn to protect and defend the President and the Constitution of the United States. And all my years of duty, I have never shirked from either.”

Stryker slowly uncocks her weapon, holsters it. She removes her sunglasses and pockets them. We see her eyes for the first time, and they are kind. “This way... Mister President.”

Stryker turns toward the rear exit, gesturing. “Gentlemen, I’ve got your back.” She gestures to the others to move to the exit. “We’re not all hopeless slaves. On your way, now!”

Overjoyed, Erickson and Lawton begin to herd the Founding Fathers toward the exit. Stryker steps over to a small footlocker. She calls out. “One moment, Mr. President!” Washington and the others pause. They turn back to face Stryker as she pulls Washington’s sword from the footlocker. “Your battle sword. It was an honor to care for it, sir.” Stryker extends the sword to Washington.

Washington takes the sword with a soft smile and straps it to his waist. “Indeed it is. The sword of liberty is an honor to wield. And heaven help the tyrant who gets in her way.” He pulls it from his sheath and admires it. “I shall leave it to my nephew Samuel, I think. He’s an army captain, you know. I shall tell him... never unsheathe her to shed blood, except for self-defense, or defense of our country and its rights... and to fall with her in hand, rather than relinquish her.”

Washington smiles, sheathes his sword, then turns to leave. Erickson, Lawton and the Founding Fathers disappear down the hallway. Stryker turns, pulls out her sunglasses and puts them on again. She stands resolute, arms folded across her chest.

Benedict approaches on the run. “Those madmen, those traitors... did they pass through here?”

“No traitors passed through here, sir!” is Stryker’s reply.

With a cry of disgust, Benedict points to the exits. The men of the DHS security detail split up, heading for the other exits.

Benedict holsters his weapon, puts his hands on his hips, looks around frustrated. He looks back at Stryker suspiciously, then sees something. “I’ve got them!”

The Founding Fathers appear to be waiting at an elevator. Benedict keys his microphone. “Agents Ellison, Crane! South elevator on the third floor! Move! And Morris, cover the ground floor! Now!” Benedict draws his weapon and runs to the elevator.

At the elevator, Benedict arrives on the run, weapon aimed and laser sight streaming_ as the elevator doors start to close. He puts his foot in the door. It slides open again as other agents arrive, weapons drawn. Laser beams bounce from Founding Father to Founding Father. Each of the Founding Fathers face forward, wearing sunglasses, except for Franklin, whose back is turned toward the elevator doors.

Benedict cries, “Hands up! You’re under arrest!”

Benjamin Franklin turns around to face Benedict. “My dear sir!” The other Founding Fathers remove their sunglasses. We recognize them as the look-alike actors, not the real Founding Fathers.

Adams smiles: “Why all the hardware?”

Jefferson asks, “Would you like an autograph?”

Washington adds, “No? A copy of the Constitution, maybe? Looks like you could use one right about now.”

Benedict holsters his weapon with an exclamation of frustration.

Franklin adds, “A fart, perhaps?” He exchanges grins with the others.

Hamilton adds the zinger: “How about five?”

The look-alike Founding Fathers all laugh as the doors close.

Benedict is not amused. He speaks into a microphone. “Get me a chopper. And I’ll need a motorcycle.”

One the road to the covered bridge, Hamilton drives the carriage. But this time, beside him on the driver’s bench, are Erickson and Lawton. “There’s the bridge you told us about!” she exclaims.

Hamilton pulls the carriage to a stop. Erickson and Lawton step down from the carriage. Franklin opens the carriage door. He, Washington, Jefferson and Adams, step out from the carriage.

At the far end of the bridge, the return vortex begins to form, spinning with flashes of lightning and rain.

Washington speaks the obvious. “Our work here is done. Time to go home.”

“Mr. Hamilton! The time vortex! We can’t cross it!” Erickson says. “We can’t go with you!”

“It’s the end of the line for us,” Lawton exclaims.

Erickson wonders, “How... how did all this happen? And why?”

Franklin replies, “Almighty God is sovereign in his heaven! There was a reason for all of this!”

Jefferson frowns, “Yet I cannot help but wonder... what have we accomplished? A few speeches? A farce of a trial...?”

But Lawton responds, “You stirred up a lot of trouble. People will talk about your time here for years.”

Washington asks, “What if the people haven’t learned their lessons from history?”

Erickson responds, “Then I guess the great ‘Legislator of the Universe’ is going to have to bring you back... set things straight.”

“Again,” Lawton adds with a smile.

A long beat as Franklin hugs the girl. Jefferson rolls his eyes. Franklin breaks it off, steps back, and doffs his hat to her. Jefferson, Washington, Hamilton, and Adams do the same. A gentleman’s bow from all of them. Erickson smiles, wiping a tear from her eye. She takes Jefferson into a long hug. Lawton taps Sally on the shoulder as he rolls his eyes, just like Jefferson. They break off the embrace. Lawton gestures to the carriage.

Erickson and Lawton wave them off. Washington, Adams, Jefferson and Franklin get back into the carriage as Hamilton climbs into the driver’s seat. The Storm is now in full rage, just like our opening sequence. The time vortex, fifty feet or more in length, spirals inside the far entrance to the bridge. Hamilton grabs the reins, cracks them across the backs of the horses and they head toward the bridge with its vortex.

As Erickson and Lawton step back, we HEAR the roar of a motorcycle brings Benedict in, riding a police motorcycle. Benedict maneuvers his motorcycle alongside the carriage as it speeds toward the bridge. Just before the carriage pulls onto the bridge, Benedict jumps from the motorcycle to the rear luggage rack of the carriage. The riderless motorcycle careens into the side of the road. On the carriage, Benedict steadies himself, jumps up and pulls his weapon. As the carriage enters the covered bridge, Benedict looks forward, over the top of the carriage, to see the time vortex as it spins at the far end of the bridge. Hamilton drives the carriage straight for it.

Benedict stares at the time vortex, transfixed by the horrific beauty of what he sees. At the rear of the bridge, a second time vortex forms quickly and spreads to meet the far end of the bridge.

The two vortexes meet and the carriage disappears into the merging vortex. Benedict’s cries echo to silence as the time vortex dissolves. And Benedict’s weapon drops to the roadbed, spinning to a stop.

We now see an empty bridge. The rain dissipates and we hear only the soft rustle of leaves in the wind, and the chirp of night crickets. Erickson turns and buries her face in Lawton’s shoulder. ““Guess they made it back safely,” Lawton observes. “You’re still here.”

She laughs through the tears. They turn and begin walking toward the bridge. “I wonder what happened to Benedict?” she asks. “Oh, I’m sure he’s got what he deserves,” Lawton replies.

In the colonial town square, back in 1789, Benedict is yelling in protest. A town crier rings his hand bell and shouts out: “Madness! Madness in Virginia! Attempted assault on Franklin and Washington is punished today!”

Benedict is fastened hand and feet into a set of wooden stocks by two colonial officials. “Let go of me! I have my rights! Let me out of here, you fools! I am an American citizen!”

One of the officials clasps an old-fashioned padlock into place as the Town Crier continues to RING his bell. “No, you are a mad man!” And so Benedict remains in the stocks, right where he belongs.

In a Virginia pasture, the branches of a large shade tree cover Hamilton's carriage. As before, the carriage, the horses, and Hamilton's rain slicker are wet from the storm. In the driver's seat is Alexander Hamilton. He is asleep, the reins still in his hands. The other Founding Fathers are asleep, too. All at once, they wake up, instantly alert, this time with no ad lib cries of surprise. They look from one to another, almost afraid to speak.

"A dream, gentlemen. I had the most amazing dream," observes Adams.

"Strange... I, too, dreamt a dream," laments Jefferson.

Franklin pulls out his watch, looks at it. "We seem to have spent... about half the day sleeping. Most peculiar."

Washington adds, "The understatement of the age, sir." Holding his sword, Washington extends it to the roof of the carriage. He knocks on the roof three times with the sheathed sword. Jefferson knocks with his walking cane. "Hamilton! Mr. Hamilton, sir!"

Hamilton wakes. He looks around quickly. Then he turns, looks over toward where the tavern should be. But there's nothing there, just an empty field. Hamilton looks from his perch in the driver's seat down to the men in the carriage. "I had... a dream, too. It was vivid, sir. But even now it fades... to nothing. Nothing at all."

And the horses munch quietly on the grass that grows beneath the tree. Washington comes out of his revile. "Gentlemen... enough delays! We have certain urgent matters of state that need our attention."

The carriage pulls away from the tree. Franklin stirs, sitting on his bench seat uncomfortably. He reaches behind his back and pulls out an object that he holds just below the frame line. "Gentlemen, what do you make of this?"

A look of puzzlement crosses all of their faces. Franklin lifts the 21st century sunglasses into the shot. Each of the other Founding Fathers stare at the sunglasses for a beat. Franklin puts the sunglasses on but before the other Founding Fathers can react, we CUT TO BLACK.

Epilogue

A cell phone rings, and the click of a light and we cut from black to Stryker's bedroom. It's night and Stryker has switched on the lamp beside his bed. Stryker reaches for the cell phone on the table, yanks the charging cord from the phone, flips it open and answers it. "Stryker... and it'd better be good."

Sally sits in a tall, wing-backed leather chair. The soft glow of a lamp illumines her figure. She wears outdoor type clothing. She speaks on a wireless speaker phone, not a cell phone. "Agent Stryker?"

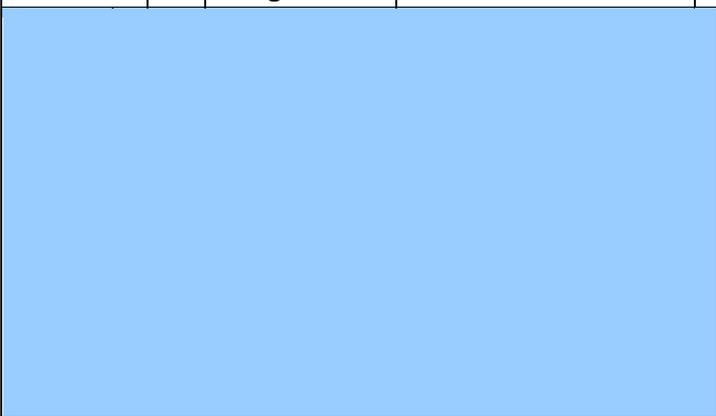
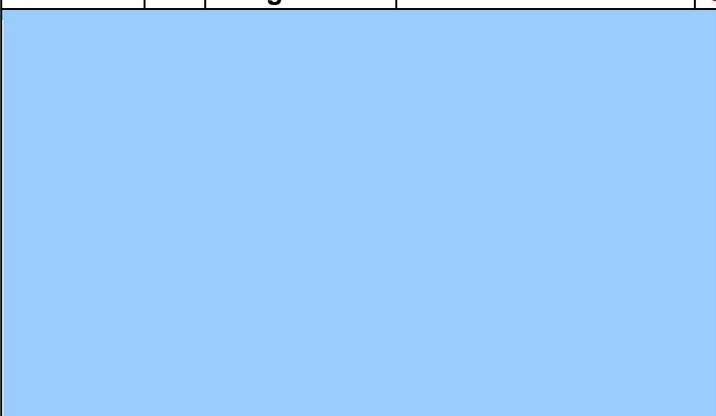
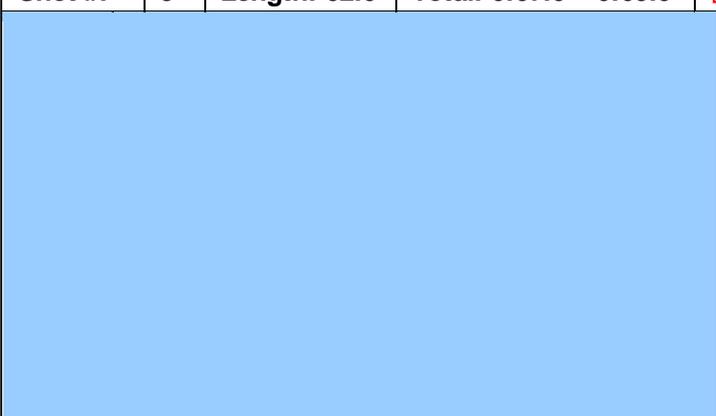
"I know that voice! It's after the election, Miss Erickson. The people have spoken. The assignment's over. First write-in winner in history. Too bad Franklin's not here to take office."

"We've got another problem. God... the "Legislator of the Universe"... whoever... whatever... somebody... is not happy. We've got some more work to do."

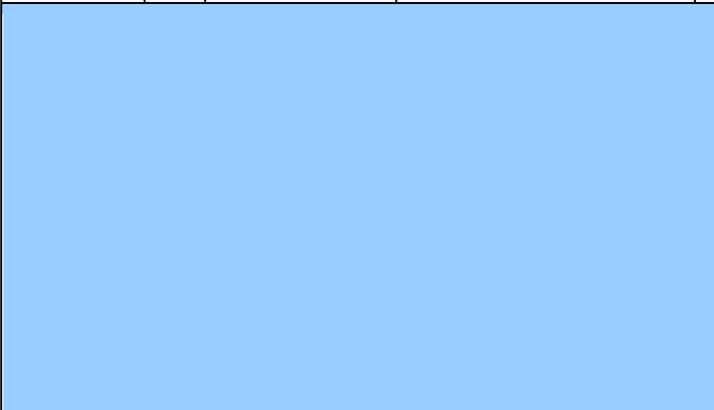
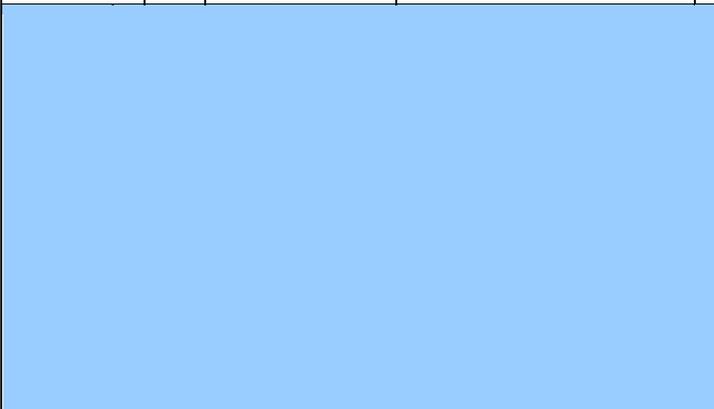
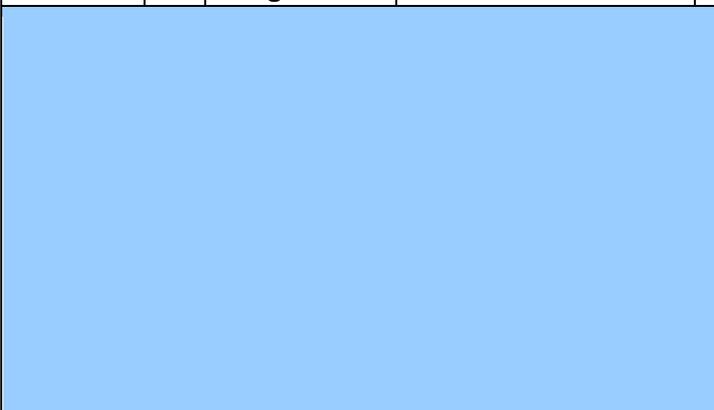
Stryker wonders, "We? What are you talking about?"

And we see the Founding Fathers, dressed in their 18th century finest and standing grimly in a semicircle behind the wing-backed chair as Lawton turns the neck of a goose-necked lamp toward them. As the LIGHT ILLUMINES the Founding Fathers, Erickson says in a sing-song voice, like the little girl in *Poltergeist*, "They're ba-a-ck. And Benjamin Franklin... he's here to take office."

The End.

Shot #:	1	Length: 02.0	Total: 0:00:0 – 0:02.0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INT. <input type="checkbox"/> EXT. HISTORICAL ART GALLERY -- DAY
				<p>FADE IN. CAMERA MOVES among portraits of the Founding Fathers in identical oval-shaped gilded frames with name plates. First up is GEORGE WASHINGTON.</p> <p>ANNOUNCER (O.S) The country founded by these dedicated men faces an unprecedented threat.</p>
				Shot #:
				<p>Next up is JOHN ADAMS.</p> <p>ANNOUNCER (O.S.) Some seditious and hate-filled terrorists are being taken into custody tonight in America to protect <u>you</u>.</p> <p>MOVE TO...</p>
				Shot #:
				<p>Next up is THOMAS JEFFERSON with the SOUND of SHOUTING and RIOTS.</p> <p>ANNOUNCER (O.S.) Their writings? Prolific.</p> <p>MOVE TO...</p>
				Shot #:
				<p>Next up is BENJAMIN FRANKLIN followed by a WHOOSH of FLAME.</p> <p>ANNOUNCER (O.S.) Their effect? Incendiary.</p> <p>MOVE TO...</p>

Shot #:	5	Length: 05.0	Total: 0:11.0 – 0:15.0	<input type="checkbox"/> INT. <input type="checkbox"/> EXT. (CONTINUES)
				<p>Next up is ALEXANDER HAMILTON with a VOLLEY of GUNSHOTS.</p> <p>ANNOUNCER (O.S.) They have actively encouraged rebellion against the most powerful nation in history.</p> <p>MOVE TO...</p>
Shot #:	6	Length: 04.0	Total: 0:15.0 – 0:19.0	
				<p>Next up is the CONSTITUTION of the United States with THUNDER and LIGHTNING.</p> <p>ANNOUNCER (O.S.) ...against everything these men stood for.</p> <p>HOLD for a beat as the THUNDER FADES AWAY, then CUT TO:</p>
Shot #:	7	Length: 03.0	Total: 0:19.0 – 0:22.0	
Shot #:	8	Length: 02.0	Total: 0:22.0 – 0:24.0	<input type="checkbox"/> INT. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXT. INDEPENDENCE HALL -- NIGHT

Shot #:	9	Length: 02.0	Total: 0:24.0 – 0:26.0	<input type="checkbox"/> INT. <input type="checkbox"/> EXT. (CONTINUES)
				<p>SIRENS CONTINUE as ANOTHER TOUGH-LOOKING MAN pulls on a black ski mask to hide his grim features.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ANNOUNCER (O.S.) ...rebellion against the most powerful...</p>
				<p>Shot #: 10 Length: 02.0 Total: 0:26.0 – 0:28.0 <input type="checkbox"/> INT. <input type="checkbox"/> EXT. (CONTINUES)</p>
				<p>SIRENS CONTINUE as A TOUGH-LOOKING WOMAN pulls on a black ski mask to hide her grim features.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ANNOUNCER (O.S.) ...nation in history.</p>
				<p>Shot #: 11 Length: 02.0 Total: 0:28.0 – 0:30.0 <input type="checkbox"/> INT. <input type="checkbox"/> EXT. (CONTINUES)</p>
				<p>SIRENS SLOW and then STOP as ANOTHER TOUGH-LOOKING MAN pulls on a black ski mask to hide his grim features.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ANNOUNCER (O.S.) And tonight, they are being taken...</p>
				<p>Shot #: 12 Length: 02.0 Total: 0:30.0 – 0:32.0 <input type="checkbox"/> INT. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXT. (CONTINUES)</p>
				<p>ANOTHER TOUGH-LOOKING MAN pulls on a black ski mask to hide his grim features.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ANNOUNCER (O.S.) ...into custody...</p>
				<p>Shot #: 13 Length: 02.0 Total: 0:32.0 – 0:34.0 <input type="checkbox"/> INT. <input type="checkbox"/> EXT. (CONTINUES)</p>

Shot #:	13	Length: 05.0	Total: 0:32.0 – 0:36.0	<input type="checkbox"/> INT. <input type="checkbox"/> EXT. (CONTINUES)
				<p>CAMERA PULLS BACK to FRAME All OF THE MASKED FIGURES as they lift some wicked-looking automatic weapons INTO THE SHOT. HEAR DOZENS of WEAPONS being cocked.</p> <p>ANNOUNCER (O.S.) ...to stop their sedition and treason once and for all.</p>
				14
				<p>ESTABLISH the sacred historical building. But there are no tourists. Department of Homeland Security armored vehicles are parked at the curb, lights flashing.</p> <p>DHS PROSECUTOR ARNOLD BENEDICT fingers a RADIO HEADSET as he speaks into it.</p>
				15
				<p>With him is SECRET SERVICE AGENT CHARLENE STRYKER. She readies a SIG SAUER 9MM PISTOL.</p> <p>BENEDICT Go! Go! Go!</p> <p>Arnold, Stryker, the FOUR ARMED INDIVIDUALS and a half-dozen MORE ARMED SPECIAL AGENTS rush into...</p>
				16
				<p>...the main hall with LASER SIGHTS STREAMING and BOOTS SCURRYING, aiming at FIVE OLDER MEN who are seen only from behind. Just the backs of their heads and upper backs are seen.</p> <p>ANNOUNCER (O.S.) And who are these wanton terrorists?</p>

Shot #:	17	Length: 05.0	Total: 0:46.0 – 0:50.0	<input type="checkbox"/> INT. <input type="checkbox"/> EXT. (CONTINUES)
				<p>BENEDICT and STRYKER rush into the room. They are followed by more ARMED AND MASKED SPECIAL AGENTS with their LASER SIGHTS STREAMING.</p> <p>They surround the five "terrorists" who are standing calmly together in a row. We only see their backs; we cannot see their faces</p>
				Shot #:
				<p>BENEDICT You are all under arrest. You have no right to remain silent. We have ways of making you talk. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law.</p>
				Shot #:
				<p>VARIOUS SHOTS of Arnold, Stryker, and the armed agents as they cover the terrorists.</p> <p>BENEDICT (CONT'D) Under the Patriot Act, you have no right to an attorney and you won't have one present during questioning.</p>
				Shot #:
				<p>WIDE, ON THE FOUNDING FATHERS. We now see the terrorists' identities for the first time. They are Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, Hamilton, and Adams.</p> <p>The men blink at the lights, the lasers, and the confusion. They are clearly alarmed. Franklin nervously takes off his bi-focals, peers out at the agents.</p>

Shot #:	21	Length: 05.0	Total: 1:05.0 – 1:10.0	<input type="checkbox"/> INT. <input type="checkbox"/> EXT. (CONTINUES)
				<p>WASHINGTON fingers his battle sword. FRANKLIN is astonished. ADAMS is nervous. HAMILTON is insulted. JEFFERSON is offended.</p> <p>BENEDICT (into head set) The “founding fathers” are in custody.</p> <p>HOLD, then SMASH CUT TO:</p>
				Shot #:
				<p>With the U.S. Constitution as a b.g. image as IT BURNS:</p> <p>Founding Fathers</p> <p>In Theaters Summer, 2016</p> <p>This motion picture is not yet rated.</p>
				Shot #:
				<p>With the U.S. Constitution as a b.g. image, STILL BURNING:</p> <p>A Welty Brothers Studios Production</p> <p>In Association with Gadsden Pictures</p> <p>A NightStar Release</p>
				Shot #:
				<p>Written by Charles Welty</p> <p>Produced by J. E. Martin and Charles Welty</p> <p>Directed by Jonathan Lawrence</p> <p>The image disappears in a CLOUD of SMOKE to a BLACK SCREEN.</p>

FOUNDING FATHERS

Written by
Charles Welty

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

1 **EXT. WASHINGTON'S MOUNT VERNON MANSION -- NIGHT** 1
(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, BUTLER,
DRIVER)

WIDE SHOT. It's RAINING as a FURIOUS THUNDER STORM lashes Washington's famous mansion. HOLD for a BEAT as we SUPER THE DATE and TIME:

George Washington's
Mount Vernon Estate
April, 1789

We LOSE SUPER as a large HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE pulled by a team of horses pulls up to the front door. The SIDE LAMPS of the carriage are lit. Its DRIVER dismounts and steps quickly to the front door.

AT THE FRONT DOOR stands a BUTLER, a house servant of the day who is a BLACK MAN in an appropriate uniform of the period. With the butler is ALEXANDER HAMILTON and JOHN ADAMS, looking out into the RAIN. They are dressed in the finest traveling clothes of the period. They each carry traveling bags.

The driver speaks quickly to Hamilton as LIGHTNING LIGHTS UP the front door.

DRIVER

Mr. Hamilton? Mr. Vice-President?

HAMILTON

Driver, I'm Alexander Hamilton.

ADAMS

I'm John Adams.

DRIVER

Your carriage awaits, gentlemen.
(to the butler)
And Dr. Franklin? Mr. Jefferson?

BUTLER

Inside, sir, awaiting the end of
this storm!

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

DRIVER

(to Hamilton and Adams)

There is some urgency, gentlemen.

(to the butler)

You can inform them their carriage awaits.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)

No need for that.

CAMERA ADJUSTS and BENJAMIN FRANKLIN steps INTO THE SHOT with THOMAS JEFFERSON. Like the others, they also carry traveling bags. Always the gentleman, Franklin doffs his hat and gestures toward the carriage with it.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

Thomas... after you, sir.

JEFFERSON STEPS INTO THE SHOT. He, like all the Founding Fathers, is immaculately dressed in formal traveling clothes of the period. He carries a WALKING CANE.

JEFFERSON

(glancing up toward
the sky)

These spring rains. They seem to be getting worse.

Jefferson pulls his traveling cloak around himself.

ADAMS

Spring rains? More like a Nor'easter, I'd say.

Adams, too, pulls his cloak around himself.

JEFFERSON steps toward the carriage, nearly bumps into Adam.

ADAMS quietly stiffens at the perceived insult. There will be tension between the two for most of our story.

JEFFERSON moves stiffly past Adams, heading through the rain to the carriage.

FRANKLIN notices the slight. He sighs, pulls his own cloak around himself, steps out into the rain.

THE BUTLER picks up their bags and carries them to the carriage, heading into the rain and OUT OF THE SHOT.

AT THE CARRIAGE

Jefferson has already seated himself in the rear seat. Franklin gets into the carriage, takes his seat next to Jefferson.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: (2)

1

AT THE BACK OF THE CARRIAGE, the butler tosses the traveling bags on to the luggage rack.

BACK TO SCENE

The driver turns to face Hamilton and Adams.

DRIVER

(to the butler)

Two down. Where's the Master of the house?

WASHINGTON (O.S.)

Present and accounted for!

GEORGE WASHINGTON, looking quite distinguished in his traveling clothes, carries a VALISE in one hand and his SHEATHED BATTLE SWORD in the other hand. He tenders the valise to the driver.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

My traveling bag.

(looks up at the sky)

A Nor'easter? At this time of year?
Strange...

ADAMS

(gestures to the sword)

Will you be needing that, sir?

The driver takes up the valise as the BUTLER RETURNS, his clothes dripping wet. The butler picks up the traveling bags belonging to Hamilton and Adams and carries them OUT OF THE SHOT.

HAMILTON

(to Adams)

When I served with the General at Valley Forge, he was never without it.

WASHINGTON

Those times are past. But, for the sake of formality...

Washington pulls the sword close to him, then gestures toward the carriage.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Gentlemen... after you.

HAMILTON

I'll drive.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: (3)

1

Hamilton starts to step out into the rain. Washington restrains him for a moment.

Washington peers out into the rain. He SEES JEFFERSON AND FRANKLIN seated inside the carriage in the rear seats, facing forward.

WASHINGTON

(to Hamilton)

You'd rather drive the team, than sit inside with...

HAMILTON

I'd rather face the elements than that... Virginian.

ADAMS

If it weren't for certain pressing matters of state, General Washington, we'd not be here... together.

Washington laughs heartily, clasps Hamilton in a good-natured manner on the shoulder.

WASHINGTON

We're all Virginians, Mr. Hamilton!

HAMILTON

I was born in the Caribbean, sir!

WASHINGTON

Nevis, if I recall. And look... you've come so far since those days. Your service under my command is remembered fondly, my dear sir.

Washington smiles wryly. Hamilton returns the wry smile. Washington then turns to Adams.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Mr. Vice-President...

(then to Hamilton)

There, you see... he's from Massachusetts, not Virginia...

(gestures to carriage,
then to Adams)

After you...

ADAMS

No, General Washington... after you.

Adams bows, doffing his hat and gesturing to the carriage. Washington acquiesces, pulls his traveling cloak around himself, and steps OUT OF THE SHOT toward the carriage.

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED: (4)

1

Adams follows, moving OUT OF THE SHOT. Hamilton pauses for a beat, gathers his cloak around himself and pauses just to say...

HAMILTON
(with a sigh)
Virginians...

Hamilton steps OUT OF THE SHOT and into the rain, heading to the carriage. We pause long enough to HOLD ON THE DRIVER, who laments with a wry smile...

DRIVER
Politicians...

The driver steps OUT OF THE SHOT, carrying Washington's traveling bag.

AT THE CARRIAGE

ADAMS is getting into the carriage as Washington holds the door for him.

WASHINGTON gets in and Hamilton steps INTO THE SHOT, closes the door for Washington, then climbs aboard the driver's seat.

AT THE REAR OF THE CARRIAGE

THE BUTLER finishes stowing the bags he has carried and moves OUT OF THE SHOT, heading for the warmth of the mansion.

THE DRIVER stows Washington's traveling bag in the back. We see the OTHER TRUNKS and VALISES strapped to the LUGGAGE RACK on the back of the carriage. The driver drapes the luggage rack's rain slicker over the other bags, secures it to the rack, then steps back.

BACK TO SCENE

Hamilton, picks up the reins, turns briefly and shouts down to the other Founding Fathers:

HAMILTON
Let's roll!

LIGHTNING LIGHTS UP THE SKY as Hamilton CRACKS THE REINS and drives the carriage OUT OF THE SHOT. We WIPE TO:

2 **EXT. COUNTRY ROAD -- NIGHT**
(HAMILTON)

2

BEGIN CREDITS as the RAIN CONTINUES, only now it's much worse than before. WIND and RAIN lash at Hamilton as he drives the carriage quickly along the road.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

2

As the carriage rolls through the rain, we HEAR AD LIB DIALOG -- more like loud arguments, actually -- between Adams, Jefferson and Franklin, with Washington trying to calm the passionate political differences among them. Jefferson calls Adams a mentally unbalanced hermaphrodite. Adams says if Jefferson ever becomes president, it would mean murder, rape, and robbery in the streets. The ad lib argument continues all the way through the action until the end of the scene, interrupted only by Hamilton's shout, below.

VARIOUS SHOTS as the carriage moves through the night rain.

RAIN DRENCHES the carriage windows.

THE WHEELS cut through the muddy roads.

THE HORSES strain against the wind and the rain.

THE SIDE LAMPS are seen through the gloom and the rain.

THE SKY IS ROILING and there is more to this storm than the RAIN and LIGHTNING.

A LIGHTNING BOLT crashes into a tree beside the road. A SHOWER OF SPARKS spooks the horses even more than they already are. Hamilton calls out to the four men in the carriage.

HAMILTON

Gentlemen! Hang on!

3 **INT. HAMILTON'S CARRIAGE -- NIGHT** 3
(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON)

Inside the carriage and seated in the rear-facing front seat, Washington and Adams are jostled by the sudden jerking of the carriage. Jefferson and Franklin hold on to side straps to steady themselves.

FRANKLIN

Hang on, indeed!

Adams and Washington reach up, grab their own side straps as the CARRIAGE ROCKS from the motion of the horses. RAIN beats against the glass windows of the carriage. Hold for a beat, then CUT TO:

4 **EXT. HAMILTON'S CARRIAGE -- CONTINUOUS** 4
(HAMILTON)

The carriage moves through the RAIN as the carriage is lashed by the WIND and the STORM. We TRACK ALONG the carriage from BACK TO FRONT. As the HORSES COME INTO VIEW, we SEE them straining at their task. Hamilton (the driver) shakes his head and yells an ad lib encouragement to the horses. Then we CUT BACK TO:

5 **INT. HAMILTON'S CARRIAGE -- CONTINUOUS**
(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON)

5

Franklin pulls a pocket watch from his vest, snaps open the front cover, and peers at it.

A LIGHTNING FLASH through the side window shows us the time. It's just after two in the morning. Franklin closes the watch.

Off Jefferson's raised eyebrows:

FRANKLIN

Two o'clock. We've been on the road
for just over three hours.
(looking out the window)
Not much progress.

He peers out, looking forward.

FRANKLIN'S POV

The carriage moves forward and we SEE THE ROAD CURVE TO THE RIGHT up ahead as an enormous COVERED BRIDGE MOVES INTO VIEW, ILLUMINATED BY THE LIGHTNING. Its roof is slick with rain. We HOLD FOR A BEAT, then we CUT:

BACK TO SCENE

Franklin turns from the window.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

Covered bridge ahead. Maybe we can
get some relief from this storm. Let
the horses blow.

The other Founding Fathers look from one to another, wondering about the storm. We CUT TO:

6 **EXT. COVERED BRIDGE -- CONTINUOUS**
(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON)

6

WIDE SHOT as the carriage moves on to the bridge. It continues forward, stopping about 1/3 of the way across the bridge. We SEE some type of SPINNING VORTEX beginning to form at the far edge of the bridge.

END CREDITS as Hamilton pulls the carriage to a stop. He shouts down to the men in the carriage.

HAMILTON

Gotta get out of the rain. Give the
team a rest!

As he turns forward, he sees something up ahead. A puzzled look crosses his face.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

AT THE CARRIAGE DOOR

Washington opens the carriage door, steps partly out the door. He, too, looks ahead, and freezes with a puzzled look on his face.

WASHINGTON

What in heaven...?

BACK TO SCENE

JEFFERSON, inside the carriage, notes Washington's reaction. Jefferson opens the door on the right side, pokes his head out. Jefferson's look of annoyance turns to puzzlement, too.

JEFFERSON

Dr. Franklin! Take a look at this!

ADAMS moves to the side door, pokes his head out. The look on Adams' face turns to puzzlement, too.

FRANKLIN, seeing the reaction of his traveling companions, moves to his side door, too.

WASHINGTON steps out of the carriage as Franklin pokes his head out.

FRANKLIN REACTS: his jaw drops. We HOLD FOR A BEAT on Franklin's reaction, then we CUT TO:

ANGLE -- ON THE COVERED BRIDGE

The storm lashes the covered bridge. At the far end, we SEE a VORTEX of clouds and lightning SWIRL on the inside, and not on the outside, of the covered bridge.

BACK TO SCENE

Franklin takes off his bifocal glasses, wipes them quickly with a handkerchief, puts them on again. He peers through them, then over them, at the storm.

FRANKLIN'S POV

THE VORTEX is getting larger by the second!

BACK TO SCENE

Franklin stuffs his handkerchief back into his pocket.

FRANKLIN

General Washington! Look! It's growing.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED: (2)

6

AT THE DRIVER'S SEAT

Looking ahead to the vortex, Hamilton takes the reins firmly into his hands. As he turns to shout down to his companions, Hamilton notices something behind them.

HAMILTON

Our retreat has been compromised,
too, gentlemen.

BACK TO SCENE

Washington, Franklin, Jefferson and Adams turn toward the rear to see...

ANOTHER VORTEX AT THE REAR

The vortex grows quickly, with LIGHTNING FLASHES and STRONG WINDS.

BACK TO SCENE

Hamilton shouts down to his companions.

HAMILTON (CONT'D)

No retreat, gentlemen! There's only
one way we can go!

WASHINGTON

Inside, gentlemen!

Adams and Jefferson pull their heads back into the carriage as Franklin and Washington take their seats. Washington and Jefferson pull their carriage doors shut.

AT THE DRIVER'S SEAT, Hamilton cracks the reins.

HAMILTON

Onward, to glory!

INSIDE THE CARRIAGE, Jefferson grabs on to his strap.

JEFFERSON

I've never questioned the man's
courage, Dr. Franklin! Just his
politics!

ADAMS

(annoyed)

Let the man drive, sir!

Franklin smiles grimly, then grabs on to his own strap.

FRANKLIN

Drive, I say! Drive on... to glory!

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED: (3)

6

ON THE BRIDGE

The carriage moves forward, the horses straining and whinnying their complaints. They head right for the vortex.

INSIDE THE CARRIAGE

Washington, Franklin, Adams and Jefferson watch as the VORTEX SWIRLS around the outside of the carriage.

OUTSIDE THE CARRIAGE, ON THE BRIDGE

FROM THE REAR of the carriage, we SEE the REAR VORTEX rapidly approaching. It JOINS WITH THE FRONT VORTEX. As it joins, we HEAR THE LOUD AD LIB CRIES of the FOUNDING FATHERS and the COMPLAINING WHINNIES of the HORSES. We HOLD FOR A BEAT and then the CRIES ABRUPTLY CEASE. The VORTEX VANISHES and the STORM INSTANTLY DISSIPATES, leaving a CLEAR, MOONLIT NIGHT. As the SOUND OF THUNDER ROLLS TO SILENCE, we HEAR the SOUND OF NIGHT CRICKETS.

We SEE the EMPTY BRIDGE for a beat, then we CUT TO:

7 **EXT. VIRGINIA PASTURE -- AFTERNOON**

7

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON)

CLOSE -- THE BRANCHES of a LARGE SHADE TREE. As CAMERA LOWERS, the carriage COMES INTO VIEW, sitting alone under the tree. The carriage, the horses, and Hamilton's rain slicker are GLISTENING WET from the prior storm. We HEAR the last of the THUNDER from our previous scene as the SOUND ECHOES TO SILENCE.

INTO VIEW: the horses are munching quietly on the grass that grows beneath the tree. It's a quiet, warm, beautiful spring day. The BIRDS are CHIRPING and the BEES are BUZZING.

IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT is Alexander Hamilton. He is asleep, the reins still in his hands. He SNORES. A FLY BUZZES around his nose. He sleepily waves it away.

THROUGH THE CARRIAGE WINDOWS we SEE WASHINGTON and FRANKLIN, also asleep. Next to them we SEE ADAMS and JEFFERSON, also asleep with their heads leaned against the windows of their door.

All at once, they wake up, instantly alert, with ad lib cries of surprise.

JEFFERSON

Where are we?

ADAMS

What in the name of the Great Jehovah happened?

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

FRANKLIN

Most peculiar...

WASHINGTON

The understatement of the age, sir.

INTERCUT BETWEEN HAMILTON, in the driver's seat, and INSIDE THE CARRIAGE -- HAMILTON rouses himself, looks around.

WASHINGTON, holding his battle sword, extends it to the roof of the carriage. He KNOCKS on the roof three times with the sheathed sword.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Hamilton! Mr. Hamilton, sir!

No response from Hamilton. Jefferson knocks on the roof with his cane. Still no response.

HAMILTON is still looking around.

WASHINGTON (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Is everything in order?

Hamilton rolls his eyes at the absurdity of the question.

HAMILTON

General Washington, it was the middle of the night and we were in a humdinger of a Nor'easter. Now it's the middle of the afternoon, and a spring day at that! No, sir, I'd say everything is not in order!

WASHINGTON REACTS -- this is not what he wanted to hear.

Washington and then Jefferson open their respective doors.

Washington and Franklin step out of the carriage, looking around in puzzlement as Hamilton steps down from the carriage.

Franklin takes out his watch, looks at it in curiosity.

FRANKLIN

Strange. My pocket watch says two o'clock.

ADAMS

(from inside the carriage)

In the afternoon, sir!

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (2)

7

FRANKLIN

(listens to the watch)

No, it has a 24-hour dial. It's still running, and it says two o'clock... in the morning.

JEFFERSON

You and your newfangled... machines.

Jefferson says the last word in disgust as he steps from the carriage.

FRANKLIN

My "machines"? You're the one who redesigned that plow for Monticello, and built that one-handed clock and...

JEFFERSON

(interrupting)

I'll not be dictated as to what to do or when to do it by a collection of cogs and wheels.

WASHINGTON

Gentlemen, gentlemen! Priorities. Where are we?

HAMILTON

Still near civilization, I should think.

Hamilton gestures toward something OUT OF FRAME. The others follow his gaze.

HAMILTON'S POV

HAMILTON (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Gentlemen... a tavern!

BACK TO SCENE

Adams steps out of the carriage.

ADAMS

Hear, hear!

Hamilton steps OUT OF THE SHOT, heading toward...

8 **EXT. COLONIAL TAVERN -- AFTERNOON**

8

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON)

WIDE SHOT as we SEE other COLONIAL BUILDINGS in the distance. PEOPLE in PERIOD DRESS move about in the distance. The carriage remains in the f.g. underneath the tree.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

As Hamilton heads for the tavern, Franklin looks around, then responds:

FRANKLIN

Little early for a pint, but... why not? Maybe the tavern owner can tell us something.

ADAMS steps down from the carriage. Adams and Jefferson move toward the tavern. Franklin pulls out a handkerchief, cleans his bifocals, then tucks his handkerchief back into his pocket. Franklin then steps OUT OF THE SHOT, following Adams and Jefferson.

WASHINGTON shakes his head, then acquiesces.

WASHINGTON

After all this, I suppose I could use a pint, myself.

Looking around, WASHINGTON STEPS OUT OF THE SHOT, following the other Founding Fathers toward the tavern. We HEAR Washington mutter something as he moves OUT OF THE FRAME.

WASHINGTON (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Glory indeed!

We HOLD FOR A BEAT on the horses as they munch on the grass beneath the tree, then we CUT TO:

9 INT. COLONIAL TAVERN -- AFTERNOON

9

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, MONTGOMERY, SUSAN, TAVERN BOY, TAVERN PATRON)

A typical tavern of the late 18th century. Large KEGS along one wall. Plain wooden tables with LIT OIL LANTERNS. An enormous FIREPLACE with a rectangular portrait above it. There is NO FIRE in the fireplace, but the hearth is piled with logs. A couple of CUSTOMERS in the dress of the period drink their ales. They are seated at a LONG ROW OF TABLES.

The proprietor of the tavern, RICHARD MONTGOMERY, mid 50's and stout, wipes down one of the wooden tables. He SEES Hamilton ENTER. Hamilton looks around curiously for a beat.

Montgomery observes Hamilton's mode of dress. A soft smile comes to his face.

MONTGOMERY

Help you, sir?

HAMILTON

Your finest ale, proprietor! Five, I might say!

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

MONTGOMERY

Five?

Montgomery's question trails off as he sees...

JEFFERSON, ADAMS, WASHINGTON, and FRANKLIN step into the tavern.

MONTGOMERY (CONT'D)

Uh... this is most unusual. Is there a change in the performance schedule?

Washington steps over to the table.

WASHINGTON

Performance schedule?

MONTGOMERY

(gestures to Franklin)

Mr. "Franklin" and your party here weren't due in until Thursday evening, I thought.

FRANKLIN

Due in? My good man, what are you talking about?

A young TAVERN BOY, also dressed in period clothes, steps up to Montgomery, tugs on his sleeve, whispers something in his ear.

MONTGOMERY

That your carriage outside, Mister... "Franklin"?

JEFFERSON

It is... our carriage, sir.

FRANKLIN

Thomas... we must see to the horses.

MONTGOMERY

Thomas? Jefferson, I suppose?

Jefferson nods. Montgomery smiles a knowing smile, but before Jefferson can respond with a word, Franklin pulls out a leather coin purse, extracts a half-penny coin, then offers it to the boy.

FRANKLIN

Ah, a servant boy! Please see our carriage to the nearest livery. Here's a ha'penny for your trouble.

The boy takes it cautiously.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (2)

9

TAVERN BOY

Servant boy?

He examines the coin. A puzzled expression crosses his face, then realizing its value:

TAVERN BOY (CONT'D)

My apologies, sir. Right away, sir!

The tavern boy runs to the door, pauses. He examines the coin, finds that it's real.

TAVERN BOY (CONT'D)

Gee, thanks, mister! Nobody's ever given me a real Colonial coin before.

The boy runs outside with a very contemporary CRY of "Woo-hoo!" The Founding Fathers shake their heads at what is for them a bizarre response to the payment.

Adams and Hamilton, and Franklin and Jefferson, take their seats along one side of one of the tables, opposite the large bay window. Washington sits at the head of the table.

ADAMS

Our ales?

JEFFERSON

For God's sakes, sir! Get the man a drink!

MONTGOMERY

What did you give him?

FRANKLIN

A ha'penny, sir, to see to our carriage.

SUSAN, A WAITRESS dressed in period clothes, brings a large platter with five mugs of ale, brimming over the top. She sets it down on the table. She sets one drink before each of the Founding Fathers. As she does, an OPEN POCKET in a band around her waist reveals a small white box.

MONTGOMERY

A... ha'penny?

Franklin NOTICES the box. A puzzled look crosses his face.

But Adams reaches for the ale, takes a deep drink, then reacts, surprised.

ADAMS

My good woman, how did you get the ale so cold?

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (3)

9

MONTGOMERY
 (to Franklin)
 Not a dollar?

SUSAN
 Cold? That's the only way we serve
 it around here.

HAMILTON
 A day's wages for five minutes of
 work? And a common courtesy at that?

Franklin stares at the device in her pocket.

FRANKLIN
 My good woman, would you mind
 answering a question?

OFF MONTGOMERY'S PUZZLED REACTION to Hamilton's comment,
 Washington and the other Founding Fathers laugh heartily at
 the suggestion. They pick up their ales.

Franklin offers a toast.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)
 To democracy!

WASHINGTON
 To the republic!

JEFFERSON
 To liberty!

HAMILTON
 To freedom!

ADAMS
 To ice cold ale!

They each take a long drink. They respond with puzzled delight
 to the cold drinks because in their day ale was served warm.

Montgomery smiles as they drink their ales, pleased that the
 men enjoy their drinks.

MONTGOMERY
 There ya, go!

SUSAN
 (to Franklin)
 Depends...

Then Washington, looking around, speaks the one question on
 all of their minds:

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (4)

9

WASHINGTON

My good man, where are we, sir?

MONTGOMERY

And you would be?

As Adams picks up his mug again, he salutes Washington.

ADAMS

General Washington...

Montgomery's reacts with shock, then annoyance.

MONTGOMERY

Actors! Okay, enough with the charades!

FRANKLIN

(to waitress, pointing)

What is that in your pocket?

Adams starts to take a swig from his mug, sees something outside the window. The shock of it causes him to scoot his chair back, stand up, and take a step backwards with a CRY OF ALARM, spilling his ale.

SUSAN

What? You want the news? A fire, maybe?

The other Founding Fathers turn, holding their mugs of ale, and look out the window to see...

THROUGH THE LARGE BAY WINDOW OF THE TAVERN

A brand new DODGE CARAVAN PULLS INTO THE SHOT, windows down and MUSIC BLARING to the tune of "HAZY SHADE OF WINTER" by the Bangles. The vehicle pulls up to the front door of the tavern. We cannot see the driver or its passenger.

BACK TO SCENE**FAST SERIES OF CUTS (AN OVERWHELMING BLUR OF NEW TECHNOLOGY)**

SUSAN pulls out the small white box, a REMOTE CONTROL.

SHE AIMS the remote control at the fireplace, PUSHES A BUTTON.

THE FIREPLACE BURSTS INTO FLAME.

SHE AIMS the remote control at the portrait over the fireplace. She PUSHES A SECOND BUTTON.

THE PORTRAIT DROPS DOWN to reveal a HIGH DEFINITION TV. The SOUND BLARES and we SEE a FOX CHANNEL with MIKE HUCKABEE.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (5)

9

HUCKABEE

In this, the second decade of the 21st century, on all the minds of the American people is the continuing conflict in Afghanistan and the Middle East.

A CELL PHONE RINGS and a TAVERN PATRON pulls out his cell phone. He answers it with some perturbation as FOX'S HUCKABEE drones on and on...

TAVERN PATRON

Didn't I tell you never to call me at the end of my shift? What's up with that?

HUCKABEE

(on screen in b.g.)
President Barack Obama...

THROUGH THE BAY WINDOW, the driver's side door of the mini-van OPENS AUTOMATICALLY, sliding backwards.

HUCKABEE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

...has condemned the policies of his potential successor, [insert name of Republican candidate].

BACK TO SCENE

CAMERA MOVES DOWN THE ROW of the Founding Fathers as they REACT in shock, spilling their mugs of ale. The tavern patron shuts his cell phone.

As Huckabee continues, the image of Barack's successor is KEYED INTO THE BACKGROUND behind Huckabee. It's HILLARY CLINTON.

ADAMS

A... a woman... is running for President!?

ADAMS falls backward with a groan.

HUCKABEE

(continuing in b.g.)
...who will bring his arguments to the American people one week from tonight at historic Independence Hall in Philadelphia. And you can catch all the action right here on Fox.

JEFFERSON just stares at it all, speechless.

HAMILTON

For once, gentlemen, I agree with you!

WASHINGTON

Did... did he say... the 21st century!?

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (6)

9

TAVERN PATRON

(to waitress)

Can ya' turn that thing down, Susan?

(notices the Founding
Fathers)What'sa matter? Ain't you never seen
a cell phone before?

The Founding Fathers are still holding their ales up in mid-drink, shocked at what they are seeing. Hamilton and Jefferson REACT, staring in shock first at the screen, then at each other.

HAMILTON

(together, staring
at the screen)A Negro?

JEFFERSON

(together, staring at
the screen)A Negro?

(then)

And he was elected twice?

ADAMS

I think we will need something
stronger.

FRANKLIN

(to bartender)

Whiskey. Five.

Washington just stares at it all, speechless for a beat.
Then:

WASHINGTON

A nightmare. Has to be a nightmare.

SUSAN points the remote at the TV, pushes another button.
The VOLUME MUTES COMPLETELY but Huckabee continues on silently
in the b.g.

TAVERN PATRON

(to Montgomery)

That's taking characters a bit too
far, doncha think?

MONTGOMERY nods his head, then sees the Founding Fathers'
reactions to the car. Another puzzled look crosses his face.

FRANKLIN -- at the end of the row -- comes to his wits first.
He sets his mug of ale down on the table. He thinks about it
for a beat, then picks the mug up again, drinks it completely
dry, then stands, wiping his mouth.

Franklin looks over at the other Founding Fathers. Franklin
shrugs, then CAMERA FOLLOWS FRANKLIN as he moves to the door.
Franklin heads out the tavern, rubbing his hands in glee.

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED: (7)

9

FRANKLIN
Actors, indeed!
(to the bartender)
Hold the whiskey.

The other Founding Fathers stare at the HDTV image for a beat, then they all drink down their ales in one long draught. Then we CUT TO:

10 **EXT. COLONIAL TAVERN -- CONTINUOUS**

10

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON, MONTGOMERY)

Franklin moves quickly out of the tavern, then walks around the mini-van, admiring it with a sense of wonder.

The driver, RICHARD LAWTON, mid-30's and his passenger, SALLY ERICKSON, early 30's, get out of the vehicle. They are dressed in contemporary clothing. He wears shorts. She wears a tight top with a short skirt.

FRANKLIN
Fantastic! Unbelievable! I had no
idea your transport was so... advanced
here in...

Franklin looks back at Adams, Jefferson and Hamilton as they exit the tavern, more than a little shaken at what they see. They gawk at the van and at Sally's revealing clothing.

Montgomery comes out the door, steps over to the mini-van.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)
Where are we, anyway? Thomas?

JEFFERSON looks around, a puzzled look on his face. Stepping forward, Montgomery reacts at what he is seeing.

LAWTON
Thomas Jefferson? The Thomas
Jefferson?

JEFFERSON
(looking askance at
the van)
At your service, sir.

Montgomery plays along with what he thinks is a gag. He shakes Jefferson's hand.

MONTGOMERY
(to Jefferson)
Montgomery. Richard Montgomery.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

MONTGOMERY (CONT'D)

(shakes Lawton's hand,
then to Franklin)

And you're at Monty's Tavern. In
Colonial Williamsburg.

JEFFERSON

Williamsburg? Well, at least we are
still in Virginia.

Jefferson, Adams and Hamilton look at the van curiously as
Franklin steps around the van, looking inside of it. Then:

FRANKLIN

What is it? Some kind of...
autonomous...?
(searching for words)
Mobile...?

LAWTON

(like talking to a
child)
Automobile?

FRANKLIN

Good word for it!

ERICKSON

(to Jefferson)
The Thomas Jefferson?

JEFFERSON

Thomas Jefferson, ma'am, of
Monticello.

He bows, regally, as do Adams and Hamilton. Erickson glances
sideways at Lawton, stifling a smile.

ERICKSON

Sally Erickson... of Philadelphia.
And this...
(indicating Lawton)
...is my fiancée, Richard Lawton.
We're on a vacation.

FRANKLIN

Ah, Philadelphia! My own...

ERICKSON

And you're... don't tell me...
Benjamin Franklin?

Franklin bows grandly, doffing his hat to her.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: (2)

10

FRANKLIN

My humble reputation proceeds me, my dear Miss Erickson.

ERICKSON

(to Lawton)

And the costumes... so authentic.

Lawton nods as he takes out a digital camera. A puzzled look crosses Franklin's face as he considers what she just said, and as he sees Lawton's camera.

FRANKLIN

Costumes? What's all this about the theater? My dear woman, we are not actors!

(then, quickly to Lawton)

What kind of device is that, sir?

Erickson turns to Hamilton and Adams. Franklin steps aside to speak privately with Lawton. As the dialog progresses in f.g., Lawton shows the camera to Franklin in pantomime.

HAMILTON

Alexander Hamilton, Miss Erickson. A pleasure to make your acquaintance.

LAWTON, who is listening even while he is speaking quietly to Franklin, shakes his head and speaks OUT LOUD:

LAWTON

(off mic)

Ac-tors...

Montgomery nods his agreement as Lawton continues speaking to Franklin. He aims the camera, takes a picture, shows the camera's LCD display to Franklin, all while the following dialog takes place.

ADAMS

John Adams of Massachusetts. Vice-President to...

LAWTON

(off mic)

We know, we know...

ERICKSON

(together)

George Washington!

LAWTON

(together, off mic)

George Washington!

They both laugh, but then their laughs trail off as Washington steps from the tavern. He wears his sword and he carries himself with his usual commanding presence.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: (3)

10

WASHINGTON

Your most humble and obedient
servant...

We SEE the reaction of Erickson and Lawton.

FRANKLIN

(holding Lawton's camera)

Miss Erickson, Mr. Lawton, would you
mind telling us... what year is it?

On an even more shocked look from Erickson and Lawton, we
CUT TO:

11 **EXT. VIRGINIA INTERSTATE 60 -- AFTERNOON**

11

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON,
LAWTON)

We're WITH THE MINI-VAN, MOVING alongside it as the mini-van
proceeds down the highway. The conversation is taking place
INSIDE THE MOVING MINI-VAN, but we are OUTSIDE of it. On top
of the van, looking very much out of place and strapped to
the luggage rack with hand-woven ropes is the OLD-FASHIONED
LUGGAGE from the Founding Fathers' carriage.

LAWTON is driving. Franklin is in the front passenger seat.
Washington sits behind Lawton, with Erickson at Washington's
right, behind Franklin. In the back row of the mini-van is
Hamilton (behind Washington in the left rear seat) and
Jefferson (behind Erickson in the right rear seat) with Adams
in the center rear seat petrified, separating Hamilton and
Jefferson.

ERICKSON (O.S.)

Let me get this straight... you say
you are not actors.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)

I should say not.

JEFFERSON (O.S.)

I don't know but that we've been
insulted, gentlemen.

12 **INT. LAWTON'S MINI-VAN -- CONTINUOUS**

12

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON,
LAWTON)

Lawton looks through the rear-view mirror into the back of
the mini-van as he drives, trying to catch all the
conversation.

LAWTON

Oh, no, sir! Not at all. In our day,
actors make more money than God.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

12

ERICKSON

And some of them get more respect.

FRANKLIN

(reproving her)

My dear Miss Erickson!

ERICKSON

Well, it's true!

Washington shakes his head, amazed. Hamilton looks over at Jefferson.

HAMILTON

Once again, Jefferson, I am forced to agree with you.

ADAMS

(mocking them both)

The very idea!

WASHINGTON

My dear Miss Erickson...

ERICKSON

Sally. Call me Sally.

WASHINGTON

Miss Erickson... we are nothing more, and nothing less than who we say we are.

Erickson is a bit perturbed because the Founding Fathers keep referring to her as "Miss Erickson."

LAWTON

This is insane.

FRANKLIN

Insane? Mr. Lawton, do you want to hear insane?

(to Erickson)

Miss Erickson...

ERICKSON

Sally... please.

FRANKLIN

Miss Erickson, you say this is the 21st century. What you call "modern" America?

ERICKSON

Yes...

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (2)

12

LAWTON

And you say that you're Benjamin Franklin. The real Benjamin Franklin. Kite "fly guy"... the discover of electricity... and all.

FRANKLIN

(cautious)

I didn't discover it, I just worked to harness it, and quantify it.

LAWTON

Whatever...

ERICKSON

Uh-huh...

(to Washington)

And you're George Washington. The real George Washington. The boy... the hatchet... the cherry tree...

WASHINGTON

(dismissive wave of hand)

A myth, Miss Erickson. I've heard it all my adult life.

LAWTON

(slapping the steering wheel)

I knew it!

WASHINGTON

It was a plum tree.

A SERIES OF QUICK INTERCUTS:

LAWTON SPINS THE STEERING WHEEL to the right.

THE MINI-VAN pulls to the side of the road.

LAWTON'S FEET hit the brakes.

THE VAN skids to a stop.

LAWTON points to the outside.

LAWTON

That's it! Out you go! All of you!

He glances quickly into the back seat again.

ERICKSON slaps the arm rests of her seat in frustration.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (3)

12

ERICKSON

(to Lawton)

Hold on, honey.

(to the Founding
Fathers)We're not getting anywhere.

Erickson turns, addresses the men in the back.

ERICKSON (CONT'D)

And so you're...

(stifles a smile)

Hamilton, Adams and... Jefferson?

Hamilton, Adams and Jefferson WALLA their assent.

FRANKLIN

Is that so hard for you to understand,
Miss Erickson?

ERICKSON

(broadly)

Yes... don't you? You can't be. How'd
you get here?The Founding Fathers look from one another. They shake their
heads.

WASHINGTON

We... we do not know.

FRANKLIN

We were on a night trip, headed for
Philadelphia. There was a
thunderstorm...

JEFFERSON

No, worse than that. A Nor'easter,
by the look of her. The Devil's own
tempest, if there ever was one.

ADAMS

And there was a bridge... a covered
bridge.

HAMILTON

We sought shelter from the storm. I
was driving the horses...

WASHINGTON

There was some type of atmospheric
disturbance, like a cyclone, but
along the roadway. It was...

(shudders)

...not natural.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (4)

12

FRANKLIN

And the next thing we knew, it was broad daylight. And we all awakened, like from a sleep. But even now, I pinch myself to make certain that we are all truly awake!

ERICKSON

This is... this is impossible.

JEFFERSON

Yet, Miss Erickson, here we are all. Traveling down this... what do you call it?

ERICKSON

(to Lawton)

Speaking of traveling...

She gestures toward the road. Lawton sighs, checks the traffic, then pulls back on to the road as he replies to Jefferson's question.

LAWTON

A freeway. There's no tolls.

JEFFERSON

Traveling down this "freeway" and having this most impossible conversation with you two.

ERICKSON

(after a beat, then)

We need to look into this some more.

WASHINGTON

We?

An awkward pause, then...

ERICKSON

I... didn't tell you.

ADAMS

Tell us what?

ERICKSON

I'm... I'm an attorney. I work for the public defender's office.

HAMILTON

A woman? Attorney!

ADAMS

The tyranny of the petticoat...

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (5)

12

They all express their surprise. Franklin is sympathetic. The others have their doubts.

HAMILTON

I don't know but that we're in trouble already.

(then, to Lawton)

And what is your line of employment, sir?

LAWTON

I'm... I'm in medical research.

FRANKLIN

Ah! A physician!

LAWTON

Not quite yet, sir. I'm more into genetic research.

(off Franklin's puzzled reaction)

It's... it's a long story.

FRANKLIN

(after a beat)

I see.

Franklin leans over and looks at the van's display panel.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

Mr. Lawton, just how does this...

"automobile" contraption work, anyway?

Lawton looks back at Sally through the rear view mirror. He rolls his eyes at the question.

Erickson looks up at Lawton. We see worry in her eyes. Then we CUT TO:

13 **EXT. MARYLAND INTERSTATE 95-- AFTERNOON**

13

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON)

As the mini-van moves down the highway, we SEE a road sign: "Philadelphia -- 140 miles". Then HAMILTON asks:

HAMILTON (O.S.)

One hundred forty miles? To Philadelphia?

LAWTON (O.S.)

That's right. Be there in about... two hours.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

JEFFERSON (O.S.)

It would take four days for me to ride from my home to Williamsburg.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)

How fast do you say we are going?

LAWTON (O.S.)

Speed limit here is sixty-five.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)

Sixty-five?

LAWTON (O.S.)

Miles. Per hour.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)

You limit the speed? To sixty-five?
(after a long beat)
Oh, dear...

ADAMS looks even more petrified than before.

ADAMS

I think I'm going to be ill.

WASHINGTON (O.S.)

(somewhat pale)

I think I'd like another ale.

The other Founding Fathers WALLA "Hear, hear!" And we DISSOLVE TO:

14 **EXT. PHILADELPHIA SKYLINE -- EVENING**

14

ESTABLISH the Philadelphia skyline as the SUN SETS. Then we CUT TO:

VARIOUS CITY SHOTS: Liberty Hall, the "Schuylkill Navy" Boathouse Row, Old City Hall, Congress Hall, Liberty Bell Hall, the Second Bank of the United States with its portrait gallery of Colonial Americans, Christ Church, etc., until we finally...

DISSOLVE TO:

15 **EXT. PHILADELPHIA HOTEL ENTRANCE -- EVENING**

15

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON, PARKING VALETS)

Lawton's mini-van, carrying Erickson and the Founding Fathers, pulls into a Philadelphia area hotel.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

LAWTON (O.S.)

I imagine you could all use something to eat.

JEFFERSON (O.S.)

Yes, famished is the word.

ERICKSON (O.S.)

I could use a drink right about now.

All of the Founding Fathers WALLA their O.S. assent as the mini-van pulls up to the front entrance of the hotel. A PARKING VALET steps up to the sliding front door.

16 INT. LAWTON'S MINI-VAN -- CONTINUOUS

16

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON)

Franklin, with a great deal of delight, pushes the button that opens the side door. He turns and watches it open.

FRANKLIN

Marvelous. Simply marvelous.

17 EXT. PHILADELPHIA HOTEL ENTRANCE -- CONTINUOUS

17

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON, PARKING VALETS)

Erickson and the Founding Fathers leave the mini-van. Lawton hands the keys to the PARKING VALET, who in turn hands him the receipt as a number of HOTEL WORKERS surround the mini-van and in no time remove the luggage from the luggage rack of the mini-van.

The parking valet looks skeptically at the Founding Fathers, then gets in the mini-van and drives it away.

ADAMS

You just... handed him your... your... what did you call it?

LAWTON

A car, Mr. Adams. Trust me... it's OK.

JEFFERSON

Oh... kay?

LAWTON

Means nothing's wrong. OK.

JEFFERSON

OK... hm-m-m. New century, new words.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

ERICKSON

Oh, there's plenty more where that came from.

WASHINGTON

This is some kind of inn?

ERICKSON

Well, where else are we going to stay?

WASHINGTON

My homestead. Mount Vernon... does it still stand?

LAWTON

Indeed it does, sir. Indeed it does!

Erickson, Lawton and the Founding Fathers enter the hotel and we CUT TO:

18 INT. PHILADELPHIA HOTEL LOBBY -- NIGHT

18

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON, HOTEL GUESTS)

The WORKERS escort the old-fashioned luggage into the hotel as various HOTEL GUESTS gawk at the luggage and the Founding Fathers.

ERICKSON

Honey, why don't you take our guests into the restaurant while I register them?

LAWTON

Sure.
(to the Founding Fathers)
Guys?

Lawton gestures to them as Erickson heads for the front desk. They all follow, with Jefferson pausing to comment:

JEFFERSON

"Guys"?

He shakes his head for a beat, then follows Lawton OUT OF THE SHOT. We CUT TO:

19 INT. PHILADELPHIA HOTEL RESTAURANT -- NIGHT

19

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON, DR. AMIT GOSWAMI, WAITRESS)

Erickson ENTERS through the bar at one end of the restaurant. At the far end, through a pair of doors, we see the Founding

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

Fathers and Lawton as they take their seats around a large table. The WAITERS and WAITRESSES, and quite a few PATRONS, shake their head in amazement at the costumed men.

As ERICKSON passes through the bar, one MAN in particular has been staring at the Founding Fathers. He is DR. AMIT GOSWAMI, the well-known astronomer from the University of Oregon.

GOSWAMI

Sally! Sally Erickson! How the devil've you been?

ERICKSON

Dr. Amit Goswami! University of Oregon... a physicist! And just when I need one. How's the Institute of Theoretical Science? Long time no see.

GOSWAMI

Retired since then. You still defending the helpless?

SUSAN

(as she hugs him quickly)

Uh-huh. I'm a sucker for a sad story, what can I say?

(then)

It's been... what? Years! What brings you in town?

GOSWAMI

Quantum physics conference at Drexel, of course. You still dating that wanna be doctor?

ERICKSON

Ah... Drexel University. Yes. We're engaged, actually. And he studies genetics.

GOSWAMI

DNA and all that stuff.

ERICKSON

We're getting married next June. I'll send you an invite. But... you? At Drexel? Lecturing?

GOSWAMI

On quantum physics, consciousness, and a theory of time.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED: (2)

19

ERICKSON

Time theory?

(thinking this over)

Say, you wouldn't happen to have about an hour to spare?

GOSWAMI

For you, I got time. Whadda ya got in mind?

OFF Sally's crafty look, we FLIP TO:

20 INT. PHILADELPHIA HOTEL RESTAURANT -- LATER

20

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON, DR. AMIT GOSWAMI, WAITRESS)

The remains of eight meals, with plates, wadded up napkins, and nearly empty drinking glasses are on the table. Franklin is finishing a dish of ice cream.

FRANKLIN

This... what did you call it? Ice...

ERICKSON

Ice cream. Invented in the late 1800's, or so they say.

JEFFERSON

No, we have something like this at Monticello.

FRANKLIN

It was worth the trip.

Lawton rolls his eyes at the suggestion.

WASHINGTON

Benjamin...

FRANKLIN

(puts his spoon aside)

Sorry.

(to Goswami)

Go on. You were saying?

GOSWAMI

(gestures to the Founding Fathers)

The Newtonian world view that has shaped our understanding for centuries is now giving way to the revelations of quantum physics...

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

FRANKLIN
(paying close attention)
Quantum physics...

GOSWAMI
Yes. It's the behavior of sub-atomic particles at the smallest level. There is a growing body of physicists who believe that physics goes beyond materialism. We believe that consciousness, not matter, is the ground of all being.

WASHINGTON
Sounds somewhat fanciful.

GOSWAMI
And yet, here you are.

They consider this for a beat, then:

GOSWAMI (CONT'D)
As I was saying, from what you've told me, some kind of "temporal displacement" has pulled you forward in time.

LAWTON
This is silly. You really believe this?

ERICKSON
Richard, please.

GOSWAMI
Clearly the Consciousness of the universe... or God... or whatever... or however you put it... has intervened in history once again.
(off their skeptical reactions)
Well, how else do you explain miracles?

FRANKLIN
(satisfied)
Indeed. How else are we going to explain it?

A WAITRESS steps over, begins to clear the table.

LAWTON
We? "We" don't have to explain anything.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: (2)

20

LAWTON (CONT'D)

(to the waitress)

Miss? Would you happen to have a
marking pen?

WAITRESS

I'll check in the kitchen.

LAWTON

And a little box...

(gesturing)

About yay big.

WAITRESS

I'll look.

She leaves, carrying a stack of plates from the table.

WASHINGTON

(to Goswami)

How do we get back?

GOSWAMI

The same way you got here, I must
assume.

LAWTON

Oh, for crying out loud!

(to Jefferson)

It's just an expression.

Jefferson nods his understanding, then:

JEFFERSON

Well, we're here now.

HAMILTON

And now what do we do?

ERICKSON

Is there... any danger if our...

(searching for the
word)

"Guests"... learn about the past? I
mean, about their future?

GOSWAMI

You mean, if they really are the
Founding Fathers, and if they can
get back to... 1789, was it?

ADAMS

Yes. We were headed for Philadelphia.
Certain pressing matters of state,
you understand.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: (3)

20

GOSWAMI

(laughs)

Well, the history books say you made it. If you hadn't, we'd have known by now.

ADAMS

(all smiles)

Then, we will get back. We didn't just disappear one day, never to return?

ERICKSON

No, Mr. Adams. You didn't.

(to Goswami)

When they do return, what will it be like? For them, I mean?

GOSWAMI

For them, it will all be like a dream.

JEFFERSON

It's like that now.

HAMILTON

More like a nightmare, you mean.

ERICKSON

You mean they won't remember anything?

GOSWAMI

No.

HAMILTON

Nothing? Nothing at all?

ADAMS

Not even, if we... we... learn when we're going to die?

The expressions on the faces of the Founding Fathers clearly indicate that they have not considered this.

GOSWAMI

(to the Founding Fathers)

You will remember nothing. And of the latter, I will merely say...

(to Adams and Jefferson)

You two, Adams and Jefferson, although antipathy has been between you, you will both become close personal friends in your later years. You will both die on the same day... an honor, actually... on July 4th, a

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: (4)

20

GOSWAMI (CONT'D)

day of some importance to both of you, I dare say. The year I shall not say.

(to Hamilton)

As for you, it would be wise of you to curb your temper. And stay away from duels.

(to Franklin)

Dr. Franklin, William Pierce will write of you, "The greatest philosopher of the present age; the very heavens obey him, and the clouds yield up their lightning to be imprisoned in his rod."

(to Washington)

And you, General Washington... First in war, first in peace, first in the hearts of his countryman. This is what will be written about you.

(to them all)

All in all, I'd say you all did quite well.

(to Sally and Lawton)

You see, if they had remembered any of this... "journey", it would have been inevitable that they would have spoken about it to someone. And by now, our future would already have been compromised. And you, my dear, given your background, quite probably wouldn't have been...

Erickson quickly interrupts before Goswami can spill her secret.

ERICKSON

Wouldn't have been up late having dinner with you.

(quick glance to her wrist watch)

Speaking of late...

LAWTON

Come on now, Dr. Goswami. You don't really believe all this? Our "present" was never compromised because these aren't the Founding Fathers! There is no time travel! And I, for one, don't know why we're even here talking about this!

WASHINGTON

Mr. Lawton...

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: (5)

20

GOSWAMI

Well, they do tell a convincing story.
So convincing, in fact, I think we
should have some fun with this. I
know a producer over at FOX...

LAWTON

Now hang on! You can't put these...
these...

FRANKLIN

Impostors?

LAWTON

Your word, Dr. Franklin!
(to Goswami)
I'll be charitable. You can't put
these "Founding Fathers" on national
television!

GOSWAMI

We'll start with Mike Huckabee.

LAWTON

Oh, great!

ERICKSON

Are you out of your mind?

Goswami smiles at her.

GOSWAMI

And maybe we'll go for Sean Hannity.
It'll be cool! National television...
by satellite.
(to the Founding Fathers)
You'll be a smash. You'll be famous!

LAWTON

They already are famous!

FRANKLIN

(after a short beat)
Uh, Miss Erickson? What's a
"television"?

ADAMS

What's a "satellite"?

JEFFERSON

What do you mean by "smash"?

LAWTON

There! Ya see!

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: (6)

20

GOSWAMI

Relax.

(to Erickson)

Sally, I really do know a network
guy in New York.

WASHINGTON

Miss Erickson, do you mean to tell
us that thing we saw in the tavern,
the window over the fireplace, is a
device that can put our images into
every home in the country?

ERICKSON

And in most of the world, actually.

LAWTON

In full color and high definition.

GOSWAMI

And with stereo sound.

WASHINGTON

Unbelievable.

ADAMS

Impossible.

JEFFERSON

Intriguing.

HAMILTON

What's "stereo"?

FRANKLIN

(rubbing his hands
together)

When do we start?

Erickson takes a long, last drink from her glass of wine to steady her nerves. All of the Founding Fathers regard her with looks that vary from Hamilton's skepticism to Adams' caution to Franklin's eagerness.

ERICKSON

We'll need some time.

GOSWAMI

Time?

ERICKSON

We've got some catching up to do.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: (7)

20

ERICKSON (CONT'D)

(she stands)

Thanks, Hugh. Do what you want with
the P-R.

(to the Founding Fathers)

We've gotta hit the sack. We all
have a big day tomorrow. Come on,
guys.

(to Lawton, gesturing
to the bill)

Honey...

GOSWAMI

(grabbing the bill)

Not on your life. This was a
privilege.

The Founding Fathers stand. Erickson and Goswami step OUT OF
THE SHOT. Jefferson gestures toward the retreating couple.

JEFFERSON

"Guys"... you heard our hostess. We
have to "hit the sack."

The Founding Fathers chuckle at Jefferson's use of the modern
words. As they all follow Erickson OUT OF THE SHOT, Franklin
remarks:

FRANKLIN

(moving OFF MIC)

Is that anything like bundling?

We HEAR the LAUGHTER of the Founding Fathers MOVING OFF MIC
as Lawton stands. The waitress returns with a small box and
a marker. She begins to clear the table.

LAWTON

Thanks. Leave the stemware, please.
(MORE)

Lawton picks up the wine glass that Washington used and begins
to write on the top part of the base of the glass with the
marker. We SEE the name that he writes: George W.

Lawton wraps the glass carefully in a napkin and places the
wrapped glass into the box. Lawton then picks up another
glass and writes again. We SEE the initials that he writes:
Ben F.

Lawton wraps this glass carefully in a napkin, too, and places
it into the box. Lawton then picks up a third glass and writes
a third time. We SEE the name that he writes: Thomas J.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: (8)

20

LAWTON (CONT'D)

(to the waitress)

I'm going to borrow these for a while.
Just bill it to our room.

WAITRESS

Yes, sir.

Lawton looks around to see if he's being watched. He continues to mark the remaining glasses, wrap them in the napkins, and then put them into the box.

Lawton pauses, looks at the two remaining glasses. He picks up Erickson's glass, thinks about it for a beat. Then he writes one last name. We SEE what he writes: SALLY E. He wraps the glass carefully in a napkin, puts it in the box with the others.

Then we FADE TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

21 INT. ERICKSON'S AND LAWTON'S HOTEL SUITE -- MORNING 21
 (ERICKSON, LAWTON, HOTEL MANAGER, KITCHEN WORKER, HOTEL WORKERS)

An ENORMOUS TWO-BEDROOM SUITE with foyer and double bath. We HEAR a KNOCK at the door. Erickson ENTERS THE SHOT from one of the bedrooms, fussing with her damp hair. She crosses to the door, opens it.

THE HOTEL MANAGER stands there.

HOTEL MANAGER

Miss Erickson, good morning. This came for you about an hour ago.
 (to workers behind him)
 Gentlemen...

WORKERS enter pushing carts full of computer equipment. Another KITCHEN WORKER rolls in a room service cart. He rapidly opens covered breakfast dishes, showing a feast for seven diners.

ERICKSON

(genuinely appreciative)
 Great!
 (yells out)
 Honey, you wanna call our guests?

Lawton enters from one of the bedrooms. He is wearing slacks and a fresh shirt.

LAWTON

Call them? Not likely. They don't know how to use a phone. I'll just... go across the hall and... you know...
 (pantomimes knocking)
 Do something old fashioned... like knocking!

Lawton turns and heads for the door. And we CUT TO:

22 INT. FRANKLIN'S SUITE -- MORNING 22
 (ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON)

Franklin is at a table, examining a lamp as Jefferson watches. Franklin takes the shade off, sees the compact fluorescent bulb.

FRANKLIN

I wonder how this thing works. Gotta be some kind of lamp.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

JEFFERSON

Dr. Franklin...

FRANKLIN

Only one thing could make this work...

Franklin begins to pull on the lamp. It won't budge.

JEFFERSON

Uh, Dr. Franklin...

FRANKLIN

Gotta be electricity.

(beat, examining the
bulb)

Maybe if I turn this glass thing...

Adams ENTERS, dressed in his finest, too. He looks at Franklin, clucks his disapproval.

ADAMS

Are you sure you know what you're
doing, Dr. Franklin?

Franklin tugs and turns on the bulb for a beat. The bulb finally moves.

FRANKLIN

There! You see? Child's play.

JEFFERSON

I wouldn't do that. You really don't
know how it works.

WASHINGTON enters from another suite, adjusting his clothing, sees Franklin working on the lamp.

FRANKLIN

(turning the bulb)

Nonsense. See...

WASHINGTON

Really, Dr. Franklin!

HAMILTON ENTERS from another part of the suite, stretching his arms as he has just awakened.

HAMILTON

Good morning, gentlemen! Our first
night in the 21st century!

(sees Franklin playing
with the lamp)

Uh... Dr. Franklin...

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED: (2)

22

Franklin ignores him. He takes the bulb out, examines it for a beat. Franklin picks up the cord.

FRANKLIN
(fingering the cord)
Where does this go, I wonder?

Franklin follows the cord with his eyes over to the wall.

ADAMS
(taking the bulb from
him)
You know what curiosity did to the
cat?

The other Founding Fathers chuckle at this. Franklin bends down, examines the wall socket. He unplugs the plug from the wall socket, examines it, then pushes the plug back in.

FRANKLIN
Satisfaction brought him back. And
again, I say... nonsense.

Franklin goes back to the table, takes the lamp from Adams. He looks inside the lamp socket.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)
Hm-m-m. That's interesting.

Franklin sticks his finger into the socket.

THE OTHER FOUNDING FATHERS react as we HEAR an O.S. POP and a SIZZLE. We HEAR FRANKLIN'S CRY OF SHOCK.

FRANKLIN quickly removes his finger from the socket. His hair stands out from his head (what little he has, anyway), frizzled from the electric shock. And the bulb in the hand GLOWS for a beat, then fades to dark.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)
Yes, I can say with absolute
certainty... it's electricity.

We INTERCUT among the reactions of the other Founding Fathers, then we CUT TO:

23 INT. ERICKSON'S AND LAWTON'S HOTEL SUITE -- MORNING

23

(WASHINGTON, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, ADAMS, JEFFERSON, ERICKSON,
LAWTON, HOTEL MANAGER, KITCHEN WORKER, HOTEL WORKERS)

The hotel manager and workers unload the last of the computer equipment. The Manager hands Erickson a note.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

HOTEL MANAGER

And I'll send up some extra chairs
and another sofa.

ERICKSON

(to Manager)

Thank you.

The Manager and the hotel workers EXIT as Erickson takes the envelope, tears it open, and reads it.

INSERT - THE NOTE

We READ THE NOTE as we HEAR Dr. Amit Goswami'S VOICE-OVER:

GOSWAMI (O.S.)

Sally, thanks for dinner. I called
in some favors. The network's picking
up all your expenses. So I thought
you could use some catch-up tools,
courtesy of FOX News. Your boys go
live on Mike Huckabee tomorrow night,
so be at the studio in New York by
six tomorrow. E-ticket receipts
enclosed. Best regards... Dr. Amit
Goswami.

BACK TO SCENE

ERICKSON

(all smiles)

Perfect.

LAWTON ENTERS with the Founding Fathers in tow. They are dressed in their 18th century clothing. Franklin is smoothing down his hair as he enters.

FRANKLIN

(rubbing his hands
together with a nod
to Hamilton)

Our first night in the 21st century!
Marvelous!

JEFFERSON

And that privy! Indoor plumbing! I
installed something like it at
Monticello.

ADAMS

We had indoor plumbing? I wish I had
known about that earlier!

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (2)

23

WASHINGTON
 (lifting the lid on
 one of the meals)
 We don't need to talk about that
 over breakfast, gentlemen.

Hamilton wheels the cart over to a large table.

HAMILTON
 Allow me, Miss Erickson.

FRANKLIN
 (picking up the remote
 control for the TV)
 Mr. Lawton, show me how this works...

Together, Hamilton and Adams arrange the seven plates for
 all of them as Lawton takes the remote control. As he
 demonstrates it for Franklin, we FLIP TO:

24 INT. HOTEL HALLWAY, OUTSIDE ERICKSON'S SUITE -- LATER

24

The breakfast cart sits outside the door, filled with dirty
 breakfast dishes. We hear the SOUNDS OF SEVEN KEYBOARDS being
 hesitatingly typed upon and some V.O. dialog:

FRANKLIN (O.S.)
 Whoever invented this absurd... what
 did you call it?

ERICKSON (O.S.)
 A keyboard.

25 INT. ERICKSON'S AND LAWTON'S HOTEL SUITE -- CONTINUOUS

25

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON,
 LAWTON)

A series of seven computer terminals have replaced the
 breakfast dishes. Each computer is equipped with a state-of-
 the-art auto-tracking webcam. In the center of the table is
 a wireless router.

LAWTON
 They're based on what used to be
 called "typewriters"... invented in
 the late 19th century.

JEFFERSON
 But... the letters... they're not in
 any order!

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

ERICKSON

(ignoring him)

And the keyboard is connected to what we call a computer. This little device...

(holds up the mouse)

...is called a mouse...

(off Franklin's about to be asked question)

...because it looks like one.

Franklin nods. He knew that. Of course he did.

LAWTON

I've configured each computer with your own identity.

(pointing to the webcam)

We call this a webcam. I've placed your picture on each monitor... that's this flat panel here.

The Founding Fathers look from one to another for a beat, somewhat skeptical of it all.

HAMILTON stares at his image in a window on the screen. All of the webcams are face-tracking units, which WHIR AND TILT to track each of the users.

JEFFERSON stares at the webcam as it follows his face.

JEFFERSON

Most unnerving...

HAMILTON does the same.

HAMILTON

Do I really look like this?

FRANKLIN makes faces at his webcam.

FRANKLIN

Thomas. Look at this.

(sticks his tongue out at himself)

I like it!

(then, to Lawton)

Can anyone see me in this?

LAWTON

Only if we let them.

HAMILTON

(admiring his own image)

That's good.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: (2)

25

WASHINGTON

Gentlemen... enough of play.

ERICKSON

(soft laugh)

All you need to know now is that your computer is connected to other computers all over the world.

LAWTON

That's right... with literally billions of pages of information just waiting for you to access.

ERICKSON

We'll start with a simple search engine. From there, we'll show you how to catch up with more than 200 years of American history.

BEGIN MUSIC MONTAGE -- "REVOLUTION" BY THE BEATLES -- a SERIES OF SHOTS as Sally and Richard introduce the Founding Fathers to the Internet. It's catch up time.

JEFFERSON examines a web page about the history of American architecture.

HAMILTON examines a web page on the War of 1812.

ADAMS looks at a web page about the history of beer making in America.

FRANKLIN studies a web page about the history of electricity.

WASHINGTON looks at a web page about the construction of Washington, DC.

JEFFERSON examines a web page about the argument about slavery with some degree of thoughtfulness.

ADAMS looks at a web page about food and food preparation.

HAMILTON examines a web page about the history of American banking.

WASHINGTON examines a web page about the start of the American Civil War. He is shocked at what he sees. He gestures to Jefferson.

ERICKSON helps the others surf to the web page about the Civil War. Hamilton, Jefferson, Adams and Franklin call up the same pages on their computers.

The CAMERA MOVES from Founding Father to Founding Father as they react to what they see. They are not happy. A TEAR falls

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: (3) 25

from the eye of Jefferson. He shakes his head sadly. We
DISSOLVE TO:

26 **INT. ERICKSON'S AND LAWTON'S HOTEL SUITE -- NIGHT** 26
(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON,
LAWTON)

MUSIC MONTAGE CONTINUES. OUTSIDE THE WINDOWS, IT'S NOW NIGHT,
and yet the Founding Fathers still search the web.

ERICKSON and LAWTON talk together MOS, clearly discussing
what the Founding Fathers are seeing. After a beat, she moves
to the terminals, and begin to steer each of the Founding
Fathers in a different direction.

LAWTON steps aside, pulls out a cell phone, and punches in a
number. When it connects, he steps away from the table toward
a BALCONY that opens to the outside.

ERICKSON, at Jefferson's keyboard, hits the "Enter" key, and
a web page pops up on the history of the American Civil Rights
movement. She steps over to Franklin, who keys in a web page
on the history of the women's movement, with pictures of
Susan B. Anthony and Gloria Steinem.

LAWTON, outside on the balcony is speaking furtively to
someone we don't know. He casts glances from time to time at
Erickson and the Founding Fathers. He looks at his watch,
then looks back furtively at Erickson.

ERICKSON looks up, sees Lawton on the phone. Their eyes meet
for a beat.

LAWTON then closes the phone, then steps back inside.

Erickson regards this with some concern. She turns back to
continue working with Franklin.

JEFFERSON snoozes on one of the two couches as Franklin
snoozes on one of the over-stuffed chairs.

WASHINGTON, HAMILTON and ADAMS continue to search the web
under the tutelage of Erickson and Lawton.

HAMILTON follows a web page on the history of the Federal
Reserve Bank. He shakes his head at what he is seeing.

WASHINGTON looks at a web page dealing with the role of
America in World War One. He shakes his head at what he sees.
Then we SEE another web page on the role of America in World
War Two.

ADAMS looks at a web page dealing with the welfare state. He
shakes his head at what he sees.

(CONTINUED)

- 26 CONTINUED: 26
- WASHINGTON, ADAMS and HAMILTON snooze on the couches and in one of the over-stuffed chairs as Franklin and Jefferson surf the web under the tutelage of Erickson and Lawton.
- FRANKLIN looks at a web page on the history of nuclear power and atomic weapons. He shakes his head at what he sees. We DISSOLVE TO:
- 27 **EXT. PHILADELPHIA HOTEL ENTRANCE -- DAY** 27
 (ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON, PARKING VALET)
- MUSIC MONTAGE CONTINUES. A PARKING VALET drives Lawton's mini-van INTO THE SHOT. Erickson, Lawton, and the Founding Fathers -- AT THE CURB -- get into Lawton's mini-van as the parking valet hands the keys to Lawton. Lawton drives the mini-van OUT OF THE SHOT. We DISSOLVE TO:
- 28 **EXT. INDEPENDENCE HALL -- DAY** 28
 (ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON)
- MUSIC MONTAGE CONTINUES. Erickson, Lawton and the Founding Fathers look up at the building. The Founding Fathers wave to the delight of the CROWDS as a LOCAL NEWS CREW video tapes them. Then we DISSOLVE TO:
- 29 **EXT. CHRIST CHURCH -- DAY** 29
 (ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON)
- MUSIC MONTAGE CONTINUES. Erickson, Lawton and the Founding Fathers look up at the building. The Founding Fathers wave to the delight of the CROWDS as a LOCAL NEWS CREW video tapes them. Then we DISSOLVE TO:
- 30 **INT. LIBERTY BELL HALL -- DAY** 30
 (ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON)
- MUSIC MONTAGE CONTINUES. Erickson, Lawton and the Founding Fathers look at the liberty bell. The Founding Fathers wave to the delight of the CROWDS as a LOCAL NEWS CREW video tapes them. Then we DISSOLVE TO:
- 31 **INT. PHILADELPHIA SHOPPING MALL -- DAY** 31
 (ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON)
- MUSIC MONTAGE CONTINUES. We're AT AN ESCALATOR as Erickson, Lawton and the Founding Fathers examine the escalator as it moves up the stairwell. Lawton steps on, turns around, and then begins walking back down, stepping so as not to be moving up the stairs. Franklin and Jefferson take Adams by the arms and help him to step on to the escalator. He is very

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: 31

reluctant. Together they step on with him, then move up the stairs as the escalator ascends.

FRANKLIN steps on with delight, turns and gestures to the stairs. WASHINGTON steps on, followed by Erickson. ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE, an absolutely gorgeous BLACK WOMAN, slender and attractive, descends. Jefferson's head turns to follow the woman as he admires her beauty, then he turns and faces ahead as they ascend the escalator. And we DISSOLVE TO:

32 **EXT. GENO'S STEAKS ON SOUTH 9TH STREET -- DAY** 32
(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON)

MUSIC MONTAGE CONTINUES. Erickson, Lawton and the Founding Fathers eat a Philly steak sandwich as a WINDOW CLERK at the late Joey Vento's GENO'S STEAKS smiles and shakes the hand of Franklin. The Founding Fathers wave to the delight of the CROWDS as a LOCAL NEWS CREW video tapes them. Then we DISSOLVE TO:

33 **EXT. CITY TAVERN IN PHILADELPHIA -- EVENING** 33
(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON)

MUSIC MONTAGE CONTINUES. Erickson's mini-van pulls up to the front entrance of the tavern. A TAVERN PARKING VALET takes the keys from Lawton as he, Erickson, and the Founding Fathers get out of the van. They go inside as the Founding Fathers wave to the delight of the CROWDS. A LOCAL NEWS CREW video tapes everything with LIGHTS BLARING. Then we CUT TO:

34 **INT. CITY TAVERN IN PHILADELPHIA -- NIGHT** 34
(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON)

MUSIC MONTAGE CONTINUES. WE'RE MOS and the Founding Fathers drink heartily as Franklin entertains the CROWDS with yarns of his own making. The CROWDS laugh and applaud enthusiastically. A LOCAL NEWS CREW video tapes everything. We DISSOLVE TO:

35 **EXT. CITY TAVERN IN PHILADELPHIA -- LATER** 35
(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON)

WE'RE MOS. As Erickson, Lawton and the Founding Fathers leave the tavern, a LOCAL NEWS CREW video tapes them all with LIGHTS BLARING as they come out of the tavern. The Founding Fathers doff their hats and bow with majesty. The CROWD reacts with great enthusiasm and applause.

LAWTON and ERICKSON look at each other for a beat. She is worried a bit; he shrugs at it all. And we DISSOLVE TO:

36 **EXT. PHILADELPHIA HOTEL ENTRANCE -- NIGHT** 36

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON)

MUSIC MONTAGE CONTINUES. Lawton's mini-van pulls up to the front entrance of the hotel. Another PARKING VALET takes the keys from Lawton as he, Erickson, and the Founding Fathers get out of the van. They go inside. The parking valet drives the mini-van OUT OF THE SHOT. THE MUSIC MONTAGE ENDS and we DISSOLVE TO:

37 **INT. ERICKSON'S AND LAWTON'S HOTEL SUITE -- MORNING** 37

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON)

The Founding Fathers are finishing their breakfasts. This time, they are using small, collapsible TV trays to eat from.

FRANKLIN
 (at his computer)
 This Romney fellow...
 (peers at screen)
 What's... what's a Mormon?

WASHINGTON
 (eating his breakfast)
 I looked that up yesterday. Think
 Freemasons... with an attitude, as
 the young people of today might say.

The other founding fathers WALLA their understanding.

Erickson and Lawton ENTER, dressed in outfits different from the day before. She is modestly dressed, like an attorney.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)
 Miss Erickson? This trip we are about
 to make...

LAWTON
 (somewhat cynical)
 Your public calls.

ERICKSON
 (a soft rebuke to
 Lawton)
 Honey...

JEFFERSON
 So much has... changed.

ADAMS
 Hear, hear! It's like... a different
 country.

37 CONTINUED:

37

JEFFERSON

I have said this before, Miss Erickson. I wish it were possible to obtain a single amendment to our constitution, an additional article taking from the federal government the power of borrowing.

HAMILTON

And speaking of money, your so-called Federal Reserve Bank is a private bank! There's nothing "federal" about it! And the government backs its worthless currency with just a promise to pay! Where's the gold and silver standard we worked so hard to establish? Federal Reserve, indeed!

JEFFERSON

Your banking establishments are more dangerous than standing armies. Spending money to be paid by posterity under the name of funding is nothing but swindling futurity on a large scale.

ADAMS

Amen, sir! And I dare say that all the perplexities, confusion and distresses in America arise not from defects in the constitution as much from downright ignorance of the nature of coin, credit, and circulation.

FRANKLIN

And look at the size of the Federal payroll. Millions!

WASHINGTON

We had less than fifty on ours!

ADAMS

Hear, hear! And your welfare state... it pays for everything. Where's the incentive to work?

JEFFERSON

I think we have more machinery of government than is necessary, too many parasites living on the labor of the industrious.

FRANKLIN

(pleading look)

Here we go. Don't get him started...

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: (2)

37

JEFFERSON

As to Congress, they are not to do anything they please to provide for the general welfare, but only to lay taxes for that purpose. To give a distinct and independent power to do any act they please which may be good for the Union would render all the subsequent enumerations of power completely useless.

FRANKLIN

See?

JEFFERSON

It would reduce the whole instrument to a single phrase, that of instituting a Congress with power to do whatever would be for the good of the United States. And as they would be the sole judges of the good or evil, it would be also a power to do whatever evil they please. Certainly no such universal power was meant to be given them. It was intended to lace them up straightly within the enumerated powers and those without which, as means, these powers could not be carried into effect.

ADAMS

And our associate, Mr. James Madison, has said that if Congress can do whatever in their discretion can be done by money to promote the General Welfare, the Government is no longer a limited one, possessing enumerated powers, but an indefinite one, subject to particular exceptions.

JEFFERSON

And speaking of Congress...

FRANKLIN

Here we go again.
(another pleading
look to Erickson)
I warned you...

JEFFERSON

If the present Congress errs in too much talking, how can it be otherwise in a body to which the people send 150 lawyers, whose trade it is to
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: (3)

37

JEFFERSON (CONT'D)

question everything, yield nothing,
and talk by the hour? That 150 lawyers
should do business together ought
not to be expected.

Lawton laughs.

LAWTON

Well, I've always maintained it ought
to be illegal to be a lawyer and a
Congressman at the same time.

Then Lawton sees Erickson is taking offense at the
illustration. He instantly sobers.

ERICKSON

That bad, eh?

ADAMS

Oh, it's much worse. If what we have
seen continues, democracy will
degenerate into an anarchy, such an
anarchy that every man will do what
is right in his own eyes and no man's
life or property or reputation or
liberty...

WASHINGTON

Or privacy. What is this NSA, anyway?

ADAMS

Or privacy... will be secure, and
every one of these will soon mould
itself into a system of subordination
of all the moral virtues and
intellectual abilities, all the powers
of wealth, beauty, wit and science,
to the wanton pleasures, the
capricious will, and the execrable
cruelty of one or a very few.

FRANKLIN

(to Erickson)

See? I warned you.

HAMILTON

Madison also said the powers delegated
by the proposed Constitution to the
federal government are few and defined
and should be exercised principally
on external objects, such as war,
peace, negotiation and foreign
commerce.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: (4)

37

JEFFERSON

But now, welfare means handouts from the federal government. Madison was right, too. He also said he could not undertake to lay a finger on that article of the Constitution which granted a right to Congress of expending, on objects of benevolence, the money of their constituents.

FRANKLIN

Agreed, Thomas! Mankind was meant to work, sir, to lift your life situation! A penny saved... as I've always said. But now, you don't have to earn anything if you don't want to. You just claim your "entitlements."

JEFFERSON

The federal government is stealing from those who are earning a living, and they're giving it all to people who would never lift a finger to better themselves. That's... that's...

HAMILTON

Outrageous!

JEFFERSON

In questions of power, then, let no more be heard of confidence in man, but bind him down from mischief by the chains of the Constitution.

All five of the Founding Fathers WALLA their agreement.

FRANKLIN

And your families... they are devastated by divorce and infidelity. Who could have foreseen a nation of unwed mothers?

ADAMS

The foundation of national morality must be laid in private families. How is it possible that children can have any just sense of the sacred obligations of morality or religion if, from their earliest infancy, they learn their mothers live in habitual infidelity to their fathers, and their fathers live in constant infidelity to their mothers?

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: (5)

37

HAMILTON

Hear, hear! Amazing! All of us agree on something!

WASHINGTON

For once! Miss Erickson, Mr. Lawton... my colleagues are right. What we've seen... isn't what we hoped for our American posterity.

Erickson and Lawton exchange a concerned glance. Franklin answers their unasked question.

FRANKLIN

We cannot appear on your... what did you call it? Your "television talk show" tonight.

ERICKSON

(duly shocked)
And why not?

JEFFERSON

Miss Erickson, Mr. Lawton... I think I can speak for all of us. The American public... they would not like what we have to say.

Erickson and Lawton look at each other for a beat, then:

ERICKSON

Good!

LAWTON

I agree.

ALL of the Founding Fathers WALLA their responses of surprise.

WASHINGTON

What!?

ERICKSON

(to Jefferson)
Who wrote the Declaration of Independence?

JEFFERSON stiffens at the mention of his crowning glory.

ERICKSON (CONT'D)

And the ten amendments, who recommended to Madison that they be included in the new Constitution?

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: (6)

37

JEFFERSON

I think we get your point, Miss Erickson.

ERICKSON

So... tell 'em!

WASHINGTON

Beg pardon?

LAWTON

Tell the American people. Live... on television. Tonight.

ERICKSON

Let them know the truth. Right from the horse's mouth, so to speak.

HAMILTON

They will never believe that we are who we are.

(beat)

We barely believe all of this ourselves.

LAWTON

I'm working on that now.

ADAMS

How?

A PUZZLED LOOK from Erickson, then a RAISED EYEBROW, too.

LAWTON

Just an idea I had. Don't know how it will pan out.

WASHINGTON

We're in Philadelphia, Miss Erickson. Even with your "freeways", a day trip to New York would take half a day.

ERICKSON

Nah... just an hour's commuter flight.

All of the Founding Fathers look from one to another, puzzled. All except Franklin, of course.

FRANKLIN

(after a beat)

Flight?

Franklin looks excited and pleased with the prospect of flight. Then we CUT TO:

38 EXT. PHILADELPHIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT -- DAY 38

TO ESTABLISH as a UNITED AIRLINER lands on the tarmac. Hold for a beat as it taxies down the runway.

THE AIRCRAFT is moved into position at the gate by a tractor tow.

39 INT. UNITED AIRLINES TERMINAL -- DAY 39

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON, PASSENGERS, TSA WORKER)

We're AT THE UNITED AIRLINE CHECK-IN TERMINAL. The Founding Fathers' ANTIQUE LUGGAGE is being handled by a UNITED WORKER and a UNITED SKY CAP.

To one side is a TSA CHECKPOINT. We SEE a LONG ROW of PASSENGERS standing in line in the TSA checkpoint, waiting to be screened for the voyage. Some of them point and stare at the Founding Fathers and their 18th century clothing. Erickson and Lawton look over the long line of passengers.

We PAN ACROSS THE FACES of the FOUNDING FATHERS as they look over the TSA checkpoint: JEFFERSON, carrying his WALKING CANE, clenches his teeth, angry. ADAMS shakes his head in disbelief. HAMILTON looks away in disgust. FRANKLIN takes off his bifocals, wipes them with his handkerchief, then puts them on again. Finally WE PAN to WASHINGTON. A TEAR forms in his eye. He steps forward, one angry General, with his hand on his sword.

LAWTON SEES Washington's sword.

LAWTON
(to Erickson)
Oh, Jeez! The General's sword! TSA's gonna freak!

Erickson steps over quickly, restrains Washington.

ERICKSON
Uh, Mr. Washington...

Washington ignores her. He takes a few steps over to the line.

An ARMED TSA GUARD looks over, his bored expression turning to bored possible interest.

ERICKSON (CONT'D)
General Washington, please!

Lawton steps over to Washington.

LAWTON
Your sword. It's considered a weapon.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

WASHINGTON

Indeed it is, sir!

ERICKSON

You don't understand. Weapons aren't allowed on air craft.

Jefferson steps over.

JEFFERSON

No weapons allowed?

ERICKSON

A federal rule. To prevent a hijacking.

ADAMS

A... "hijacking"?

LAWTON

Sort of like a highwayman in the sky.

HAMILTON

Oh, well... there's only one way to handle a highwayman.

ADAMS

Correct, sir.

(to Erickson)

You arm all the passengers and shoot the hijacker.

FRANKLIN

Case closed.

Erickson and Lawton consider this for a beat.

ERICKSON

Well, you can't fire a shot on board an aircraft.

FRANKLIN

And why not?

ERICKSON

It's... another long story. Here... give me your sword.

Washington takes a hold of his sword.

WASHINGTON

(offended)

Miss Erickson!

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (2)

39

LAWTON

We're going to pack it in our luggage.
It will go with our bags. I'll declare
it.

ADAMS

You have to declare weapons when you
travel?

LAWTON

By air, yes.

Adams shakes his head in disgust.

ERICKSON

Come on, now. General Washington...

Washington reluctantly unbuckles his sword. He hands it to
Erickson.

JEFFERSON

Does that include all weapons?

LAWTON

'Fraid so.

Lawton opens one of the ancient pieces of luggage, flips
open the lid, then carefully places Washington's sword on
top as all of the Founding Fathers gather around the chest,
shielding the luggage from the view of the TSA officers.

JEFFERSON

(above a whisper)

This is ridiculous.

ON THE PIECE OF LUGGAGE, as a CANE drops INTO THE SHOT.

LAWTON looks up, amazed. JEFFERSON has dropped his walking
cane into the luggage. Lawton looks up, a quizzical expression
on his face. Jefferson reaches INTO THE SHOT, pulls the handle
of the cane to REVEAL A SHARP SWORD.

JEFFERSON smiles craftily, resets the handle, and then drops
the cane sword into the luggage.

JEFFERSON (CONT'D)

(shrugs)

I... recently returned from New York.

ADAMS steps over, pulls a FLINTLOCK POCKET PISTOL from inside
his jacket, drops it into the luggage. He stands there, deeply
offended.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (3)

39

HAMILTON, too, with a sheepish look, pulls out a SHEATHED KNIFE. He tosses it into the luggage. He pauses a beat, then pulls out a FLINTLOCK PISTOL. He drops it into the luggage.

LAWTON

Dr. Franklin?

FRANKLIN looks at Lawton and Erickson with a "What? Me?" expression.

ERICKSON looks sternly at Franklin, crosses her arms across her chest, looks at him with tilted head.

FRANKLIN shrugs his shoulders. He opens one side of his jacket.

ON THE PIECE OF LUGGAGE, as a third FLINTLOCK PISTOL drops INTO THE SHOT, followed a beat later by TWO SMALL KNIVES in their sheathes, and after another beat, a LONG DAGGER, also in a sheath, and then after another beat, TWO SMALL POCKET FLINTLOCK PISTOLS.

FRANKLIN looks over at Erickson as he pulls his coat closed.

ERICKSON continues to look at him, arms crossed her chest.

FRANKLIN shrugs, opens the other side of his coat.

ON THE PIECE OF LUGGAGE as a LONG DAGGER, also in a sheath, and TWO SMALL POCKET FLINTLOCK PISTOLS drop INTO THE SHOT.

OFF FRANKLIN'S SHEEPISH LOOK:

FRANKLIN

One can never be too careful.

WASHINGTON shakes his head. JEFFERSON does the same. ADAMS looks Franklin over from head to toe, then:

ADAMS

It's a wonder you don't jangle when you walk.

Lawton shakes his head, closes the luggage.

LAWTON

I'll file the declarations.

(to Franklin)

I'll need the key.

(MORE)

FRANKLIN digs into a vest pocket, removes a small skeleton key, hands it to Lawton, who takes it with a stern expression on his face. Lawton turns to Erickson.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (4)

39

LAWTON (CONT'D)

Uh, Sal... what're we gonna do about their I-D?

JEFFERSON

"I... D"?

ERICKSON

Identification. You can't fly without government-issued identification.

HAMILTON

The idea!

ADAMS

Outrageous!

FRANKLIN

Our constitution allows us to travel freely between all the states... without papers!

LAWTON

That all changed on 9-11.

Lawton turns toward the counter, pushing the luggage ahead of him. He speaks in the b.g. MOS to the CLERK at the counter as the dialog continues.

WASHINGTON

9-11?

ERICKSON

(to all of them)

We didn't quite have time to catch you up with all our history. We'll show you when we get to New York.

She opens her purse.

ERICKSON (CONT'D)

Meanwhile, this will have to do...

Erickson pulls out her wallet, removes the e-ticket receipts that Goswami left for her, then we FLIP TO:

THE TSA CHECKPOINT -- LATER

The TSA WORKER examines the E-TICKET PRINTOUTS. She is a LARGE BLACK WOMAN. The line of PASSENGERS stretches out behind Erickson, Lawton and the Founding Fathers.

TSA WORKER

Lady, I'm tellin' ya, ya need a government issued I-D.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: (5)

39

ERICKSON

Will you just... look at them?

The TSA worker looks over the Founding Fathers.

TSA WORKER

So? Actors, that's all.

JEFFERSON

This is getting a little old.

ADAMS

Hear, hear!

FRANKLIN

How many times do we have to say it?

HAMILTON

We are not actors!

TSA WORKER

(to the Founding
Fathers)

I need... to see... your I-D.

(to Erickson)

I don't care who they look like.

Without a government issued portrait,
they can't board! And that's final,
"gentlemen"!

ERICKSON crooks her finger at the Founding Fathers, beckons them to come closer. She opens her purse, and as she PULLS SOMETHING OUT of her purse, the Founding Fathers crowd around her.

LAWTON looks over, cranes his neck, then REACTS to what he sees.

LAWTON

I don't believe it.

We HOLD on Lawton's reaction, then we FLIP TO:

40 INT. TSA SCREENING STATION -- LATER

40

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON, PASSENGERS, TSA WORKER)

FRANKLIN steps forward INTO THE SHOT. Franklin snaps a ONE HUNDRED DOLLAR BILL between his two hands.

FRANKLIN

Franklin, Benjamin. Late of
Philadelphia.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

Erickson takes the bill from Franklin, shows the bill to the TSA worker, who looks at it skeptically. The pictures match. She shrugs her shoulders, hands the bill back to him, lets him pass.

Behind him, the line of PASSENGERS are enjoying the sight. They point and laugh with amusement.

HAMILTON steps forward INTO THE SHOT. He snaps a TEN DOLLAR BILL between his two hands.

HAMILTON
Hamilton, Alexander.
(then to the TSA worker)
Secretary of the Treasury, ma'am.

The TSA worker rolls her eyes as Erickson takes the bill from Hamilton.

JEFFERSON steps forward INTO THE SHOT. He snaps a TWO DOLLAR BILL between his two hands.

JEFFERSON
Jefferson, Thomas. Late of Monticello.

Erickson takes the bill from Jefferson, shows it to the TSA worker, who again looks at it skeptically. Once again, the pictures match. The TSA worker waves Jefferson through.

Then the TSA worker's eyes grow wide as Washington steps forward. He snaps a ONE DOLLAR BILL between his two hands.

WASHINGTON
Washington, George. President of the
United States.

The PASSENGERS are CHEERING NOW. Washington steps forward and passes through the TSA screening post without waiting for the TSA worker to gesture for him to pass.

Finally ADAMS steps forward. He has no bill, as his face is not on the front of any of the U.S. currency. He pauses a bit, bewildered. Jefferson steps back INTO THE SHOT.

ADAMS
Adams, John. Vice-President to...

JEFFERSON
(points to back of
two dollar bill)
Actually, he's right... here!

WASHINGTON steps back, grabs Adams by the arm.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: (2)

40

WASHINGTON

He's with me.

Together, Washington and Jefferson pull Adams through the checkpoint.

As Erickson and Lawton show their IDs, the crowd behind them begins to cheer. The TSA screener waves them through.

ALONG THE HALLWAY TO THE GATE, we SEE the PASSENGERS in the b.g. begin to riot as the Founding Fathers, Erickson, and Lawton move AWAY FROM THE GATE. The PASSENGERS AD-LIB their anger at the TSA requirements as they beat up on all the TSA workers.

PASSENGERS

No more... I-D's!
(etc.)

We TRUCK WITH THE FOUNDING FATHERS as they move. The disturbance recedes into the background behind them.

JEFFERSON

Very clever, Miss Erickson.

ERICKSON

We got away with it... for now.

FRANKLIN

Indeed we did.

WASHINGTON

Miss Erickson, I can use that kind of thinking in my administration. You sure you won't return with us?

Erickson laughs as the group heads AROUND A CORNER and OUT OF THE SHOT. WE HOLD FOR A BEAT, then we CUT TO:

41 **EXT. UNITED AIRCRAFT -- DAY**

41

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON, PASSENGERS, TSA WORKER)

There's nothing but BLUE SKY and AIRCRAFT PASSENGER WINDOWS as the CAMERA MOVES LATERALLY down the side of the aircraft. We SEE VARIOUS PASSENGERS coming INTO VIEW and moving OUT OF VIEW as the CAMERA MOVES ALONG THE WINDOWS: a BORED LAWTON and ERICKSON, a BUSINESSMAN, a WIDE-EYED CHILD, a GRANDMOTHER TYPE. Then...

INTO VIEW: HAMILTON peers warily down to the ground. He covers his eyes quickly, then looks again.

INTO VIEW: WASHINGTON looks curiously down to the ground. His expression is one of amusement.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

INTO VIEW: JEFFERSON looks down to the ground, then around inside the aircraft, then down to the ground again. He shakes his head in wonder.

INTO VIEW: ADAMS looks stiffly straight ahead, not daring to look down. In the b.g., a FLIGHT ATTENDANT offers him an ale. She pours it for him. He takes it, he gulps it down, and we MOVE PAST HIM, finally coming...

INTO VIEW: FRANKLIN, enthusiastic as can be, smiles and laughs as he looks down. He points to the ground and gestures to everyone around him, thrilled at what he is experiencing. OFF FRANKLIN'S EXPRESSION, we CUT TO:

42 EXT. JFK AIRPORT RUNWAY, NEW YORK -- AFTERNOON

42

The UNITED FLIGHT comes in for a landing on the tarmac.

43 EXT. JFK AIRPORT, NEW YORK -- AFTERNOON

43

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON, CAB DRIVER)

A MARRIOTT SHUTTLE BUS waits at the curb as a CREW OF SKYCAPS load the many pieces of luggage into the shuttle van. Erickson scoots the Founding Fathers away toward a YELLOW VAN-STYLE CAB. She hands the SHUTTLE BUS DRIVER her business card and waves him away. He gets in the shuttle bus and leaves.

AT THE CAB, Lawton and the Founding Fathers scrunch into the back seats. Erickson gets in the front seat.

CAB DRIVER

You can't fit eight in here.

Erickson turns to Franklin.

ERICKSON

Dr. Franklin? I need your Ben Franklin.

Franklin pauses for a beat, unsure what she means. Then her meaning dawns on him.

FRANKLIN

Ah, yes. I see.

He takes the 100-dollar bill from his vest pocket, hands it to Erickson.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

Sad to see it go.

ERICKSON

Oh, there's lots more where this came from.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

43

She hands the bill to the cab driver. He looks at the bill. He looks at Franklin. He looks at the bill again. Then he looks at all the Founding Fathers. He shakes his head at the costumed group.

CAB DRIVER

I didn't see nothin'.
 (to Erickson)
 Where to, lady?

Erickson turns, looks at Lawton and then at the Founding Fathers. Her eyebrows do the asking.

LAWTON

Ground Zero.

CAB DRIVER

Ground Zero. Ground Zero! It's always
 Ground Zero. Not the Met. Not the
 Natural History Museum. Always Ground
 Zero.
 (sighs)
 Okay, Ground Zero it is.

And we CUT TO:

44 EXT. NEW YORK TRAFFIC -- DAY

44

A SERIES OF SHOTS: We're MOVING, barely, through traffic. The Founding Fathers gawk at the skyscrapers. We SEE various sights as we MOVE THROUGH THE STREETS OF NEW YORK (director's discretion). Finally, we pull up to...

45 EXT. GROUND ZERO -- DAY

45

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON, CAB DRIVER)

The taxi mini-van pulls to a stop. We can SEE the Founding Fathers inside the mini-van, but WE CANNOT HEAR what Erickson is saying. She pantomimes two towers, then the aircraft smashing into them, then the towers crashing down.

As she speaks, each of the Founding Fathers reacts in his own way. We END on George Washington, and he is NOT HAPPY. He looks up, angry and staring off into the distance. Something catches his attention. His expression turns to wonder and amazement.

WASHINGTON

It still stands...

LAWTON

What still stands?

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

45

Franklin looks, sees it, too. Then all the founding fathers see it, too.

FRANKLIN

St. Paul's. It was our first church.

ANGLE -- ACROSS THE STREET -- ST. PAUL'S CHAPEL

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON)

The founding fathers JAY WALK across the street, intent on reaching their goal. Traffic screeches to a halt around them. Erickson and Lawton reluctantly cross the street, too.

BACK TO SCENE

The cab driver looks at Lawton, puzzled.

LAWTON

Wait for us across the street.

The cab driver nods, looks both ways, then turns his cab out into the street.

46 **EXT. ST. PAUL'S CHAPEL -- DAY**

46

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON, CAB DRIVER)

Washington, Jefferson, Hamilton, and Adams move up the steps toward the entrance. Sally pulls Franklin aside.

ERICKSON

What's going on?

LAWTON

Yeah, it's just a church.

FRANKLIN

No... it's the church.
(off their puzzled looks)

Washington gave his first inaugural address here.

Franklin begins to climb the exterior steps, heading into the chapel. Lawton shrugs. Erickson and Lawton follow him, heading into the church.

LAWTON

(dismissing it)

Oh. Some historical value.

Franklin stops, turns, and responds sternly.

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

46

FRANKLIN

Much more than that. It was a warning.

Off their puzzled looks, Franklin turns and heads inside the chapel.

AT THE CURB

The cab driver pulls his cab INTO THE SHOT. He shakes his head, puzzled as he shifts the cab into park. He waits. After a beat, CUT TO:

47 **INT. ST. PAUL'S CHAPEL -- MOMENTS LATER**

47

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON, CHURCH OFFICIAL, PEOPLE OF VARIOUS AGES)

Washington and the other founding fathers are gathered around one particular pew. Erickson and Lawton hurry in to catch up. Washington gestures to the pew.

WASHINGTON

It's still here.

INSERT -- A PLAQUE

It commemorates the fact that it was Washington's pew while he attended the church.

WASHINGTON (O.S.) (CONT'D)

It's pretty much still the same,
after all these years.

BACK TO SCENE

Washington turns from the pew, glances at the pulpit.

WASHINGTON (O.S.) (CONT'D)

A few changes, I see. The steeple
wasn't here when I gave my inaugural
address. And the pulpit area is
different.

Washington steps up to the pulpit. Erickson and Lawton react, a bit uncomfortable.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

I said words something like this.
(authoritative,
preacher's voice)

It would be peculiarly improper to
omit in this first official Act, my
fervent supplications to that Almighty
Being who rules over the Universe,
who presides in the Councils of

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED:

47

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)
Nations, and whose providential aids
can supply every human defect...

Franklin clenches his fist in a gesture clearly meaning "Yes!"
Jefferson rolls his eyes. Washington continues.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)
...and may enable every instrument
employed in its administration to
execute with success, the functions
allotted to his charge.

FRANKLIN
In the vernacular of the day, I
believe it's... preach it!

WASHINGTON
No People can be bound to acknowledge
and adore the invisible hand, which
conducts the Affairs of men more
than the People of the United States.

ADAMS
Amen!

WASHINGTON
Every step, by which they have
advanced to the character of an
independent nation, seems to have
been distinguished by some token of
providential agency.

A LITTLE OLD LADY watches all of this with puzzlement.
Gradually, PEOPLE begin gathering to listen. Washington
continues, not really seeing the growing crowd of listeners.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)
The foundations of our National policy
will be laid in the pure and immutable
principles of private morality; and
the pre-eminence of a free Government,
be exemplified by all the attributes
which can win the affections of its
Citizens, and command the respect of
the world.

More and more PEOPLE enter, listening eagerly to the recap
of Washington's first address. He continues.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)
I dwell on this prospect with every
satisfaction which an ardent love
for my Country can inspire: since
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED: (2)

47

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

there is no truth more thoroughly established, than that there exists in the economy and course of nature, an indissoluble union between virtue and happiness, between duty and advantage, between the genuine maxims of an honest and magnanimous policy, and the solid rewards of public prosperity and felicity.

Franklin looks around at the gathering crowd. He smiles, gesturing at the people.

FRANKLIN

We have an audience.

WASHINGTON

Since we ought to be no less persuaded that the propitious smiles of Heaven, can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right, which Heaven itself has ordained: And since the preservation of the sacred fire of liberty, and the destiny of the Republican model of Government, are justly considered as deeply, perhaps as finally staked, on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people.

An OFFICIAL wearing a backward collar ENTERS, sees Washington and the others. He frowns. CUT TO:

48 EXT. ST. PAUL'S CHAPEL -- DAY

48

It's MOMENTS LATER and we are AT THE CURB as Sally and the founding fathers get into the cab. The Episcopal official stands nearby, hand on his hips, happy to see them leave.

LAWTON (O.S.)

Fox studios.

The cab pulls out into traffic.

49 EXT. FOX STUDIOS, NEW YORK -- AFTERNOON

49

TO ESTABLISH, then we CUT TO:

50 INT. FOX STUDIOS, NEW YORK -- LATER

50

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON, MIKE HUCKABEE, HUCKABEE'S FLOOR DIRECTOR)

We're on the MIKE HUCKABEE SET and a MAKE-UP GIRL is applying make-up to Washington. He is very uncomfortable with it all.

MIKE HUCKABEE SITS AT HIS MICROPHONE. HE LOOKS UP AT THE CAMERA.

HUCKABEE

I can't believe I let Goswami talk me into this.

Arranged in front of him are the five Founding Fathers. Four of them are wearing lapel microphones. The fifth, Franklin, is being fitted with his microphone. He speaks to MIKE HUCKABEE'S FLOOR DIRECTOR.

FRANKLIN

Now, you say this device takes my voice, and puts it all over the country?

The floor director smiles as the quaintness of the request.

HUCKABEE'S FLOOR DIRECTOR

You really know how to get into a part, don't 'cha, Mr. "Franklin"?

Franklin's quizzical expression turns to annoyance as the floor director steps back, holds up his hand and counts down the seconds.

HUCKABEE'S FLOOR DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

All right, now! Quiet on the set. We're live in five, four, three, two...

The floor director throws to Huckabee, and we're live!

HUCKABEE

Have I got a doozy of an interview lined up tonight!

OFF TO ONE SIDE, we SEE AN HDTV FLOOR MONITOR framing an ON THE AIR SHOT. The Founding Fathers look to one another, silently mouthing the word "doozy" as a question.

HUCKABEE (CONT'D)

Five mystery men... they call themselves the "Founding Fathers" and... you got it... they claim... they claim to be the real George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton and John Adams.

51 EXT. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, WASHINGTON -- NIGHT 51

To ESTABLISH the exterior of the building and a MARQUEE. We ZOOM up to one of the office windows, then we CUT TO:

52 INT. ARNOLD BENEDICT'S OFFICE -- NIGHT 52
(BENEDICT, BENEDICT'S AIDE)

We're WATCHING the Mike Huckabee interview in progress. A HAND RAISES INTO THE SHOT. It holds a remote control. The MUTE BUTTON is pushed and the sound from the TV goes SILENT. We watch the image play for a beat, then CAMERA TURNS as ARNOLD BENEDICT, late 50's or so, cold-hearted and tough, leans back into his high-backed leather chair.

BENEDICT
(with disdain)
Founding Fathers...

He reaches over, picks up a telephone, punches a button. He turns to a computer terminal, punches up a file.

BENEDICT (CONT'D)
Is Stryker still on assignment from
Secret Service?

As Benedict speaks, a COMPUTER FILE on AGENT CHARLENE "CHARLIE" STRYKER paints itself across the screen. We SEE the LOGO OF THE SECRET SERVICE, and a list of commendations. We DO NOT SEE a complete picture; just the lower half of Charlie's jaw. There is no smile.

BENEDICT (CONT'D)
(beat)
Good. Good. Where's Stryker now?
(a slow smile)
New York?
(soft laugh)
Well, I'll be damned. Tell Charlie I
said to get over to Fox. On the
double.
(beat, oily smile)
Yeah, my heart bleeds.
(coldly)
Charlie's got a new assignment.

BENEDICT hangs up the phone, then we CUT TO:

53 INT. FOX STUDIOS, NEW YORK -- LATER 53
(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON,
LAWTON, STRYKER, MIKE HUCKABEE, HUCKABEE'S FLOOR DIRECTOR)

We're STILL ON THE MIKE HUCKABEE SET, and a very frazzled MIKE HUCKABEE is winding up the interview.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

53

HUCKABEE

Well, there you have it. You'll have to make up your own mind. Their story is fantastic. Five of America's own Founding Fathers... have they really come forward in time to... what? To warn us? To admonish us? Or perhaps, even more... to change us?

(beat)

Good night.

In the background shadows, Erickson stands, watching the show end. Behind her, a TALL FIGURE steps INTO VIEW; broad shouldered, muscular, wearing an immaculate suit, but clearly with a female cut. The figure's hair is braided down behind her back.

The show ends and the STUDIO LIGHTS COME UP. We see that the agent behind Erickson wears DARK SUNGLASSES. An EARPIECE is in her right ear, and a COILED CORD arcs around her ear and down into her coat. This is CHARLENE "CHARLIE" STRYKER, the Secret Service agent. She is always all business. The woman never, ever smiles and she never removes her sunglasses. Stryker speaks politely, but firmly.

STRYKER

Miss Erickson?

Erickson jumps, stifling a scream. She turns, sees Stryker. Her blood runs cold.

STRYKER (CONT'D)

I'll take that as a "yes".

Stryker steps forward INTO THE LIGHT. We get our first good look at her. You wouldn't want to meet this lady in an alley in a dark night.

STRYKER (CONT'D)

(flashes a badge)

Charlie Stryker, Secret Service.
Miss Erickson, we need to talk.

ERICKSON

(hard swallow)

Am I in some kind of trouble, Agent Stryker?

Lawton ENTERS, listening to his cell phone. He covers the microphone as he speaks to Erickson.

LAWTON

Sally! Interview requests are coming in from all over the country!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LAWTON (CONT'D)
 Goswami's forwarding the calls to
 me.

STRYKER
 (to Erickson)
 Maybe.

LAWTON
 (still on the phone)
 Huckabee's producer wants the boys
 to chair the Liberty Debates tomorrow
 night at Independence Hall.

STRYKER
 Yeah, could be.

LAWTON
 (clueless, to Erickson)
 Who's your muscular friend, here?
 (to Stryker)
 Hang on a sec!
 (listens to the phone
 for a beat)
 You're kidding. I'll pass it on, run
 it up the flag pole, see if anybody
 salutes.
 (flips the phone closed)
 The Libertarians... they want to
 know if Franklin will join their
 ticket... maybe run for president!

STRYKER
 Definitely.
 (to Lawton, holds up
 badge)
 Charlie Stryker. Secret Service.

The Founding Fathers ENTER, wiping makeup off their faces.

ERICKSON
 Uh... guys? I have some good news
 and I have some bad news.

As we see the PUZZLED LOOKS of the Founding Fathers, Erickson
 continues:

ERICKSON (CONT'D)
 The good news is... you're going to
 chair the Liberty Debates on national
 television. In Philadelphia.

LAWTON
 At Independence Hall.

(CONTINUED)

ERICKSON

The bad news is... this is Agent Stryker. Of the Secret Service.

STRYKER

That's not bad news, Miss Erickson.
(to the Founding Fathers)
Consider me your bodyguard for the duration of your stay.

ADAMS

Our bodyguard?

ERICKSON

(to Washington)
The Secret Service was formed during the Civil War.

LAWTON

They were given the specific charge of protecting the President of the United States.

ERICKSON

(to Stryker)
But surely you of all people don't believe...

STRYKER

I just follow orders, Miss Erickson.
(gestures to Washington)
I've been assigned to protect this man...

ADAMS

(interrupting, raising his hand for attention)
I'm going to be president, too.

Jefferson rolls his eyes, then looks somewhat demurely at Stryker, knowing he will be president, too.

STRYKER

(ignoring him)
Men... and that's exactly what I am going to do.

ADAMS

A woman...

HAMILTON

I suppose we can't make a move and you won't be there... to watch... and to report.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED: (4)

53

STRYKER
You can count on it.

ERICKSON
(looking around)
You on your own? I don't see anyone else.

STRYKER
(grim reaction, then)
You never do.

Franklin looks hard at Stryker.

FRANKLIN
Agent Stryker... what is that you are wearing? Those... dark glasses. May I...
(embarrassed, then)
May I get a pair?

Lawton rolls his eyes.

STRYKER
I'll see what I can do.

HAMILTON
So... what's next?

ERICKSON
We're going back to Philadelphia. They're holding the first debate in Independence Hall.

WASHINGTON
Good place for it.

We HOLD FOR A BEAT on the group, then we DISSOLVE TO:

54 **EXT. INDEPENDENCE HALL -- NIGHT**

54

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON, STRYKER)

LARGE CROWDS surge around the exterior of Independence Hall. Lawton's mini-van pulls up. Stryker, wearing sunglasses, gets out of the mini-van.

INSIDE THE VAN

Lawton looks out, sees the crowd.

LAWTON
Wow!

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

54

FRANKLIN

Wow?

ERICKSON

Another expression. It means
"Surprise! Didn't expect that!" That
sort of thing.

Franklin and Washington nod, as do Jefferson, Adams and Hamilton in the back of the van. Jefferson mouths "Wow" silently to himself a couple of times, shrugs his shoulders.

Erickson gets out, followed by Franklin. Franklin pauses for a beat, takes out a new PAIR OF SUNGLASSES identical to Stryker's, and puts them on with some flair. Then each of the other Founding Fathers gets out of the mini-van, too. Each of them is wearing sunglasses identical to Stryker's sunglasses, too.

They pause, looking at the surge of crowds, the FLASHING PHOTO STROBES, the SEARCHLIGHTS that pierce the sky, etc.

ALL TOGETHER

Wow!

The Founding Fathers step over to meet the last thing we would expect... THE FOUNDING FATHERS. But these "Founding Fathers" are a group of ACTORS dressed as the Founding Fathers. The actors greet the Founding Fathers, all smiles. The Founding Fathers mug for the TV NEWS REPORTERS with the actors impersonating them. (The actor look-alikes do not wear sunglasses, so we can tell them apart.)

After a beat, Stryker waves the look-alikes away.

STRYKER

Sorry, boys. Gotta get 'em inside.
Maybe you can see them later.

THE LOOK-ALIKES LAUGH and the other Founding Father look-alikes greet the crowd as Lawton, Erickson, Stryker and the Founding Fathers move inside.

55 INT. INDEPENDENCE HALL -- NIGHT

55

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON, STRYKER, MIKE HUCKABEE, HUCKABEE'S FLOOR DIRECTOR, HILLARY CLINTON, REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE)

TO ESTABLISH. Three CAMERAS on REMOTELY-CONTROLLED TRIPODS oversee the main hallway of Independence Hall. LECTERNS on RAISED PODIUMS are separated by a waist-high bench just long enough for our five Founding Fathers to stand behind.

The FLOOR DIRECTOR stands next to one of the cameras as MAKE-UP ARTISTS put makeup on the two presidential candidates.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

55

HUCKABEE'S FLOOR DIRECTOR

Sally, your guys ready?

SALLY and Lawton stand next to the Founding Fathers, giving them some last minute pointers.

ERICKSON

As ready as they'll ever be.

(to Franklin)

So... you turned the Libertarians down?

FRANKLIN

I'm too old for presidential politics.
Too many naps during the day.

ERICKSON

Why, Dr. Franklin! I'm surprised at you! You never got a chance to be President. And in the last century, Ronald Reagan was about your age when he became president.

FRANKLIN

I appreciate the honor, but history...
is history.

ERICKSON

Well, it was a great idea!

FRANKLIN

But we don't know how long we'll be here. We still don't even know how we got here.

Franklin turns back to the MAKEUP ARTIST, who pats pancake makeup over the bald part of his head.

HUCKABEE'S FLOOR DIRECTOR

(to Erickson)

Just tell 'em to relax. Ignore the lights and the cameras. You've clued 'em in as to what to say and how to use the Teleprompter?

ERICKSON

Uh-huh.

JEFFERSON

Where's your Mr. Lawton?

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: (2)

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HUCKABEE'S FLOOR DIRECTOR
(pointing to the lens
on one of the cameras)
And tell 'em to look at this red
light. Right here, just above the
lens. When it's on, they're on. Got
it, guys?

The Founding Fathers WALLA their assent as a COMMERCIAL SPOT
for 24 Hour Fitness clubs runs on an HDTV monitor. Jefferson
views this as Erickson responds to his query.

ERICKSON
At the university. He had to look in
on some tests. Something to do with
his work, I think.

FRANKLIN
Always the scientist. My kind of fellow.

JEFFERSON
(watching the TV
commercial)
A strong body makes the mind strong,
Miss Erickson.

Franklin observes the spot and the following conversation
with some interest, reacting from time to time.

ERICKSON
There, you see! Our time has something
in common with yours!

JEFFERSON
(holds up a cautionary
finger)
As to the species of exercises, I
advise the gun.

Sally's eyebrow raises at this. Franklin reacts with approval.

JEFFERSON (CONT'D)
While this gives moderate exercise to
the body, it gives boldness, enterprise
and independence to the mind.

FRANKLIN
Hear, hear! A fine genius in his own
country is like gold in the mine.

ERICKSON
(skeptical)
Uh-huh.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: (3)

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JEFFERSON

No, I mean it. Games played with the ball, and others of that nature, are too violent for the body and stamp no character on the mind.

(pats her on her arm)

Let your gun therefore be your constant companion of your walks.

ERICKSON

(soft smile)

Just not on aircraft.

JEFFERSON

(sighs)

One loves to possess arms, though one hopes never to have occasion for them.

A long, thoughtful beat. Then Washington speaks.

WASHINGTON

(looking around at the television cameras)

Miss Erickson, very little in your America is real anymore, is it?

A guilty look crosses Erickson's face. She says nothing.

HUCKABEE'S FLOOR DIRECTOR raises his hand, then announces:

HUCKABEE'S FLOOR DIRECTOR

OK, quiet on the set! Intro tape rolling in three... two...

On the timing of "one", he throws a gesture toward a LARGE HDTV screen as a PRE-TAPED INTRO PLAYS. It's all MUSIC and HIGH-TECH GRAPHICS as the same FOX HOST, MIKE HUCKABEE, begins the program. At the appropriate cue, the PICTURE DISSOLVES TO:

WASHINGTON, who takes his cue like a pro.

WASHINGTON

Two hundred years ago, we fought a war to establish freedom and liberty in these United States. I'm George Washington.

JEFFERSON

But freedom and liberty are not land or gold... objects you can pass from generation to generation without depreciation or exhaustion. I'm Thomas Jefferson.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: (4)

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HAMILTON

Freedom and liberty are intangible qualities. Once you have gained them, there are only two things you can do with them. I'm Alexander Hamilton.

ADAMS

You can preserve them by the utmost of vigilance and sacrifice, or you can lose them! I'm John Adams.

FRANKLIN

And from what we have seen of this time, Americans believe themselves to be possessed of the great gift of freedom. But little do you know how little of the original gift is left. I'm Benjamin Franklin.

WASHINGTON

Tonight! The Liberty Debates begin... and we, your humble servants, have the privilege of presiding over them.

JEFFERSON

On your left... Hillary Clinton, representing the Democratic party.

FRANKLIN

And on your right, [insert name of candidate], representing the Republican party.

ADAMS

They are supposed to represent you, the American people who will vote one of the present candidates into office.

HAMILTON

So tonight we, the Founding Fathers, will hold the feet of the American presidential candidates...

ADAMS

...and of the the American people!

HAMILTON

(nods his agreement)
And of the American people, to the fire.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: (5)

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FRANKLIN

The American people will answer to history... tonight, live on national television! What did you do with the freedoms bequeathed to you through the blood of your countrymen?

(to Washington)

General Washington...?

WASHINGTON

Let the reckoning begin! Mr. Adams...

ADAMS

No foreign tyrant has invaded our fair shores and seized this precious gift from us. That has not been necessary. The modern American has simply given his freedom away!

CLINTON

(offended)

To whom have we given our freedom?

FRANKLIN

Why... to the government, of course.

The Founding Fathers WALLA their agreement.

REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE

But we have a government of the people, for the people, and by the people.

(to CAMERA)

Lincoln said that... after your time.

JEFFERSON

And in our time, it is our model.

FRANKLIN

And from what we have studied, even in the time of Abraham Lincoln, it was. But it is no more.

ADAMS

You have given your freedoms and liberties away... not entirely, but it is but an exercise in nostalgia to say that America is a free country.

JEFFERSON

Just look at the evidence. In implementing the Constitution that still governs this nation, we appended to that great document a set of 10 amendments called the Bill of Rights.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: (6)

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HAMILTON

That's right. And he should know...
the man recommended that Madison
should include them!

WASHINGTON

The Bill of Rights were written to
guarantee that the government could
not take from the states and citizens
specific rights and freedoms.

JEFFERSON

(shaking his head)

It did not, however, guarantee that
the citizens, acting on their own,
would not give to the government
that which it was prohibited from
taking.

FRANKLIN

And this is precisely what has
happened.

WASHINGTON

(ignoring him)

Just look at the first amendment.
"Congress shall make no law respecting
an establishment of religion or
prohibiting the free exercise thereof,
or abridging the freedom of speech
or of the press, or the right of the
people peaceably to assemble and to
petition the government for a redress
of grievances."

FRANKLIN

Modern Americans take great pride in
this particular amendment. But how
much of it is left intact? In my
day, we still had the freedom to
utter a prayer at school or to start
a session of Congress with an
invocation.

ADAMS

But we see these rights have all
been taken away by a pernicious doc-
trine called the "separation of Church
and State."

JEFFERSON

No. Separation between church and
state. Yet where does the original
amendment call for that? You took

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: (7)

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JEFFERSON (CONT'D)

words that I wrote in a private letter, twisted them out of context, and made them a legal doctrine.

ADAMS

Hear, hear! A nation which cannot pray in public, each man to God, will soon have none! No ethics or moral standards. It will become a nation of opportunists, drunks, liars, murderers and thieves.

HAMILTON

And you will call them the Senate and the House of Representatives!

JEFFERSON

Or worse... the Judiciary!

FRANKLIN

Why should it be any different? If you cannot or will not answer to the Bountiful Father, then you will answer to no one, not even the law.

HAMILTON

You become a law unto yourselves. But surely we still have our freedom of speech and press?

ADAMS

But, you say, we still have freedom of the press!

FRANKLIN

Oh, I know something about freedom of the press. I've owned one, sir! And in my day, I made quite a use of it. I'll tell you, if you call "freedom" the ability to stand up and say innocuous things that everyone agrees with...

HAMILTON

The press bows to the advertisers. Their coverage is limited to what does not offend the sponsors.

ADAMS

But there is no honest dialogue in the press from what I've seen.

(CONTINUED)

FRANKLIN

And where are the editors of today's America, the champions of free speech? Are they presenting a rational defense to this mischief? No... they are lighting the bonfire and helping the conflagration to spread! For shame, I say... shame! And you think you have a free press.

The candidates looks from one to another, speechless.

HAMILTON

And look at the taxes you suffer.

WASHINGTON

Two hundred years ago, I led a war to free ourselves from excessive taxation, among other evils.

JEFFERSON

In setting up the Constitution, one of the most important things we did was forbid the federal government from taxing the income of its citizens. This freedom was preserved for 150 years, until the citizens gave it away. And now look at how you are taxed!

HAMILTON

There shouldn't be any personal federal taxes at all on the people! Our federal government shouldn't need your personal taxes. And I ought to know. I'm the Secretary of the Treasury!

ADAMS

So, what do the so-called champions of free speech do? They run articles on how to fill out their income tax forms! They have become the propaganda machines of your IRS.

FRANKLIN

If I were to make my home here, today, in this time, Poor Richard would be raising hell about the rape of the public by the Internal Revenue Service.

HAMILTON

Agreed, sir, yet you say the Federal government needs money? Of course it does!

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: (9)

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JEFFERSON

But the same prudence which in private life would forbid our paying our own money for unexplained projects, forbids it in the dispensation of the public moneys.

REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE

Well, we may have a few problems...

CLINTON

We do NOT!

JEFFERSON

A few problems? A plague on both your houses! We have more machinery of government than is necessary; too many parasites living on the labor of the industrious.

WASHINGTON

We have had an opportunity to study the history that we missed over the past two hundred and thirty years.

HAMILTON

Your Democrat Party is now led by those who have turned the wisdom of their leaders upside down.

CLINTON

That's a lie!

ADAMS

Is it? Your JFK once proclaimed, "My fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you -- ask what you can do for your country." But now Americans are told, "Ask not what you can do for your country, ask what your country can do for you."

WASHINGTON

Your famous civil rights leader said, "I have a dream that my children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character." But now Americans are told they must live in a nation where they will not be judged by the content of their character but by the color of their skin.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: (10)

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JEFFERSON

Do you know why I said "A plague on both your houses"? Today, democrats and republicans alike deride the notion of individual rights. Instead, they advocate the supplanting of individual liberty with statism. They promote the notion of a living constitution rather than the authentic Constitution that we established.

FRANKLIN

They despise free enterprise and advocate socialist redistribution of wealth, the ultimate goal of which is to render all people equally poor and dependent upon the state.

ADAMS

They loathe our military and our national sovereignty, and they propose to replace it with treaties that establish supranational governmental legal and policing authorities.

WASHINGTON

They detest traditional American values, and they support all manner of behavior resulting in social decay.

JEFFERSON

The States can best govern our home concerns and the general government our foreign ones. I wish, therefore never to see all offices transferred to Washington, where, further withdrawn from the eyes of the people, they may more secretly be bought and sold at market.

All the Founding Fathers WALLS "Hear, Hear" and the like.

JEFFERSON (CONT'D)

When all government shall be drawn to Washington as the center of all power, it will render powerless the checks provided of one government on another. Were we directed from Washington when to sow, and when to reap, we should soon want bread.

The Founding Fathers LAUGH at the absurdity of the idea.

CLINTON

It's not like that...

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: (11)

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WASHINGTON

No? You provide subsidies to farmers and tell them not to plant certain crops.

JEFFERSON

It's the same thing. So prices are artificially inflated or suppressed. Not led by the free market. Disgraceful!

HAMILTON

And both republican and democrat administrations have endowed future generations, unless soon reversed, not with liberty but with historically unprecedented levels of debt, which will enslave them to hyper-inflation.

FRANKLIN

Conservatives and liberals can argue various policy points ad nauseam, but the question Americans must ask is this: Are we a nation governed by the Rule of its Constitution, or by the contemporaneous opinions of men?

JEFFERSON

We've studied your contemporary history. There's ample evidence that the terminus of nations that are governed by men rather than by law is tyranny.

ADAMS

In the last century alone, hundreds of millions have been enslaved under statist dictators such as Lenin, Stalin, Mussolini, Franco, Hitler, Mao, Kruschev, Pol Pot, Ho Chi, Idi Amin, Castro, Hussein, Kim Jong-Il, Chavez...

WASHINGTON

(interrupting)

And on and on. The only question to ask is... Who might be next?

REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE

Surely not... us!

The Founding Fathers WALLA their agreement. Then:

(CONTINUED)

HAMILTON

In disquisitions of every kind there are certain primary truths, or first principles, upon which all subsequent reasoning must depend.

JEFFERSON

Today, Americans must return to the core principles upon which our nation was founded, those which made it the freest and most productive in history. There -- in the plain and common words of the Constitution -- are the seeds for a renewed commitment to support and defend Essential Liberty.

ADAMS

Human nature itself is evermore an advocate for liberty. There is also in human nature a resentment of injury, and indignation against wrong. A love of truth and a veneration of virtue.

The Founding Fathers WALLA their agreement with various cries of "Hear, Hear" and the like.

ADAMS (CONT'D)

These amiable passions are the latent spark. If the people are capable of understanding, seeing and feeling the differences between true and false, right and wrong, virtue and vice, to what better principle can the friends of mankind apply than to the sense of this difference?

WASHINGTON

I believe that a majority of Americans today are fully capable of understanding the truth, if given the right information and opportunity. As Thomas Paine noted, "Such is the irresistible nature of truth, that all it asks, and all it wants, is the liberty of appearing."

The Floor Director taps his wrist watch. Franklin sees this and reacts to the time prompt.

FRANKLIN

One last thing. You are told that you must choose between a left or right. But toward the end of the

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

last century one of your presidents -- Reagan, I believe -- said , "I suggest there is no such thing as a left or right. There is only an up or down. Up to man's age-old dream -- the maximum of individual freedom consistent with order -- or down to the ant heap of totalitarianism."

WASHINGTON

Patriots, the time has come to choose.

JEFFERSON

If you are a democrat, know this -- the principles of conservatism are sound because they are based on what men and women have discovered through experience in not just one generation or a dozen, but in all the combined experience of mankind.

HAMILTON

The principles conservatives hold dear are those that have been found, through experience, to be ultimately beneficial for individuals, for families, for communities and for nations -- found through the often bitter testing of pain, or sacrifice and sorrow.

ADAMS

If you are a Republican, know this -- you must purge those who have forsaken the first principles of conservatism for power. In their stead, you must lift up those who are devoted to the Rule of Law and Essential Liberty. You must back real conservatives instead of arrogant pretenders.

WASHINGTON

Patriots take heart: Do not wither during these difficult times. For as I have oft times said, we should never despair, our situation before has been unpromising and has changed for the better, so I trust, it will again. If new difficulties arise, we must only put forth new exertions and proportion our efforts to the exigency of the times.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: (14)

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JEFFERSON

Indeed, the next several years will be a vital test for Patriots and our countrymen. Let us choose to persevere, to make our cause that of all men, to make no peace with oppression.

A long beat. The presidential candidates frown, but say nothing. Grim looks from Washington, Hamilton, Adams, Jefferson, and then Franklin, who speaks at long last.

FRANKLIN

Do you want the truth -- or do you want the comfort of falsehoods and flattery?

JEFFERSON

(hand to his brow)
Uh-oh...

WASHINGTON

(same gesture as
Jefferson)
Here it comes...

FRANKLIN

The truth of the matter is that in today's America, you no longer even have the freedom to fart!

This comments rouses the presidential candidates to speak with self-righteous indignation.

REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE

I beg your pardon?

CLINTON

How dare you...!

WASHINGTON

Uh, Dr. Franklin...

FRANKLIN

(to the VIDEO CAMERA)
You see what I mean?

JEFFERSON

The best government does as little as possible, leaving everything else to the citizens to do for themselves.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: (15)

55

FRANKLIN

But now you believe that the best government is the one that does as much as possible, leaving little for the citizenry to do on their own.

ADAMS

In our day, the citizens formed private societies to deal with our problems, so that the government would not be tempted to stick its nose in where it didn't belong.

FRANKLIN

I helped form fire companies, libraries, and relief societies, and not a one involved the government. So I know it can be done.

JEFFERSON

In our time, the citizens govern themselves as much as possible. In your time, when you are no longer willing to do so, you trade in freedom and liberty for security and comfort.

FRANKLIN

Yes. This is the fundamental difference between the America of 200 years ago and the America of today. And this is why I say you no longer have the freedom even to fart.

The STUDIO AUDIENCE LAUGHS at the suggestion.

HAMILTON

And we were not afraid to take risks, either. We did not envision a country where everyone was protected from every possible harm.

ADAMS

Quite the opposite, we envisioned a country where everyone had every possible chance to succeed.

FRANKLIN

Somewhere along the way, I guess, America has lost the courage to fart.

JEFFERSON

(nodding)

The modern American cannot tolerate anything that is not squeaky clean,

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: (16)

55

JEFFERSON (CONT'D)

whether it is body odor, the smell of garbage, or language.

ADAMS

And this is how you handle the unpleasantries of life, as well. You mask them, so they will not offend you. But in doing so, you have given up your freedoms and liberties, and this is what ought to offend you.

The FLOOR DIRECTOR points to a floor clock as its digital display counts down the time.

WASHINGTON

I see we're out of time. Dr. Franklin... Thomas... you want to sum up?

FRANKLIN

My brethren and countrymen, if you cherish freedom and liberty, you are going to have to learn to fart.

ADAMS

Stop running to the government to protect you from every possible calamity.

HAMILTON

Take on the responsibilities of human living for yourself, and tell the government to get out of your life!

JEFFERSON

Take possession of your voice and start decrying the loss of freedom in this country.

FRANKLIN

Write to your representatives and tell them that you want the government to give back the freedoms they have stolen from us.

JEFFERSON

Write to the papers, and tell them that freedom of the press isn't worth a nickel unless it serves the people.

ADAMS

Speak freely to your friends and colleagues, and awaken them to the loss of freedom in this nation.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: (17)

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HAMILTON

May I remind you that in 1776, Peter Muhlenberg delivered a sermon, concluding, "There is a time for all things, a time to preach and a time to pray, but those times have passed away. There is a time to fight, and that time has now come." He removed his clerical robes and set out to command the 8th Virginia Regiment of the Continental Army. Patriots, we have great opportunity before us, and once again the time has come to fight for it.

WASHINGTON

And when you are criticized, as you will be, remind your critics that you have the right to speak your mind.

FRANKLIN

And if they shout you down, as they will, then inform them that since they insist on being asses, you will henceforth communicate with them with the appropriate part of your own anatomy. And turning to face them from the posterior, let them know where you stand. Let every fart count as a peal of thunder for liberty.

CLINTON

You can't say that word on national television!

FRANKLIN

Let every fart remind the nation of how much it has let pass out of its control.

REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE

The FCC will fine this station!

FRANKLIN

Let them! Ours is a small gesture, but one that can be very effective...

JEFFERSON

Especially in a large crowd.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: (18)

55

FRANKLIN

So fart, and if you must, fart often.
But always fart without apology.
Fart for freedom, fart for liberty,
and fart proudly.

REPUBLICAN CANDIDATE

Gee, maybe we should make that our
campaign slogan!

OBAMA rolls his eyes.

FRANKLIN turns his backsides TOWARD CAMERA. We HEAR a LONG FART. WASHINGTON smiles stiffly. HAMILTON shakes his head. JEFFERSON raises his hand to his forehead. ADAMS shakes his head. And then we SPIN TO A SERIES OF SHOTS:

The cover of the Los Angeles Times blares the words "Fart Proudly!" across its masthead with a FREEZE-FRAME of the Founding Fathers from the TV debate.

PIERS MORGAN of CNN interviews the frazzled Republican and Democratic presidential candidates.

PEOPLE ON THE STREET review magazine covers with the Founding Fathers as the cover images.

CUSTOMERS in a bar point at replays of the Founding Fathers on the screen and argue hotly about them. DISSOLVE TO:

56 **EXT. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, WASHINGTON -- NIGHT** 56

To ESTABLISH the building once again.

57 **INT. ARNOLD BENEDICT'S OFFICE -- NIGHT** 57
(AIDE, BENEDICT)

BENEDICT is speaking to his AIDE.

BENEDICT

We have to silence these "Founding Fathers" or send them back to their own time.

AIDE

We don't even know how they got here!
What if we can't send them back?
They're booked on every talk show in the country. And around the world by satellite!

BENEDICT

If we can't silence them, or send the Founding Fathers back to their own time, there's only one solution.

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED:

57

AIDE

The British crown couldn't silence them over 200 years ago! What chance does anybody have now!?

Benedict holds up his hand, demanding silence.

BENEDICT

If we cannot silence them, if we cannot send them back to their own time, then... for the sake of order...
 (taps his own chest)
 ...for the sake of America and her own survival...

The aide stiffens at the inevitable.

BENEDICT (CONT'D)

If we cannot silence these... these seditionists... then the Founding Fathers... must die.

A LOOK OF ALARM crosses the face of the aide.

BENEDICT (CONT'D)

I'm going for an arrest warrant. Have Stryker bring in the Founding Fathers. The charge... sedition. That's the one I want to see stick. The penalty for sedition is still on the books. The penalty is death.

OFF HIS AIDE'S HORRIFIED REACTION:

BENEDICT (CONT'D)

Hey, I'll show some respect for history. Let's try them in Philadelphia.

58 EXT. WASHINGTON MONUMENT -- NIGHT

58

A LONG, ESTABLISHING SHOT of the tall Washington Monument, bathed in artificial lighting. HOLD FOR A BEAT and then...

FADE TO BLACK

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

59 EXT. INDEPENDENCE HALL -- AFTERNOON**59**

TO ESTABLISH. We hear the sounds of KNOCKING ON WOOD and the VOICE OF JOHN ADAMS, O.S.

ADAMS (O.S.)
I know it's here somewhere...

And we CUT TO:

60 INT. INDEPENDENCE HALL -- CONTINUOUS**60**

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, JEFFERSON, HAMILTON, WASHINGTON, STRYKER, ERICKSON, DHS AGENTS)

It's late afternoon and the golden light of the afternoon sun filters through the windows. We're along one side of the room and Adams is knocking discretely along the panels of one wall. With him are Franklin, Jefferson, Hamilton and Washington, who look curiously at what he is doing.

JEFFERSON
Adams, what are you looking for?

ADAMS
Sh-h-h-h! Buried treasure.

HAMILTON
What on earth?

Adams continues to knock.

ADAMS
I think it was right about...

At last his knock goes hollow.

ADAMS (CONT'D)
Here!

All smiles, he begins to push on the molding around the edge of the panel. Nothing happens.

ADAMS (CONT'D)
At least I thought it was here.

FRANKLIN
Looking for beer?

ADAMS
You're thinking of my second cousin, Samuel. He's the braumeister of the family.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED:

60

HAMILTON

What, then?

ADAMS

After nearly 230 years of misguided American history, couldn't you use a belt right about... now?

Adams finally finds the correct molding strip. He pushes it to one side.

WASHINGTON

You don't really expect whatever you're looking for to be there after all these years?

Washington's voice trails off as Adams pushes various pieces of molding aside in a certain sequence. The panel suddenly slides open to reveal...

ADAMS

Eureka! My drink of choice has a little more substance to it.

We SEE a FLASK OF DUSTY BRANDY on an old, equally dusty wooden tray, with six glass brandy snifters turned upside down and held in place in special cut-outs made just to hold the glasses.

Adams pulls out the brandy tray, turns, and offers it to his companions, setting it on a table.

JEFFERSON

(takes the bottle,
reads the label)

Vintage 1776... a very good year, I recall.

ADAMS

I had the good sense to ensconce it here in its own little treasure... as my private reserve, during that long dreary session back when... well, never mind!

FRANKLIN

And it has laid here undisturbed for over 230 years?

HAMILTON

Ought to be pretty smooth by now, don't you think?

WASHINGTON shakes his head at the absurdity of it all.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED: (2)

60

FRANKLIN peels a wax seal from the top of the bottle, removes the cork, and sniffs it.

FRANKLIN

Wow!

Jefferson, Adams, Hamilton and Washington quickly up-end the glasses. Franklin pours a stiff belt into five of the six glasses. Each man takes a glass. Franklin offers a toast.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

To democracy!

WASHINGTON

To the republic!

JEFFERSON

To liberty!

HAMILTON

To freedom!

ADAMS

To two-hundred-thirty-year-old brandy!

They all clink their glasses. They each take a big gulp. Then they react, each in his own way, to the brandy.

ALL TOGETHER

Wow!

Adams thinks about it for beat, then pours himself another round.

ADAMS

Wow... I'll have another.

The Founding Fathers WALLA "Hear, Hear" etc. as Adams pours another round for each of them.

ERICKSON steps into the room. Stryker is at her side. Sally is not happy. Stryker is grim and, as usual, wears sunglasses, even inside the room.

ERICKSON

Gentlemen, I could use a drink, too.

The Founding Fathers turn, see Stryker and Erickson. Franklin looks over his bifocals at them with a puzzled look. He pours a drink for Sally using the last remaining brandy snifter. Franklin offers the snifter to Erickson.

FRANKLIN

Miss Erickson... Agent Stryker...

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED: (3)

60

A mixture of anger and sorrow crosses Sally's face as tears well up in her eyes. She takes the brandy, drinks it down, then...

ERICKSON

Wow...

(beat, then)

Now we're in trouble.

A CADRE OF DHS AGENTS burst into the room, entering at a run from all doors. TWO DOZEN AGENTS, dressed in full SWAT-type gear, cover the unarmed Founding Fathers with machine guns and laser sights.

THE FOUNDING FATHERS each react in his own way.

WASHINGTON is grim; he fingers his sword. FRANKLIN is astonished; he looks over his glasses at the assembled agents. ADAMS is nervous; his gaze moves from agent to agent. HAMILTON is insulted. JEFFERSON is quietly offended.

STRYKER

You are all under arrest. You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. You have a right to an attorney and to have one present during questioning. If you desire an attorney and cannot afford one, an attorney will be appointed for you at public expense.

The last of the agents surround the Founding Fathers. Stryker steps over to Washington, extends her hand.

STRYKER (CONT'D)

I'll take the sword.

A tense beat. Washington looks around at all the armed men surrounding them. Franklin peers at the laser beams.

FRANKLIN

The lights... some kind of weapon, General Washington.

HAMILTON

There's too many of them.

ERICKSON

We'll fight them in court, General Washington.

Washington looks intently at his friends. They each reluctantly, one after another, nod their heads in agreement.

Washington unstraps his sword, holds it out in both hands to Stryker.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED: (4)

60

WASHINGTON

You have sworn to protect the
President of the United States.

STRYKER

There is some question...

WASHINGTON

(waves away the
objection)

We shall place our care into the
hands of our legal counsel, Miss
Sally Erickson.

The other Founding Fathers WALLA their agreement.

ERICKSON wipes away a tear, and straightens up proudly to
accept the assignment.

ERICKSON

General Washington, I would be happy
to be your attorney.

WASHINGTON

In the meantime...

(to Stryker)

I place this sword of liberty under
your protection.

Stryker accepts the sword with a slight grim smile.

VARIOUS SHOTS as HANDCUFFS are snapped around the wrists of
the Founding Fathers. As Stryker prepares to close the
handcuffs around Washington's wrists:

ERICKSON

Is that really necessary?

Stryker says nothing, snaps the handcuffs shut on Washington's
wrists.

WASHINGTON'S EYES say it all: His is a restrained anger, and
he almost wears the handcuffs with pride. Then we DISSOLVE
TO:

61 EXT. INDEPENDENCE HALL -- MORNING**61**

HIGH ANGLE -- TO ESTABLISH. CROWDS OF SEVERAL THOUSAND PEOPLE
surround the building. TV crews everywhere. ZOOM IN to a
COURT-TV REPORTER, a woman holding a microphone with "Court-
TV" on its label. She speaks INTO A CAMERA that is fitted on
the shoulder of a CAMERAMAN.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

61

REPORTER

We're here at Independence Hall where the trial of the century is now in the final day of testimony. The prosecution and the defendants' attorney have agreed to a non-jury trial before Judge Horowitz. The Department of Homeland Security's Chief Prosecutor, Mr. Arnold Benedict, has pushed through an indictment of sedition against the mystery men that some citizens actually believe are the "Founding Fathers". Some observers are saying the speed at which this trial has come together is indicative of the usurpation of power by the Federal government. Others are saying its speed is an indication of the system working as it should... quickly, efficiently, and without prejudice.

She finishes her intro, then she steps through the doorway of Independence Hall, moving into...

62 INT. INDEPENDENCE HALL (DRESSED AS COURTROOM) -- MORNING **62**
(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, STRYKER, BENEDICT, AIDE, BAILIFF, JUDGE HOROWITZ, REPORTER)

All around the room, and jamming every possible space in the hall, we SEE CROWDS of PEOPLE lining the hall, eyes glued to a number of ENORMOUS HDTV screens that display her report.

We SEE the BENCH, the prosecutor's table, and the defense table. Sally and the Founding Fathers are lined up behind the defense table. Benedict, his aide, and Stryker are seated behind the prosecutor's table.

The BAILIFF ENTERS as the reporter takes her seat.

BAILIFF

All rise. The United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania is now in session. The Honorable Judge H. M. Horowitz presiding. All rise.

Everyone in the courtroom rises, including Erickson and the Founding Fathers.

HOROWITZ

Good morning, Mr. Benedict. Good morning, Miss Erickson. Are you ready to proceed?

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED:

62

BENEDICT

The state is ready, your honor.

ERICKSON

The defense is ready, your honor.

JUDGE HOROWITZ

Very well, Mr. Benedict. Proceed with your final witnesses.

BENEDICT

Your Honor, I call the Founding Fathers to the stand.

We HEAR CATCALLS and HOOTS from outside the hallway. Erickson stands.

ERICKSON

Your Honor, I object! A defendant cannot be forced to testify against himself.

JEFFERSON

(aside to Hamilton)

At least they still have that correct.

Franklin and Adams, overhearing the remark, WALLA their assent with Hamilton.

JUDGE HOROWITZ

(to Erickson)

Counselor, the Court has not ruled on the identity of your... clients... as yet. They are charged with providing a false identity to a TSA official...

(reading the indictment paper)

...to wit, presenting currency as a government issued I-D.

ERICKSON is annoyed for a beat, as she was the one who suggested the strategy at the airport.

ERICKSON

That was on the advice of counsel, Your Honor. It... seemed the only alternative at the time.

BENEDICT

We have also charged them with sedition.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED: (2)

62

BENEDICT (CONT'D)
(dismissive wave of
his hand)
We'll drop the fraudulent ID charge,
Your Honor.

JUDGE HOROWITZ
Miss Erickson, your clients have
maintained what appears to be an
impossibility before this Court.
They claim to be five of the founding
fathers of this country. This,
clearly, cannot be. Whoever these
men are, it is imperative that this
Court learn the truth. Objection
overruled!
(to Benedict)
You may proceed.

FRANKLIN
(aside to Jefferson)
Then again, maybe they didn't.

All of the Founding Fathers nod their heads in agreement.

JUDGE HOROWITZ
The defendants will take the stand.

Erickson starts to object again. Washington restrains her.

WASHINGTON
(to the judge)
I am a man of honor, sir.

JUDGE HOROWITZ
(wryly)
No doubt...

WASHINGTON
(to Erickson)
We shall all take the stand.

Franklin, Jefferson, Hamilton and Adams all stand and join
Washington before the bench. Together they move forward as
two of the BAILIFFS position five chairs in a row beside the
judge's bench.

They all raise their right hands. The lead Bailiff raises
his right hand.

BAILIFF
Do you swear to tell the truth, the
whole truth and nothing but the truth?

Washington looks over at the judge.

(CONTINUED)

WASHINGTON

What? No Bible?

BENEDICT

We haven't required sworn testimony on one of those for decades.

FRANKLIN

I say, sir, that is one of the many symptoms of what has gone astray in your America.

WASHINGTON

Your honor, where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation deserts the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in the Courts of Justice?

BENEDICT

(standing)

Your honor...

HOROWITZ

Overruled. Let him continue.

Benedict sits down reluctantly.

WASHINGTON

Let us with caution indulge the opposition...

(gestures, referencing the opposing counsel)

... that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that National morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

ADAMS

Hear, hear!

(to the Judge)

Your honor, clearly our political way of life is by the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God, and of course presupposes the existence of God, the moral ruler of the universe, and a rule of right and wrong, of just and unjust, binding upon man, preceding all institutions of human society and government.

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED: (4)

62

FRANKLIN

All of us who were engaged in the struggle for independence must have observed frequent instances of superintending providence in our favor. And have we now forgotten that powerful friend? Or do we imagine that we no longer need his assistance?

(turns, addresses the Judge)

I have lived, sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth...

(turns, addresses the courtroom, voice rising)

...that God governs in the affairs of men! And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid?

Franklin pauses, looks to Jefferson.

JEFFERSON

Well said, Dr. Franklin.

(to the Judge)

We should like a Bible, sir!

Horowitz relents, gestures to the Bailiff to allow it. He addresses Benedict.

HOROWITZ

Don't even think about it, counselor.

I'm going to allow it.

WASHINGTON

(to Erickson)

My traveling bag, Miss Erickson. If you please...

Erickson reaches down, pulls Washington's traveling bag over to her. The Bailiff reaches for it.

ERICKSON

It was duly searched, Bailiff.

The Bailiff looks it over as she rummages through it. She finds what Washington was referring to. She pulls out a WORN BIBLE. We FOLLOW THE BIBLE as Erickson hands it to the Bailiff. He takes it, almost like it's a thing of contraband, and hands it to Adams. We FOLLOW THE BIBLE from Adams, to Hamilton, to Jefferson, to Franklin, and then finally to Washington, who takes it tenderly in his hands.

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED: (5)

62

Washington opens it to a passage, then pauses and removes his spectacles from an inside pocket of his coat. Washington speaks to the judge, and to the entire court.

WASHINGTON

Gentlemen, you will permit me to put on my spectacles, for I have grown not only gray, but almost blind in the service of my country.

ARNOLD BENEDICT rolls his eyes at what he considers to be role playing by Washington.

WASHINGTON shows the passage to the other Founding Fathers, who nod quietly in agreement. Whatever it is that Washington shows them remains a secret to us, however. Washington closes the Bible. He speaks directly to the judge, as do all of the Founding Fathers.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Upon all that is sacred, Your Honor...

Washington turns, offers the Bible to Franklin.

FRANKLIN

Upon all that we hold dearest to life itself...

Franklin hands the Bible back to Jefferson. They all crowd around it, five hands on the Bible.

ADAMS

We all swear, before God Almighty...

JEFFERSON

We all swear upon our sacred honor...

ALL TOGETHER

...to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth...

WASHINGTON

So help me, God!

ALL TOGETHER

So help me, God! Amen!

63 EXT. INDEPENDENCE HALL -- MORNING

63

The AUDIENCE CHEERS for a beat, then we CUT BACK TO:

64 INT. INDEPENDENCE HALL (DRESSED AS COURTROOM) -- MORNING 64
(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON,
STRYKER, BENEDICT, AIDE, BAILIFF, JUDGE HOROWITZ, REPORTER)

Erickson beams a soft smile to the Founding Fathers. BENEDICT rolls his eyes at the theatrics of it all.

BENEDICT

Yeah, yeah. Whatever. Let's get on with it.

As Benedict moves toward the witness stand, we CUT TO:

65 INT. LAWTON'S MEDICAL LAB -- AFTERNOON 65
(LAWTON)

Lawton sits at a computer terminal waiting for a print out to complete. We SEE an enormous 8-panel computer screen. Colorful DNA images are on six of the screens, one for each of the Founding Fathers, and one for Erickson.

Lawton is reviewing the six screens. Beside him is the box of stemware from the restaurant where he packed the wineglasses into the box.

Lawton selects the seventh screen with his mouse. A comparative box opens up. He drags Jefferson's DNA image over to the seventh screen. He does the same with Erickson's DNA image. He hits a few keys. The eighth screen runs a comparative analysis. A figure rolls into position one digit at a time: Matching 10%, 20%, etc. to 90%, then 91% to 99%, then fifteen decimals of nines.

Lawton lifts one of the glasses out of the box. We SEE the name "Thomas J." marked on the base. He looks at it thoughtfully for a beat, then puts it back into the box. Lawton pulls out a second glass. We SEE the name "SALLY E." marked on the base.

Lawton turns to the laser printer, lifts a stack of paper from it, and thumbs through it for a beat, examining the papers. A low whistle as he reads it, then Lawton pulls a cell phone from his pocket, punches in a number.

LAWTON

Lawton here. I need a favor... a special favor.

(beat)

That's right. Grab the boys. Meet me at the parking lot of the Bryne building.

(beat)

That's right. Where they're staging that "trial."

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

65

LAWTON (CONT'D)

(beat)

Yeah, you and about a hundred thousand others want to help. I think I know how you can.

(beat)

Thirty minutes? Great! See you there.

Lawton closes the cell phone, tucks it into a pocket, grabs his coat and the stack of papers, and heads out the door.

66 INT. INDEPENDENCE HALL (DRESSED AS COURTROOM) -- MORNING
(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON, STRYKER, BENEDICT, AIDE, BAILIFF, JUDGE HOROWITZ, REPORTER)

66

The five Founding Fathers are seated in their witness chairs as Franklin speaks.

FRANKLIN

You have called us as witnesses. But it is you who are the witnesses! You have left your first love, as the Good Book says.

HAMILTON

No one follows the Constitution any more. Not the judiciary. Not the Congress. And certainly not the Executive Branch.

JEFFERSON

Executive Orders, indeed! More like a dictator's whims! As I have written, on every question of constitutional construction, let us carry ourselves back to the time when the Constitution was adopted, recollect the spirit manifested in the debates, and instead of trying what meaning can be squeezed out of the text...

ADAMS

(interrupting)

...or invented against it!

The other Founding Fathers WALLA "Hear, hear!" Etc.

JEFFERSON

(continuing)

...or invented against it, let us conform to the probable one which was passed.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED:

66

ADAMS

May I say that a Constitution of Government once changed from Freedom, can never be restored. Liberty, once lost, is lost forever.

The other Founding Fathers WALLA their assent. Sally smiles. She couldn't provide a better defense. Adams smiles at her, then holds up the Bible, upon which the Founding Fathers have taken their oath.

ADAMS (CONT'D)

A country decays from within. It forgets the lessons of history. Of the blood of its founders. And the hope of its convictions.

JEFFERSON

Have you not seen? Have you not read... the lessons of the past? A government big enough to give you everything you want, is strong enough to take everything you have!

WASHINGTON

And the faith that forms the bedrock of its foundations? Without these, our nation flounders, like a ship sinking in a storm.

HAMILTON

We must rescue that ship! Rescue her, I say! Turn her away from the rocks upon which she must surely find her own destruction.

FRANKLIN

Your Honor...

(bows to the audience)

Ladies and gentlemen of these United States... our nation, like any nation, must follow a path. And that path begins... indeed, began... in bondage, like the Israelites of old. Her taskmasters, the crown of King George the Third. And from bondage, she traveled...

WASHINGTON

From bondage to spiritual faith. And from faith to great courage.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (2)

66

HAMILTON

Indeed, sir! And from courage to liberty. From liberty she has moved to great abundance.

The AUDIENCE WALLAS their agreement.

ADAMS

And then from abundance to complacency. From complacency to apathy.

AUDIENCE members look from one to another, obviously feeling guilty.

JEFFERSON

And then from apathy to dependency... your own "social security". You look for government to solve your every problem. And that inevitably leads a people from dependence back again into bondage.

FRANKLIN

That's correct. Do you know who said these things, Miss Erickson?

She shakes her head. Franklin looks at the prosecutor. He has no reaction. And the judge just shakes his head.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

Well, I'll tell you. We said these things. Not in so many words as now, but search our letters, our journals.
(shouting to the audience)

Read them for yourselves! Are you not free men? Can you not read our works? Do not their sacred words live still?

WASHINGTON

Can you not see? The preservation of the sacred fire of liberty and the destiny of the republican model of government are justly considered as deeply, perhaps as finally, staked on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people!

ADAMS

From what I've seen, I'd say these words are just as true in this time, as in ours.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (3)

66

HAMILTON

And perhaps more so.

All of the Founding Fathers WALLA "Hear, hear!"

JEFFERSON

And, indeed, from what we've all
seen, America is back where we
started... in bondage.

WASHINGTON

America is in slavery all over again!
A personal income tax, indeed!

FRANKLIN

"Homeland Security!" Bah!

The Founding Fathers WALLA "Hear, Hear!", etc.

ADAMS

In spite of our many differences, we
are all agreed on this. We have rights
antecedent to all earthly governments;
rights that cannot be repealed or
restrained by human laws; rights
derived from the Great Legislator of
the Universe.

JEFFERSON

Indeed, sir! The strength of our
federal republic stands or falls on
the strength of its people and the
Laws of Nature.

HAMILTON

And Nature's God.

The Founding Fathers are nodding their heads, all in agreement
for once.

FRANKLIN

In our day, serious religion, under
its various denominations, is not
only tolerated, but respected and
practiced.

(aside to Erickson)

One of my publications...

All the Founding Fathers WALLA their agreement again.

HAMILTON

Dr. Franklin, didn't you write that
in America, atheism is unknown there?

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (4)

66

FRANKLIN

I did, sir! And infidelity is usually a secret. Here and now, so many of you wear it as a... a badge of honor.

WASHINGTON

And from my sacred office, I have been recommending that religion be preached among the Indians.

JEFFERSON

In Virginia, not so long ago, you couldn't hold an office unless you were a member of the Anglican church.

ADAMS

That, sir, was another form of tyranny. Those days are gone, now.

HAMILTON

Jefferson wrote the Virginia laws that made it so.

JEFFERSON

But when I wrote that a wall of separation should stand between church and state, I never meant that government should restrict religion. I meant that wall was to encourage freedom of religion.

WASHINGTON

I believe that the people have the right, and the obligation, to keep and bear arms so that if a despotic ruler or tyrannical government arises, they have the means to replace it.

FRANKLIN

Or publish without restriction in print, on television, or on your newfangled Internet...

ADAMS

And that everyone has the right to a fair trial by jury.

WASHINGTON

And that our nation has no right or obligation to intermeddle in the internal concerns of another.

A LONG BEAT, while the Founding Fathers look from one to another. Then...

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (5)

66

BENEDICT

Your Honor...

The Judge holds up his hand.

JUDGE HOROWITZ

The Court will allow the testimony.

Benedict starts to object, but a stern look from Judge Horowitz shuts him up.

JUDGE HOROWITZ (CONT'D)

Indulge me, Mr. Benedict.

(to the Founding
Fathers)

Anything else?

HAMILTON

(addressing the court
and the people present)

Your Honor, the safety of a republic essentially depends on the energy of a common national sentiment; on a uniformity of principles and habits; on the exemption of citizens from foreign bias and prejudice; and on the love of country which will almost invariably be found to be closely connected with birth, education, and family. We cannot leave our borders wide open so any people can conquer our lands and cultures from within.

WASHINGTON

By an intermixture with our people, they, or their descendants, get assimilated to our customs, measures, laws. In a word, they soon become one people: "e pluribus unum."

JEFFERSON

It is inevitable that some immigrants would leave more restrictive governments and not be able to handle American freedoms, leading to cultural corruption and an unbounded licentiousness. It would be a miracle were they to stop precisely at the point of temperate liberty. These principles, with their language, they will transmit to their children. In proportion to their numbers, they will infuse into the country their spirit, warp and bias its direction,

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JEFFERSON (CONT'D)

and tender it a heterogeneous,
incoherent, distracted mass.

FRANKLIN

The good education of youth has been
esteemed by wise men in all ages as
the surest foundation of the happiness
both of private families and of common-
wealths. Almost all governments have
therefore made it a principal object
of their attention to establish and
endow with proper revenues such
seminaries of learning as might supply
the succeeding age with men qualified
to serve the public with honor to
themselves, and to their country.

ADAMS

Facts are stubborn things; and
whatever may be our wishes, our
inclination, or the dictates of our
passions, they cannot alter the state
of facts and evidence.

The Founding Fathers WALLA their agreements from the witness
stand. The AUDIENCE is on its feet now. VARIOUS CHEERS of
"Free them" and "Let them go", etc. Others shout "Crucify
them!"

BENEDICT rises to object.

BENEDICT

Your honor, all of this testimony
is... irrelevant in America today.

ERICKSON jumps up to respond, but before she can say anything,
Franklin interrupts her, standing up.

FRANKLIN

Your honor, in our day, we hold these
Truths to be self-evident...

JEFFERSON

(standing up)
...that all Men are created equal,

ADAMS

...that they are endowed by their
Creator with certain unalienable
Rights,...

HAMILTON

...that among these are Life, Liberty,
and the Pursuit of Happiness...

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (7)

66

WASHINGTON

That to secure these Rights,
Governments are instituted among
Men,

ALL TOGETHER

...deriving their just Powers from
the Consent of the Governed!

The people in the hallway are cheering now. The Founding Fathers look from one to another, encouraged by the response. They all sit down again.

Erickson smiles, gives them an encouraging gesture.

BENEDICT frowns, starts to object, but before he can, we CUT TO...

THE ENTRANCE WAY INTO THE ARENA

RICHARD LAWTON tries to push his way past TWO BAILIFFS. They refuse to let him in. Lawton turns his medical identity pass over, shows it to them as STRYKER ENTERS THE SHOT.

LAWTON

The DNA test results. A defense
exhibit. I have a subpoena...

STRYKER

(flashes badge)
Agent Stryker, Secret Service. Admit
him.

The bailiffs relent. They let him pass. Lawton slips past Stryker without a word. But Stryker watches him for a beat. We see Stryker's typically impassionate face. And yes, Stryker still wears the sunglasses, even inside the court building.

BACK TO SCENE

BENEDICT continues objection.

BENEDICT

I object to all this... rhetoric...
about religion. It is highly
prejudicial.

WASHINGTON stands, gestures for silence. He raises his hand to speak.

WASHINGTON

Of all the dispositions and habits,
which lead to political prosperity,
religion and morality are
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (8)

66

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

indispensable supports. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

HAMILTON stands as Washington sits.

HAMILTON

The sacred rights of mankind are not to be rummaged for, among old parchments, or musty records. They are written, as with a sun beam in the whole volume of human nature, by the hand of the divinity itself; and can never be erased or obscured by mortal power.

ADAMS stands as Hamilton sits down.

ADAMS

Hear, hear! We have no government capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. Avarice, ambition, revenge, or gallantry, would break the strongest cords of our Constitution as a whale goes through a net. Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.

JEFFERSON stands as Adams sits down.

JEFFERSON

The God who gave us life, gave us liberty at the same time. But, can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with his wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just: that his justice cannot sleep forever.

WASHINGTON stands as Jefferson sits down. Washington looks over at Franklin with raised eyebrow, gestures for Franklin to speak.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (9)

66

FRANKLIN

Well said, Thomas.

(to Washington)

Nothing to add, General Washington, of my own words. But I think of the words of Mr. Adams' second cousin, Samuel. If you love wealth greater than liberty, the tranquility of servitude greater than the animating contest for freedom, go home from us in peace. We seek neither your counsel, nor your arms. Crouch down and lick the hand that feeds you. May your chains set lightly upon you, and may posterity forget that you were our countrymen.

ADAMS

(holding up a
cautionary finger)

And may I add, sir, that Samuel also has said that no people will tamely surrender their Liberties, nor can any be easily subdued, when knowledge is diffused and virtue is preserved? On the contrary, he says, when people are universally ignorant, and debauched in their manners, they will sink under their own weight without the aid of foreign invaders.

A SERIES OF INTERCUTS:

THE PEOPLE IN THE COURTROOM are silent now, as they react with looks of guilt.

THE PEOPLE IN THE HALLWAY react the same way, too. After a beat we CUT BACK TO WASHINGTON, who is still standing.

WASHINGTON

And may I add, Your Honor, that if I could have entertained the slightest apprehension that the Constitution framed by the Convention where I had the honor to preside, might possibly endanger the religious rights of any, certainly I would never have placed my signature to it.

He is interrupted by ADAMS, who stands and once again holds up a cautionary finger:

ADAMS

And may I also say to the people that I have written that it should
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (10)

66

ADAMS (CONT'D)

be your care, and mine, to elevate the minds of our children and exalt their courage; to accelerate and animate their industry and activity; to excite in them a habitual contempt of meanness, abhorrence of injustice and inhumanity, and an ambition to excel in every capacity, faculty, and virtue. If we suffer their minds to grovel and creep in infancy, they will grovel all their lives.

WASHINGTON nods, turns to address the court, and takes a deep breath.

WASHINGTON

You want the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

Washington looks over at Franklin, then his gaze passes down to Jefferson, Hamilton and Adams. Each one nods solemnly in encouragement.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Then it's past time for the American people to face the truth...

Washington stiffens, then speaks loudly, with boldness.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

I am late of service to these United States as commander of the Continental Army. And now as its President, the first!

(raises his right hand)

And as Providence as my witness, and on my honor as a gentleman and a Christian, I do solemnly swear that we are who we say we are. I am George Washington, president of the thirteen United States...

FRANKLIN

(stands, raises his right hand)

And I swear before the throne of Almighty God, that I am Benjamin Franklin, late of Philadelphia!

The AUDIENCE CHEERS at this.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (11)

66

JEFFERSON

(stands, raises his
right hand)

I am Thomas Jefferson, of Virginia!
Late of Monticello...

HAMILTON

(stands, raises his
right hand)

And I... am Alexander Hamilton, late
of General Washington's service at
Valley Forge, now serving as the
Secretary of the Treasury!

ADAMS

(stands, raises his
right hand)

And I am John Adams, now in service
to Washington as his Vice-President.

WASHINGTON

And we all... to a man... swear before
God and Country, and before the people
of these United States of America,
and before the entire world... we
have told the truth!

JEFFERSON

As to how... or why... we have been
sent here, we do not know.

FRANKLIN

And as we have said to one, so say
we to all... it's not too late for
change.

The AUDIENCE GOES WILD.

LAWTON ENTERS. Lawton approaches the defense table and hands
the medical report to Erickson. He passes a copy to Benedict
and to a Bailiff, who hands it to the Judge.

THE JUDGE takes the report while he bangs his gavel, ad lib
demanding silence in the court. His efforts are useless.

LAWTON has to shout above the noise of the crowd.

LAWTON

The DNA tests! They're complete! And
there's no question about it!

(MORE)

ERICKSON scans the report quickly, catching Lawton's
enthusiasm.

THE JUDGE scans the report quickly, too.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (12)

66

LAWTON (CONT'D)

It's a match, Sally! To fifteen
decimals! The DNA never lies! These
men are who they claim to be!

A GASP from Erickson as the AUDIENCE GOES WILD, then:

ERICKSON

(to Jefferson)

Then... you're... you're my great...
great, great, great... grandfather!

Jefferson takes her into a grandfatherly embrace with a soft
smile.

ERICKSON (CONT'D)

Imagine... the first woman to ever
meet her own ancestor! This can't be
happening.

She wipes a tear away as Lawton turns to the Judge.

LAWTON

(to the Judge, loudly,
so all can hear)

Your Honor, the DNA reports don't
lie! These are the Founding Fathers!

THE AUDIENCE continues to go wild. Over the TUMULT, Erickson
shouts to Lawton:

ERICKSON

We have to get them back. If we don't,
I'll never be born!

With ad lib cries of "Free them" and "Found-ing Fa-thers"
and other CHANTS, they surge toward the bench, overwhelming
the bailiffs and guards.

THE JUDGE bangs his gavel over and over again.

JUDGE HOROWITZ

On its own motion, the court orders
this case dismissed! Bailiff! Release
these men forthwith!

As the pandemonium continues, the Judge sees his gavel means
nothing. He tosses it over his shoulder with a shrug.

THE FOUNDING FATHERS stand, shaking one another's hands as
the tumult in the courtroom continues.

BENEDICT grabs one of his lieutenants, spins him around with
a shout above the tumult:

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (13)

66

BENEDICT

I don't care what the judge said.
Take them into custody outside. We'll
find another justice to sign the
warrant.

In the confusion, Erickson and Lawton grab the Founding
Fathers and herd them toward an exit, away from the crowd.

They move slowly through the crowd, heading toward a rear
exit.

STRYKER blocks their way. adjusts the EARPIECE as BENEDICT'S
VOICE (filtered) IS HEARD (O.S.) in the earpiece. Stryker
pulls her duty weapon, holds it at her side.

Erickson, Lawton and the Founding Fathers come to a complete
stop.

FRANKLIN

(studies the gun from
a distance)

H-m-m-m. Some kind of weapon.

STRYKER, still holding the weapon at her side and listening
to BENEDICT'S FILTERED VOICE through her headset, COCKS her
duty weapon.

ERICKSON

Dr. Franklin... Now is not the time!

Washington restrains Franklin with a gesture, then turns to
Stryker as Lawton addresses her.

LAWTON

The DNA. You heard?

STRYKER

I heard.

FRANKLIN

What's DNA?

ERICKSON

Not now, Dr. Franklin!

WASHINGTON

Agent Stryker, once in a great while,
an individual and a nation have an
opportunity to do what is right in
the sight of Almighty God, but what
is wrong according to the laws of
humanity.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (14)

66

ADAMS

Or one can do what is wrong in the sight of God...

JEFFERSON

But demanded by the laws of man.

FRANKLIN

We have all faced that time in our day, young woman. We had to choose what was right before the throne of heaven, but what was wrong before the throne of Britain.

HAMILTON

Before whose throne will you bow?

A TENSE BEAT, then:

WASHINGTON

Choose ye this day, whom ye shall serve.

Stryker listens for a beat to BENEDICT'S FILTERED VOICE IN HIS HEADSET. She slowly pulls the earpiece out, lets it drop.

STRYKER

I am an officer in the United States Secret Service... sworn to protect and defend the President and the Constitution of the United States. And in all my years of duty, I have never shirked from either.

Stryker slowly uncocks her weapon, holsters it. She removes the sunglasses and pockets them. We see her eyes for the first time, and they are kind.

STRYKER (CONT'D)

This way... Mister President.

Stryker turns toward the rear exit, gesturing.

STRYKER (CONT'D)

Gentlemen, I've got your back.

(gestures to the others
to move to the exit)

We're not all hopeless slaves. On your way, now!

(MORE)

Overjoyed, Erickson and Lawton begin to herd the Founding Fathers toward the exit.

Stryker steps over to a small footlocker. She calls out.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (15)

66

STRYKER (CONT'D)

One moment, Mr. President!

Washington and the others pause. They turn back to face Stryker as she pulls Washington's sword from the footlocker.

STRYKER (CONT'D)

Your battle sword.

(holds it out to him)

It was an honor to care for it, sir.

Stryker extends the sword to Washington. Washington takes the sword with a soft smile and straps it to his waist.

WASHINGTON

Indeed it is. The sword of liberty is an honor to wield. And heaven help the tyrant who gets in her way.

(he pulls it from his sheath and admires it for a beat)

I shall leave it to my nephew Samuel, I think. He's an army captain, you know.

STRYKER

No, I didn't.

WASHINGTON

I shall tell him... never unsheath her to shed blood, except for self-defense, or defense of our country and its rights... and to fall with her in hand, rather than relinquish her.

STRYKER

A good choice... advice we should all heed...

(with conviction)

...Mister President!

Washington smiles, sheathes his sword, then turns to leave. Erickson, Lawton and the Founding Fathers disappear down the hallway.

STRYKER turns, pulls out her sunglasses and puts them on again. She stands resolute, arms folded across her chest.

BENEDICT approaches on the run with other GOVERNMENT GUNMEN.

BENEDICT

Those madmen, those traitors... did they pass through here?

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (16)

66

STRYKER

No traitors passed through here,
sir!

With a cry of disgust, Benedict points to the exits. The men of the DHS security detail split up, heading for the other exits.

STRYKER smiles softly.

STRYKER (CONT'D)

(softly, to himself)

No, sir! No traitors today.

BENEDICT holsters his weapon, puts his hands on his hips, looks around frustrated. He looks back at Stryker suspiciously, then sees something OUT OF FRAME.

BENEDICT

I've got them!

BENEDICT'S POV

We see what appears to be the Founding Fathers waiting at the exit.

BENEDICT (CONT'D)

Front exit. On the double.

Benedict keys his microphone.

BENEDICT (CONT'D)

Agents Ellison, Crane! Front exit.
Move!

Benedict draws his weapon and runs to the elevator.

AT THE EXIT

Benedict arrives on the run, weapon aimed and laser sight streaming as the founding fathers start to move into the street. AGENTS ELLISON and CRANE arrive, weapons drawn. Three LASER BEAMS bounce from Founding Father to Founding Father. Each of the Founding Fathers face forward. They all turn towards Benedict. They are all wearing sunglasses, except for Franklin.

BENEDICT (CONT'D)

Hands up! You're under arrest!

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(turning around to
face Benedict)

My dear sir!

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (17)

66

The other Founding Fathers remove their sunglasses. We RECOGNIZE them as the look-alike actors, not the real Founding Fathers.

JOHN ADAMS

Why all the hardware?

Benedict expresses his disgust.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Would you like an autograph?

GEORGE WASHINGTON

No? A copy of the Constitution, maybe?
Looks like you could use one right
about now.

Benedict holsters his weapon with an exclamation of frustration.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

A fart, perhaps?
(exchanges grins with
the others)

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

How about five?

The look-alike Founding Fathers all laugh, then turn to leave.

BENEDICT

(keys his microphone)
Get me a chopper.
(beat)
And I'll need a motorcycle.

FROM a HIGH ANGLE, we SEE THE SURGING CROWD in the hallway. Benedict moves away. We HOLD FOR A BEAT, then we CUT TO:

67 **EXT. ROAD TO COVERED BRIDGE -- NIGHT**

67

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON, BENEDICT)

We're ON THE ROAD, MOVING, as HAMILTON drives the carriage. But this time, beside him on the driver's bench, are Erickson and Lawton.

HAMILTON

How long since we left Philadelphia?

LAWTON

About three hours! Why?

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

67

HAMILTON

That prosecutor... Benedict. You'd think he would've followed us.

LAWTON

Yeah, he didn't seem the type to give up so easily.

ERICKSON

(pointing)

There's the bridge you told us about!

HAMILTON

I'm amazed that it still stands!

LAWTON

There are dozens like it all over the state, restored for old times' sake.

Hamilton pulls the carriage to a stop. Erickson and Lawton step down from the carriage.

HAMILTON

Good thing for us!

Franklin opens the carriage door. He, Washington, Jefferson and Adams, step out from the carriage.

ADAMS

Now what do we do?

JEFFERSON

We wait!

FRANKLIN

Not for long! Look!

Franklin points. The WIND begins to BLOW STRONGLY as Erickson, Lawton and the other Founding Fathers turn to see...

AT THE FAR END OF THE BRIDGE

The VORTEX BEGINS TO FORM, spinning with FLASHES OF LIGHTNING. It begins to RAIN.

BACK TO SCENE

The RAIN begins to soak Erickson, Lawton and the Founding Fathers.

WASHINGTON

Our work here is done. Time to go home.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: (2)

67

THE HORSES WHINNY, straining at their places. Hamilton reaches over, steadying them.

HAMILTON

Inside the carriage! Everybody!

ERICKSON

Mr. Hamilton! The time vortex! We can't cross it!

LAWTON

It's the end of the ride for us!

ERICKSON

We can't go with you!

FRANKLIN

We know.

ERICKSON

How... how did all this happen? And why?

FRANKLIN

Almighty God is sovereign in his heaven! There was a reason for all of this!

JEFFERSON

Yet I cannot help but wonder... what have we accomplished? A few speeches? A farce of a trial...?

HAMILTON

(sad shake of head)

No man in his senses can hesitate in choosing to be free, rather than a slave.

LAWTON

You stirred up a lot of trouble. People will talk about your time here for years.

WASHINGTON

(ironic shake of his head)

Time... Was this all a waste? What if the people haven't learned their lessons from history?

ERICKSON

Then I guess the great "Legislator of the Universe" is going to have to bring you back... set things straight.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: (3)

67

LAWTON

Again.

She nods as a tear falls from her eyes. Franklin takes Erickson into an embrace.

FRANKLIN

There, there, Sally.

She smiles as this is the first time Franklin has called her by her first name.

JEFFERSON

Dr. Franklin...

A long beat as Franklin hugs the girl. JEFFERSON rolls his eyes.

JEFFERSON (CONT'D)

Dr. Franklin...

(then)

Ben!!

Franklin breaks it off, steps back, and doffs his hat to her. Jefferson, Washington, Hamilton, and Adams do the same. A gentleman's bow from all of them.

Erickson smiles, wiping a tear from her eye. She takes Jefferson into a long hug.

ERICKSON

(wipes away a tear)

It's not often you get to meet your own great, great, great, great grandfather.

After a beat, Lawton taps Sally on the shoulder as he rolls his eyes, just like Jefferson. They break off the embrace.

Adams steps over, embraces Sally. Then:

ERICKSON (CONT'D)

Any last words of advice, gentlemen?

JEFFERSON

The spirit of resistance to government is so valuable on certain occasions, that I wish it to be always kept alive. I like a little rebellion now and then. It is like a storm in the atmosphere.

(MORE)

Erickson reacts to the advice with a bit of skepticism.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: (4)

67

JEFFERSON (CONT'D)

No... really. I mean it. It will often be exercised when wrong, but better so than not to be exercised at all.

ADAMS

(to Erickson and Lawton)

Never forget... a constitution of government once changed from freedom, can never be restored. Liberty, once lost, is lost forever.

Franklin, not to be outdone, holds up an admonishing finger.

FRANKLIN

It is very imprudent to deprive America of any of her privileges. If her commerce and friendship are of any importance to you, they are to be had on no other terms than leaving her in the full enjoyment of her rights.

He holds up another finger. Jefferson rolls his eyes at the long-winded nature of Franklin's comments, as do Washington, Jefferson and Adams. Hamilton moves over to the driver's seat.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

Oh... and they that can give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety.

HAMILTON

If it be asked -- What is the most sacred duty and the greatest source of our security in a Republic? -- the answer would be, An inviolable respect for the Constitution and Laws; the first growing out of the last.

Lawton and Erickson nod their understanding. They look to Jefferson for a final word.

JEFFERSON

Cherish the spirit of our people, and keep alive their attention. Do not be too severe upon their errors, but reclaim them by enlightening them. If once they become inattentive to the public affairs, you and I, and Congress, and Assemblies, Judges,

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: (5)

67

JEFFERSON (CONT'D)
and Governors, shall all become
wolves.

Lawton and Erickson consider this for a beat, then Lawton gestures to the carriage.

LAWTON
Go! Go!

Erickson and Lawton wave them off. Washington, Adams, Jefferson and Franklin get back into the carriage as Hamilton climbs into the driver's seat. He calls down to them.

HAMILTON
(as he climbs into
the seat)
One last thing... a sacred respect
for the constitutional law is the
vital principle, the sustaining energy
of a free government.
(in the seat now,
taking the reins)
And while the constitution continues
to be read, and its principles known,
the states, must, by every rational
man, be considered as essential
component parts of the union; and
therefore the idea of sacrificing
the former to the latter is totally
inadmissible.

THE STORM is in full rage, just like our opening sequence. We SEE the TIME VORTEX again, fifty feet or more in length, spiraling inside the far entrance to the bridge.

HAMILTON (CONT'D)
See you in eternity!

Hamilton cracks the reins across the backs of the horses and they head toward the bridge with its vortex.

As Erickson and Lawton step back, we HEAR the ROAR of a MOTORCYCLE ENGINE.

BENEDICT pulls INTO THE SHOT, riding a police motorcycle.

ERICKSON
Mr. Hamilton! Look out!

Benedict maneuvers his motorcycle alongside the carriage as it speeds toward the bridge.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: (6)

67

AT THE BRIDGE -- WITH THE CARRIAGE, MOVING

Just before the carriage pulls onto the bridge, BENEDICT JUMPS from the motorcycle to the rear luggage rack of the carriage.

THE RIDERLESS MOTORCYCLE careens into the side of the road.

ON THE CARRIAGE, Benedict steadies himself, jumps up and pulls his weapon. As the carriage enters the covered bridge, Benedict looks forward, over the top of the carriage, to see...

68 EXT. COVERED BRIDGE -- NIGHT

68

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON, ERICKSON, LAWTON, BENEDICT)

THE TIME VORTEX spins at the far end of the bridge. Hamilton drives the carriage straight for it.

BENEDICT stares at it, transfixed by the horrific beauty of what he sees.

THE CARRIAGE moves faster, heading for the vortex.

HAMILTON drives the team hard.

AT THE REAR OF THE BRIDGE, a second time vortex forms quickly and spreads to meet the far end of the bridge, as it did the first time.

WIDE SHOT as THE CARRIAGE crosses the bridge and pulls into the time vortex.

THE TWO VORTEXES meet, enveloping the carriage.

CLOSE ON BENEDICT as he CRIES OUT.

THE CARRIAGE disappears into the merging vortex.

WIDE SHOT as we HEAR BENEDICT'S CRIES ECHO TO SILENCE as the time vortex dissolves.

CLOSE -- THE ROADBED

As BENEDICT'S WEAPON drops to the roadbed, spinning to a stop.

BACK TO SCENE

After a beat, we see an empty bridge. The RAIN DISSIPATES and we HEAR ONLY the SOFT RUSTLE OF LEAVES in the wind, and the CHIRP OF NIGHT CRICKETS.

69 EXT. ROAD TO COVERED BRIDGE -- CONTINUOUS
 (ERICKSON, LAWTON)

69

Erickson and Lawton continue to stare at the now empty bridge. A SNIFF from Erickson. She turns and buries her face in Lawton's shoulder. The CRICKET CHIRPS CONTINUE. We SEE the FULL MOON as it illumines the scene.

LAWTON
 Guess they made it back safely.

ERICKSON
 (through the tears)
 Huh?

LAWTON
 You're still here. No "Rankin Paradox"
 for us.

She laughs through the tears. They turn and begin walking toward the bridge.

ERICKSON
 I wonder what happened to Benedict?

HOLD for a beat as they step on to the bridge.

LAWTON
 Oh, I'm sure he's got what he
 deserves.

And we CUT TO:

70 EXT. COLONIAL TOWN SQUARE -- DAY
 (BENEDICT, COLONIAL OFFICIAL, TOWN CRIER)

70

CLOSE -- ON BENEDICT, as he yells in protest. We PULL BACK to SEE a TOWN CRIER as he rings his HAND BELL and shouts out:

TOWN CRIER
 Madness! Madness in Virginia!
 Attempted assault on Franklin and
 Washington is punished today!

BENEDICT is fastened hand and feet into a set of WOODEN STOCKS by TWO COLONIAL OFFICIALS.

BENEDICT
 Let go of me! I have my rights! Let
 me out of here, you fools! I am an
 American citizen!

One of the officials clasps an old-fashioned padlock into place as the Town Crier continues to RING his bell.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

70

COLONIAL OFFICIAL

No...

(peers closely at him)

...you are a mad man!

And so Benedict remains in the stocks, right where he belongs.
We HOLD FOR A BEAT, then we DISSOLVE TO:

71 **EXT. VIRGINIA PASTURE -- AFTERNOON**

71

(ADAMS, HAMILTON, FRANKLIN, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON)

CLOSE -- THE BRANCHES of a LARGE SHADE TREE, a reprise of
SCENE #7, but with the changes as noted.

As CAMERA LOWERS, the carriage COMES INTO VIEW, alone under
the tree. As before, the carriage, the horses, and Hamilton's
rain slicker are GLISTENING WET from the storm. We HEAR the
last of the THUNDER from the covered bridge scene as the
SOUND ECHOES TO SILENCE.

INTO VIEW: the horses are munching quietly on the grass that
grows beneath the tree. It's a quiet, warm, beautiful spring
day. The BIRDS are CHIRPING and the BEES are BUZZING.

IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT is Alexander Hamilton. He is asleep,
the reins still in his hands. He SNORES. A FLY BUZZES around
his nose. He sleepily waves it away.

THROUGH THE CARRIAGE WINDOWS we SEE WASHINGTON and FRANKLIN,
also asleep. Next to them we SEE ADAMS and JEFFERSON, also
asleep with their heads leaned against the windows of their
door. All at once, they wake up, instantly alert, this time
with no ad lib cries of surprise. They look from one to
another, almost afraid to speak.

ADAMS

A dream, gentlemen. I had the most
amazing dream.

JEFFERSON

Strange... I, too, dreamt a dream.

FRANKLIN

(pulls out his watch,
looks at it)

We seem to have spent... about half
the day sleeping. Most peculiar...

WASHINGTON

The understatement of the age, sir.

(MORE)

Holding his sword, Washington extends it to the roof of the
carriage. He knocks on the roof three times with the sheathed
sword. Jefferson knocks with his walking cane.

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

71

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)
Hamilton! Mr. Hamilton, sir!

Hamilton wakes. He looks around quickly. Then he turns, looks over toward where the tavern should be.

HAMILTON'S POV -- TOWARD THE AREA WHERE THE TAVERN STOOD

There's nothing there, just an empty field.

HAMILTON (O.S.)
Don't ask!

BACK TO SCENE

HAMILTON looks from his perch in the driver's seat down to the men in the carriage.

HAMILTON (CONT'D)
I had... a dream, too. It was vivid,
sir. But even now it fades... to
nothing. Nothing at all.

CAMERA PULLS BACK to a WIDE SHOT beneath the tree. We SEE the carriage with Hamilton in the driver's seat and the other Founding Fathers inside.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)
No... maybe it was... everything.

And the horses munch quietly on the grass that grows beneath the tree.

ANGLE - ON WASHINGTON, IN THE CARRIAGE

WASHINGTON (O.S.)
I dreamt... of the future blessings
of America, I think.
(long thoughtful beat)
No country upon earth ever had it
more in its power to attain these
blessings than United America. Much
to be regretted indeed would it be
were we to depart from the road which
Providence has pointed us to so
plainly; I cannot believe it will
ever come to pass.

He shakes himself out of his revelry.

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED: (2)

71

BACK TO WIDE SHOT OF THE CARRIAGE

WASHINGTON (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Gentlemen... enough delays! We have certain urgent matters of state that need our attention.

We HEAR the KNOCK of Washington's sword on the roof of the carriage as the others WALLA "Hear, hear!" and the like.

It's a quiet, warm, beautiful spring day. The BIRDS are CHIRPING and the BEES are BUZZING. HAMILTON CRACKS THE REINS across the back of the horses, and the carriage pulls away from the tree. As the carriage pulls out, on the luggage rack at the back of the carriage we SEE the unconscious form of ARNOLD BENEDICT sprawled across the luggage. And then we CUT TO:

72 **INT. HAMILTON'S CARRIAGE -- CONTINUOUS**

72

(ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON, WASHINGTON)

WE'RE MOVING as Franklin stirs, sitting on his bench seat uncomfortably. He reaches behind his back and pulls out an object that he holds JUST BELOW THE FRAME LINE.

FRANKLIN

Humph... Gentlemen, what do you make of this?

A look of puzzlement crosses all of their faces. They all ad lib "I don't know!" or "What the devil?" and the like. Franklin lifts the 21ST CENTURY SUNGLASSES INTO THE SHOT. Each of the Founding Fathers stare at the sunglasses. Franklin puts the sunglasses on and we CUT TO BLACK.

ROLL END CREDITS and CLOSING THEME MUSIC.

END OF ACT THREE

EPILOGUE FOUR

After (or as) CREDITS PASS, we HEAR a CELL PHONE RING, then the CLICK OF A LIGHT SWITCH as we CUT FROM BLACK TO:

73 INT. STRYKER'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT
(STRYKER)

73

STRYKER has switched on the lamp beside her bed, a CARTOON CHARACTER piece based on the BUM and MUSICIAN characters from our "POCKET CHANGE" animated short. Stryker wears red silk pajamas. A PAIR OF BUNNY SLIPPERS is on the floor beside the bed. Next to the lamp is the RINGING CELL PHONE and an ALARM CLOCK that reads just after 2 o'clock in the morning.

Stryker reaches for the cell phone on the table, yanks the charging cord from the phone, flips it open and answers it.

STRYKER
(wiping the sleep
from her eyes)
Stryker... and it'd better be good.

Stryker slips on the bunny slippers as the dialog from the next scene progresses.

74 3333333333INT. SALLY'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT
(ERICKSON, LAWTON, ADAMS, FRANKLIN, HAMILTON, JEFFERSON,
WASHINGTON)

74

Sally sits in a tall, wing-backed leather chair. The soft glow of a lamp illumines her figure. She wears outdoor type clothing. She speaks on a wireless speaker phone, not a cell phone.

ERICKSON
Agent Stryker?

INTERCUT BETWEEN THEM.

STRYKER
(instantly alert)
I know that voice!

ERICKSON
It's Sally Erickson.

STRYKER
And it's after the election, Miss
Erickson. The assignment's over.

ERICKSON
I know. The people have spoken.

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED:

74

STRYKER

That's correct, Miss Erickson. First write-in presidential candidate in American History. Franklin won by a landslide. Too bad he had to return.

ERICKSON

Uh... actually.

LAWTON kneels INTO THE SHOT, leans into the speaker phone.

LAWTON

Lawton here. Speaking of the election, the powers that be...

Sally pulls the phone away from Lawton.

ERICKSON

God... the "Legislator of the Universe"... whoever... whatever... somebody... wants to set things right.

BACK TO SCENE

as we INTERCUT BETWEEN them.

STRYKER

Would you please stop babbling?

ERICKSON

We've got some more work to do.

STRYKER

We? What are you talking about?

ERICKSON shoots a look to Lawton, then turns her head up slightly to SEE...

CAMERA WIDENS to REVEAL the Founding Fathers, dressed in their 18th century finest and standing grimly in a semicircle behind the wing-backed chair as Lawton TURNS THE LIGHT OF A GOOSE-NECKED LAMP TOWARDS THEM. And as the LIGHT ILLUMINES the Founding Fathers...

ERICKSON

(sing-song, like the little girl in *Poltergeist*)
They're ba-a-ck. General Washington wants his name taken off our capitol. And Benjamin Franklin... he's here to take office.

We HOLD FOR A BEAT, then we CUT TO BLACK.

THE END