

Eleanor and Franklin Let It All Hang Out
In A Remote Location

Characters

Eleanor

Franklin

Others

Margarite LeHand - Missy

Lorena Hickok - Hick

Louis Howe - Louie

Earl Miller

Joe Lash

*

Sarah Roosevelt

Marion Dickerman

Nancy Cook - Nan

Anna Roosevelt

Lucy Mercer / Rutherford

Elizabeth Shoumatoff - Portrait Painter

Alice Suckley - FDR Cousin

*

General Marshall

Col Bissell - Army Intelligence

Col Boyer - Army Intelligence

Act One

#1	Eleanor -	ER
#2	Opening Statements	ER, FDR
#3	Lucy	FDR, ER, Sarah, Howe
#4	Breakout	ER, Howe
#5	Separate Lives	FDR, Howe, Missy, ER Nan, Marion
#6	The Governor	FDR, Missy, Earl
#7	Eleanor and Earl	ER, Earl
	1932	
#8	Nomination	Howe, Nan
#9	The Campaign	ER, Hick
#10	Christmas	ER, Hick
	1933	
#11	Assassination	ER, FDR
#12	Tuesday, February 28, 1933	FDR, Missy
#13	Wednesday, March 1, 1933	ER, FDR
#14	Inauguration	ER and Hick

Act Two

#1	Franklin	FDR, Hick, Earl, Lucy
#2	The First Term –	FDR ER
#3	Captured by Pirates	ER Earl
#4	The Second Term — Eleanor Red Hot 36 - 40	Hick ER FDR
#5	Hello Joe 39	ER Lash
#6	Third Term 41 – 44	Lash
#7	Reconciliation – Not 1942	FDR ER
#8	Camp Follower	ER Lash
#9	April 12 - Dispatched	FDR ER Marshall Officers
#10	Pacific Rendezvous 1943	FDR Lucy Anna ER
#11	Death in the Afternoon 1945	FDR, Lucy, Alice, Schumatoff Anna ER
#12	Closing Statements	ER and FDR

Set

The basic set is his / her dumpy, Spartan, bed sitters in the Great Beyond

- Hers – cot – small table and typewriter – luggage for traveling
- His - somewhat larger bed - table for stamp collection – cocktail service – radio
- A few scenes call for an elegant interior

Numerous projections of photos, news clippings, documents, movie clip on a rear projection screen are in integral part of the story and set.

Style

The style is a recreation of 30s WPA sponsored show of topical skits with projections of news stories. These were famous in the 30s and absorbed the talents of many unemployed theatre and news people. A number became quite controversial for their alleged commie politics.

Modern technology is ripe to re-create and improve upon this mode of theatre. The text is only half the show. There are thousands of photos and available news headlines / stories of the Roosevelt's that can be fashioned into a backdrop and illustration of many of the incidents referred to. It is intended to develop this fully, to expand the 'drama' by expanding the info offered, to add a sense of documentary 'truth' to the tale.

The Appendix lists, scene by scene, the materials required. Where **Projection** appears in text the item is listed. There is considerable flexibility here. Consider the Appendix a first draft. In many cases the available photo is attached.

Footnotes

Footnotes for a play script are ... not the norm! They are here to bring home the point that story told is 'true' - the events happened pretty much as recounted. Words are spoken that have been crafted by the playwright, to illustrate his theory of events.

The general intention is that the Footnotes could morph into Programme Notes for the audience. Perhaps they are too elaborate, perhaps not. There is much editing that could be done here. Hopefully the Footnotes read as a very short and entertaining history lesson.

I am concerned that the story is so complicated that an audience might not follow the action on stage without reading the footnotes. But I see the intelligent audiences at Shaw and Stratford gobbling up Notes that are increasingly elaborate.

My Point of View

My general topic is sex and politics. I know of no probative generalizations on the subject. This is just one very interesting story on the subject.

I dissent from the establishment view that the Roosevelt's marriage was a unique and inspiring partnership, that ER was the embodiment of human kindness and FDR was a lonely, courageous and brilliant man. I think their marriage was a life-long and treacherous battle. I think he was a vain, arrogant glad hander with a great voice and she was passive-aggressive, selfish and a moralistic bully.

I happen to admire ER's recovery from sexual doormat to sexual titan. I started out inquiring whether she really was a lesbian (a good thing) then whether she fucked or cuddled or just ogled her boy toys in mid-life and old age.

I happen to believe ER fucked with Earl Miller, or had some pretty serious sex fun with him off and on through her life. Good for her - and him! I believe she a petting affair with Hick that was short lived as she saw official duties making such things impossible. And that she got nothing but hugs, maybe some groping, from Joe Lash but dreamed of a lot more. I agree with the various writers who see/saw the relationship as a substitute for her failed relationships with her children. I think most modern thinkers would think the sexual dimensions to this type of relationship 'disturbed'. In today's world she would be roasted. I can't believe someone as smart as him was not aware. I think Lash exploited manipulated her passion for his personal and political purposes. Who was the 'victim'? I don't think anybody. And I think this sex driven relation with Lash, had a political impact ten times her messing around with Earl had. In politics sexual desire can be as influential as inappropriate coitus can be destructive.

The history of their marriage is disgraceful.

In 1918 getting caught cheating on his wife was a minor matter for FDR compared to how he handled it. FDR refused to leave ER for Lucy Mercer because he thought it might spoil his chances to be President. This was utterly selfish. ER offered him his freedom but did not walk. She stayed when it was clear she was only there for appearances. She was a fool. And he took advantage of it.

Then FDR got polio. While he was potent, supposedly, after that, he was out of the market. He remained in craven need of the flattering attention of beautiful women and used his position to get it, starting with the gullible, young Missy LeHand, and moving on through Cousin Daisy, Princess Martha, Betsy, wife to son James, Dorothy Schiff and certainly Lucy Mercer. It was and is a pattern of narcissistic indulgence and exploitation that would be roundly condemned in the

modern world if the pattern were known. It is shocking that he is treated so well by various writers.

His polio, a twist of fate, set ER free. She made a new life for herself, but inside shell of this phony marriage. It was kind of her not to walk on the crippled FDR in 1922. She sunk roots in the Village and became, if not a lesbian, a sister in spirit. Good for her. And a powerful political operator, a writer and teacher, in an era when a working woman who was not a wife was plain weird. Great.

But in 1928, when Missy LeHand moved right in to the Governor's Mansion, why did she stay? She had her own funds. Her own life. The truth would seem to be she was happy to take advantage of his rising political star. She now exploited her formal status as 'Mrs.' Because it brought her political power and she liked it.

Her famous modesty was in my opinion, an effective cover for an extremely passive aggressive personal and political operator. The milk of human kindness on Tuesday had sharp elbows on Wednesday and I love her for it.

She followed him to the White House and was a thorn in side for the rest of his years, a 'pill' for a *bon vivant* like FDR. She was excluded from cocktail hour. He barred the door between their rooms. They dined together mostly on formal occasions. But she accomplished a lot as the Staff nag. Her politics were far more progressive than his and she pressured where and when she could, often with good effect (from my political point of view). The country loved her and he used her politically when he wanted a 'human face'. And she took advantage of this for her own political purposes. I certainly admire her 'purposes'.

But she was unstable and reckless in her personal life in the White House years and FDR did a good job coping. What choice did he have? That he betrayed her by resuming with Lucy Mercer is of as little consequence as that she established a repressed relationship with Joe Lash, a young guy half her age.

The offer of reconciliation by FDR in 1942 shows the depth of his manipulative cynicism – to invite her back while he seeing Lucy secretly in the White House. How far are we prepared to go to indulge or forgive because of his handicap or the pressures of his position?

And from this tangle of tortured, ugly, frustrated, covert and repressed sexual relations came some good and some great politics.

Who was the 'greater' political figure? In my opinion it was ER. Numerous politicians of the era could have sat in the White House and the result would have been about the same. But ER pushed this Administration further the left than otherwise conceivable. And she left the world with a set of expectations of active government and civil rights that exceeds the good effect of FDR's minor amelioration of the 30s depression.

Should we conclude that the political opportunities and moral duties FDR and ER confronted as they came to power overwhelm judgment about personal relations? Were their ugly personal

rivalry the engine of political greatness? Was ER's lust for Joe Lash the fuel for her push for civil rights?

Nothing in this story can be certain. And I hope there are enough ambiguities in my view of the facts to allow healthy debate. There are many things to admire about these two persons, but by modern standards we should see their extended marriage as sick.

Act One

Scene One - Eleanor

Lights up, slowly on ER's bedsitter which is on one side of the stage. A modest cot, a table with typewriter, battered luggage in the corner. FDR's bedsitter is dimly visible on the other side.

Someone, at first unidentifiable (Eleanor), is sleeping, tossing and turning and then waking.

Projections / Sound - *We hear and see a handsome couple, (Fred and Ginger??) waltzing gracefully to Gershwin "Cheek to Cheek".*

I'm in heaven, I'm in heaven ...

...

But I don't enjoy it half as much as dancing cheek to cheek.

Projections –

Evolving series of photos of FDR and ER as a young people, up to their weddings. ER looks her best. FDR is extraordinarily good looking, happy days at Campobello, etc.

Eleanor sits up, looks around. The couple has gone. She's in her nightgown and hair net. She drags herself out of bed. She looks in the mirror ... disappointment.

She takes up her field hockey stick and does a few swings. Her back hurts. She's 'over the hill' for her teenage sports triumphs. She smiles wistfully.

Projections

The picture evolve to an unflattering series of photos of ER as she ages.

The sound track evolves – Happy Days Are Here Again - the President is still good looking as he ages.

The sound track evolves into the drum beats of the FDR funeral procession.

Photos show idolization of FDR.

As photos of her age, she gets up, looks at herself in the mirror, sighs. She hangs a picture of FDR on the wall, sighs again.

Her Mood changes to 'determined' and she exits purposefully.

*The **Projection** series continues dimly as Scene One evolves into Scene Two.*

As ER goes off stage and lights dim on her side of the stage lights up, dim, briefly, on FDR's side of the stage, his bed-sitter. There is a table for stamps, a radio, his wheelchair. A basket hangs on the side of bed for ER Memos. He is reading Memos and newspapers.

Lights

Scene Two - Opening Statements

*Eleanor at her typewriter. She is dressed in a \$5 Woolworths off-the-rack sack dress and hairnet.
FDR sits in his wheelchair at a table working at his stamp collection. He ignores her.
ER speaks to the audience.*

Projections

Photos

The photo stream from Scene One evolve to focus on handsome young men and ER good times.

ER

When I told Franklin that I've decided to become a play writer ... and stage performer ... a monologue-ist ... and my subject matter would be my own life ... as a sexual adventuress ... with the 'she males', as Franklin called them ... and my 'boy toys' as you call them today ... and my body guard ... *(defining)* 'a type of muscular person to look after the body ... of another' ... not that I was a 'cougar' type of person ... exactly.

Not that drivel I put in my autobiography.

FDR shakes his head 'no' and looks to the heavens, his scepticism / contempt for the very idea.

But definitely not the 'milk-of-human-kindness-mother-to-the world' *crap* ... with which I have become identified ... for which I have only myself to blame.

No, *'telling all'* ... Franklin Honey ... as the abused and forsaken wife of a vain, dullish, crippled, stamp collector ... who just *happened* to become President.

FDR *(not listening)* Marvellous.

ER Something more up-to-date, for the modern age. I mean to say, *who* will remember Eleanor Roosevelt, the dorky Girl Guide ... *(looking over to FDR and getting more and more shrill)* ... as personally responsible for the Universal Declaration of Human Right which has shaped the course of human history for the better since the end of that war ... that was even better than winning the war itself!

(to audience) I wrote some rather scorching letters and you know it's a shame, Lorena burned all the best.

FDR *(not looking up)* You wrote too many letters!

ER If people like me did not write letters, Franklin, honey, people like you would not have stamps to collect. *(no FDR reaction)*
Franklin, I need to juice it up!
I mean ... at least you've exposed in the history books as a glad-handing, two-faced, dissembling, lying, philandering, bum pinching, lazy, light-weight fraud.
Me ... *(sigh)* I'm still a dorky ... I said that!
I know you know ... just think what *our* real story would be worth, if repackaged with a little zest!

(to the audience) When Franklin said 'marvellous' one time, you could surmise he heard what you said, but didn't give a rat's ass, pardon the expression. Which didn't mean he might not have a strong opinion, at a later time. Or that he might not change his *mind*, several times, between now and then, that later time. Or not. If he said it twice, he just wasn't listening. You could count on the fact it was gone completely from his mind.

Projection

A picture of Earl Miller with ER.

Oh, look at him!

That's Earl, the bodyguard! Yummy, yummy!

FDR *(aside to audience, slyly)* He was the best cock in the navy!

Projection

Lorena Hickok

(looking up, briefly, laughing to himself – with the audience)
Marvellous.

ER *(aside, off stage, cross, to imaginary projectionist)*
That's out of order. Please be careful. And not the ones marked with blue!

Picture disappears

Projection stops.

But then, referring to his 'mind' is ... it presumes ... it wasn't a 'mind' like you and I think. Think of a game of rugby football with those substantial young men in shorts pushing and shoving and tossing the football around, back and forth between themselves, up and down the field they go, in their shorts, dropping it, kicking it, laughing and hugging and having an awfully good time and you can then understand. Franklin's 'mind' is like the football.

(She looks over to see if she has got a rise. Not.)

If he said 'marvellous' three times, it meant, 'you do that and I'll cut your balls off, *you bitch*'. He, of course, would never actually use such vulgar language, or his mother might cut off his ... allowance.

(Aside, to the audience) That's 'exaggeration for effect', permitted to the dramatist ... to make a point ... and journalist, of course, and various 'victims of injustice', to help them raise money for their worthy cause.

Really, his mother would never threaten to cut off his allowance for bad language. You'll learn in the next scene what she would cut it off for.

FDR *(to audience)* Remind to tell you about the time my mother climbed into the school Infirmary when I was in quarantine just to see her poor darling.

ER *(interrupting)* Where was I?

FDR Mother ... cutting of my balls'!

ER Thank you.
Alas, she didn't.

And ... generally speaking, if Franklin said 'marvellous, marvellous' ... that's two times ... pay attention He heard you but didn't, so to speak. It means 'so what'.

And it was the best answer for my purposes. It provided for 'maximum deny-ability'. I could say, truthfully, 'But I *did* tell you', Franklin, darling.' As in ... 'I've taken a fifth floor flat in Greenwich Village for my weekend *flings*'. Or, 'I'm going to Connecticut for the weekend with my bodyguard in the convertible.' Or 'My girl friend is moving into the White House, upstairs, next door to yours!'

FDR *(he seems to be paying no attention but ...)*

Marvellous, marvellous, marvellous.

ER

The best time to get up his nose was about 6:45 in the evening, just after his cocktail hour, after he's had five or six of his dreadful cocktails and before he could eat! Still works. Yesterday, at seven I found him rolling himself through K-Wing on the way to Bingo ... and not in straight line ... and I told him I was writing a play about being the abused, forsaken wife of the vain, crippled etc. etc. ... The abused, forsaken ... bisexual, adventuress with the splendid bodyguard ... etc, etc.

Projection

(suddenly, picture of Earl comes back)

That's Earl. You'll love him!

(she signal 'off'. Projection off.)

Let's get started, before ... he changes his mind.

Lights dim on Eleanor

Lights up on Franklin, in his wheel chair, toasting us with a cocktail glass.

FDR

(counting) Marvellous, marvellous, marvellous, *marvellous*.

Four means ... pay attention.

Do you know, she once said, "Great minds discuss ideas. Average minds discuss events. Small minds discuss people."

I preferred talking about people. Gossip, if you will.... Ideas are hard to understand ... and because ideas are no good without the people to make them happen ... and the best ideas come from the best people. Who are generally the people who don't talk about their ideas ... during cocktail hour.

Now, Babs, she liked to talk about ideas. She thought they made sense. Ideas. Or maybe she enjoyed trying to make them make sense. But then she never had to deal with the Senate!

And now *she* wants to gossip! *(to the audience, confidentially)* I've read the script. It's all gossip, every word.

And I *now* think gossip is a bad idea ... at this stage in our historical careers, so to speak. I mean we're dealing with historians, not Senators.

Mocking himself) The only thing I have to fear ... is Babs herself *alone* on stage!

So, here I am, to keep things *even* and balanced. Franklin Delano Roosevelt plays himself!

ER

(sarcastic) Franklin Roosevelt plays himself! My, my!

Watch very closely, ladies and gentlemen. The great dissembler!

It's different every night.

Why don't you go first, Franklin, Honey.

I'll knit?

FDR *(to the audience – aside)* Beware the women who can knit and talk at the same time!
 (to Eleanor) Thank you. Don't mind if I do.
 Where to begin?

ER Try the beginning!

FDR *(signalling for spotlight, sonorous, unctuous, smiling, 'on')*
 Ladies and gentlemen, this evening I want to tell to you about some very good things about our play writer. Very good things. Outstanding, amazing and wonderful characteristics of which all Americans can be proud.

Did you know she is the niece of President Theodore Roosevelt, Uncle Teddy was the President when I married her. Republican, never mind. Damn fine gentleman! He was at the wedding!

ER Franklin!

FDR I didn't marry you just because your uncle was the ...! But it was feature. Call me ... 'refreshingly candid'!

And, second, she was healthy, fertile and gave birth to six little children ... one died. Two even got into Congress. Later. Fifteen marriages and nineteen divorces! Christmas more complicated than the Yalta Conference.

And Everybody got a Christmas present. She even kept track so they didn't get the same present two years in a row!

And, third, she was energetic! Very much like her Uncle Teddy. My lord, the woman could move! This was very good for me ... when I couldn't get around that easily and we needed to show the flag. She could do five or six speeches a day! Louie Howe ... you'll meet him, no doubt ... taught her to be a not half bad public speaker. He was my main political guy.

ER Who you didn't pay!

FDR It was a shocking thing, in those days, a woman from a proper family up there giving speeches. Damn fine, for me.
 And not only could she talk, she could write. I hated writing. I had people to do that. It started with letters, then speeches, then memos, then newspaper columns, then, goodness gracious, books! Once I said to her 'why don't you put that in a memo, darling, and

leave it by my bed.' And she did! And those memos started appearing with my morning papers! Dozens of them! Damn, if they weren't good! Bleeding heart stuff, of course ... unemployed mums and grannies with no food and sick little kiddies and negroes in the army and veterans with no legs and all the terrible things that happened to those sorts of people ... (*gesturing to himself and slightly choking back the tears*) She was *my* bleeding heart. God, she was *good*!

And four, she was all round *smart* ... and I was (*winking to the audience*) sort of 'dullish'. Many people think that. Did you know that at Harvard they said FDR stood for 'Feather Duster'. Not bad, 'Feather Duster' was elected Editor of the *Crimson* and then President of the you-know-what of, America, *four* times! Mind you, if you're the President and your wife is smarter than you are, you have to ... there are Send are some trips, arrange some distractions, if you know what I mean.

And, fifth, my friends, I want to tell you this, very plainly and truthfully, right from the bottom of my heart, Eleanor was a very, very good politician. She'd say, 'oh, thank god, I'm not important' or 'I'm only here to help my husband' or Don't you believe it! She was a political knuckle duster! It was just too bad she was a woman. She had so many, 'dear' and close friends you couldn't keep track! Like every good politician. Mind you, some of them were very peculiar, 'she-male' types, but they almost all were loyal Democrats. (*Confidentially to the audience*) And those she-male types ... could they get out the votes! Let me tell you! Letting women vote was no mistake, from my point of view! You'd be amazed what women can do - if you let them ... and what they will do - if you don't stop them!

And, sixth ... did you know she would never touch a drop of liquor. Her father was a serious drunk. Very sad! That's not the sixth great thing, per se. The sixth, is this, when I served cocktails ... every day at 5 ... she wouldn't even come in the room! And, frankly, that was a splendid arrangement because she was sooo serious! The woman just could not have a good time!

ER (*confidential, to audience*) I had a drink in the war. But I wouldn't let *him* mix it. And he *still* wouldn't let me come to his stupid, cocktail parties.

FDR Altogether she was ... absolutely marvellous, marvellous, *marvellous*!

Remind me to tell you about the time ... Louie told me this one ... He and Eleanor were driving upstate and they met this farmer and farmer said ... *(signal from off stage)* ... I'll tell you that one a little later. Remind me! Come up for a cocktail, after. *Then* I can talk!

Lights dim on Franklin, but not out, and then up on Eleanor

ER That man was a charmer! He could distract just about anybody from their real question. Like you. What was your real question? See, you can't even remember. Let me remind you.
'Tell us, Mr. President, why did you continue to see your mistress, who happened to be Eleanor's closest friend and social secretary, that's Lucy Mercer, behind Eleanor's back ... after promising her, solemnly, in 1918, that the affair was over!? You wanted Eleanor to stay on as a fake wife ... so you could become President ... after you promised her you would never see Lucy again!

FDR *(disingenuous)* How does a cripple carry on an affair?

ER Secret dinners in the White House. And then you had her down to Georgia in 1945... to die in her arms! Totally humiliating your wife! After she - I - served you faithfully through three terms! *How could you!* How could you!!!! Wasn't that the question?

Lights dim on ER and shift to FDR in next scene

Scene Three **Lucy**

1918

Lights up on Franklin

Projections

Photos of individuals referred to

FDR *(cheery, a mocking sigh, a conspiratorial wink)*
I was just getting to that matter.
(conspiratorial aside to the audience) She was knockout. Good family. Good time!
Yes, it's true; I had an affair with Lucy Mercer when Eleanor and I lived in Washington, the first time, during the First War, when I was Assistant Secretary of the Navy. That job was a very big deal.

I loved it. The same job that her Uncle Teddy started with. You can imagine what I ... I was on the way!
 Eleanor was mostly busy with the children. Women's stuff. And ignore all that stuff about how she was a terrible mother. It was *mostly* not true. I mean after all there was nanny for every last one of those

Lucy was Eleanor's social secretary. A very classy, yes ... *younger* ... lady. What's the issue? (*taunting*,) Anybody here preferred the younger gentlemen?

ER That was after.

FDR After I lost my legs!
 I don't understand women.
 Lucy knew how to ... have a good time. Eleanor ... not. Not at all!
 Her Cousin Alice, Teddy's daughter, use to say, "Franklin deserves a good time. He's married to Eleanor."
 She was wicked.

Lights up on Eleanor, knitting, seated a distance from him so they can be in separate spot lights.

ER Alice thought we were communists! Just remember that, Franklin.

FDR Well, *you* were, weren't you?

ER Not!

FDR (*teasing*) Were so! Well at least a 'traitor to your class'.

ER (*ignoring him, to audience*) Franklin was the best looking man in Washington at that time. Parties every night. I was just not good at all that! Except serving tea. He played golf every weekend. I had five children to look after and seven servants to look after the five children ... six if we include Franklin as one of the children. Being rich in those days was a lot of work. I was very good at telling people what to do.
 He was impossibly handsome when he was younger. How *I* (*gesturing to her ugly body*) ever got to be the one to marry him ... I'll never know.

FDR (*from the dark, to Eleanor*) Yes, how did that happen!? I think I was twelve years when I proposed.

ER You were twenty two.

- FDR Really. It *seemed* like twelve.
- ER It did, didn't it? I was ten! What did we know about anything!
- FDR You were absolutely the most interesting girl I had ever met. The only one who wasn't an empty-headed ninny.
- (*to Eleanor*) Really, you were! You should have gone to Harvard!
(*to the audience*) She wasn't interested at all in cotillions and coming out and tennis and Newport. She loved the poor. She went downtown once a week and taught them how to dance properly. Marvellous. Marvellous! In case they got invited to Newport.
- ER And I was gaga that such a man would even speak to me!
- (*to the audience,*) I had enough money in my own trust accounts ... but my guardian wouldn't let me go to college. I'd never get a husband!
- FDR Maybe she did you a favour. You did more than alright, don't you think ... most people would think.
- ER You knew a doormat when you trod upon it. And you were so damn good looking! Like my father.
- FDR Is it all about 'good looking'?
- ER You, and your mother, kept me pregnant for fifteen years!
- FDR My mother had nothing to do with that!
- ER Yes she did!
- FDR You loved the children!
- ER The question is ... did they love me, or your mother?
- FDR (*sigh*) (*to audience*) Anyhow ... in 1918 Eleanor found some letters from Lucy. In my private luggage. That she was searching!
- ER That I was 'unpacking' ... because you got off the boat ... sick!
(*to audience*) In 1918 when he returned from a trip to Europe, as Assistant Secretary of the Navy ... my, he was excited about that! Going to the Front in his uniform! I was unpacking his things ...
(*to Franklin*) nursing you back to health ... again!

FDR It's true I was sick. The influenza was big in 1918. I had to have it!

ER You got sick whenever you wanted!
Love letters! I was humiliated. *(starts to cry)*
(snapping out of it) They'd be worth a fortune today! And I
burned them!
I said to Franklin, he could have a divorce.

FDR You have made such a thing about this!

ER It was a big thing! The President's mistress!

FDR The 'President's mistress'! I wasn't the President, then!
It was no big deal. Nobody cared but you! You didn't even know
until you started messing with my luggage.

ER Then! I didn't know, *then!* And when I found out, I never
mentioned it publicly.

FDR What are you doing now!

ER I've grown, matured ... evolved ... updated myself!

FDR You didn't even like ... sex.ⁱⁱ

ER Franklin! I had your six children!

(to the audience) The fact is ... I was not attractive. My mother
told me so very early. She did! She was a great beauty and I was
her great sorrow. She didn't give a fig for me! Too busy with
parties! She was just like Franklin! Yes, there you have it. Too
busy with parties!

My poor father, was driven to despair ... and, yes, to drink ... by
her. Uncle Teddy's favourite brother. They hunted together out
west. I wrote a book about him.ⁱⁱⁱ *(ashamed)* Anyhow, you play the
hand you are dealt!

It was strange how it worked out.

*Lights slowly up on an Edwardian style drawing room
at Hyde Park, the Roosevelt ancestral home on the Hudson
Enter Sarah Roosevelt, Franklin's mother.
The three sit stiffly in tense conversation.*

Sarah Divorce, Franklin, is *not* done ... by the Delanos ... or the

better sort of Roosevelts.

FDR Eleanor has agreed to give me my ... I mean, it would be best.

Sarah Best for whom, Franklin? The children, living with Eleanor?

ER I can look after them, mummy.

Sarah Of course you can, darling.

ER I would never prevent you from seeing them, you know that.

Sarah Of course, darling.

ER Once a month for a weekend ...

Sarah *(sudden spotlight on Sarah, vicious)* Shut up, you dweeb!
(then normal light and sweet, to Franklin)
 You propose to marry a ... Catholic?!

FDR Well ... yes.

Sarah What will people think? Even if you don't care about my friends, Franklin, darling, boy, you're the one who want to be a politician! What does that ... that Louie Howe say? *(suddenly in spotlight and vicious)* The dwarf ... *(back to sweet)* ... the one who says he going to make you President? *(spotlight/vicious)* And don't bring him up here to the house to tell me personally!

Lights up on Howe, off to the side.

Howe That's me! FD's mother was an insufferable snob. But *he* wasn't. And I *did* make him President!

FDR He is against ... he says the same thing. But I think ...

Sarah Yes, well ... he is very clever. You always said. People like that *can* be clever.

Howe *(coughing)* I was too! Clever. Also, short and even more ugly than Eleanor! What was it about Franklin?

Lights out on Howe

Eleanor Mummy, I don't want to make Franklin unhappy. She *is* very beautiful. I can't bare to be ... if I'm not wanted.

FDR *(To his mother, indignant)* She's had six children! Look at her!

Sarah Children. Exactly. Well, now you, we, will look after them! That's what happens!

FDR Eleanor ... doesn't really want ...

Sarah Eleanor will do her duty! And so will you!
Franklin, I will not be contradicted on this!
(Firmly, aside, to audience) Or anything!
(To FDR) It is for your own good.
If you leave the children, I will cut off your funds and I will disinherit you!

FDR *Wew+Xwadc!!!*

Sarah I have spoken!

ER But I don't want to ...

Sarah You will do what you are told!

ER I can't bear ... I won't ... I couldn't stand ... if Franklin is ... with another ...

Sarah Franklin will not see this Lucy ever again! Will you Franklin! Will you!

FDR Ah ... Ah ...

Sarah Franklin will never see her again or he will ... find his financial situation, dire!
Eleanor sighs
And, Eleanor, darling, you don't need to ... if you don't want.
Franklin, Eleanor has done enough of her wifely duty by you. Do you understand? Do I make myself clear! Franklin can stay here with me, Eleanor. I will see to it that he doesn't bother you, darling.

FDR Yes, Mummy.

Lights out on the drawing room scene and up on Franklin, stage front, left.

No sex?! No sex. How smart that was! ^{iv} Strategy wasn't Eleanor's strong suite! I was thirty five. I was still very good looking. Anyhow, I was trapped. The Presidency was at stake, or so I believed at the time. And ... I was right! I told Lucy, Eleanor would not give me a divorce. *(caught in a lie, to the audience)* I couldn't tell her *my mother* wouldn't permit it! How humiliating! She would never have seen me again! And I ... never saw her again ... *not*, that Eleanor knew about ... until after I died. ... I don't mean I saw Lucy after I died ... I mean ... We were very careful. No letters! Well ...

Lights fade on FDR.

ER

(from the dark) But not careful enough!

Projection - *Lights slowly rise on a dim scene, a photo backdrop of the famous statue, 'Grief', in the Rock Creek Cemetery in Washington. Eleanor is sitting in front on bench, as she did often at the time of the breakdown of her marriage.*

At the time I felt very sorry for myself. I use to go to Rock Creek Cemetery and sit in front of this statue, called *Grief*. Henry Adam put it there this after his wife, Clover ... I met her once ... she was a very talented photographer ... she committed suicide ... when she ... found out about *her* husband ... *(She says this loudly, in Franklin's direction.)* ... who was unfaithful. *(sarcastically)* The *poor* husband, so sad for him ... he commissioned this lovely sculpture ... as a memorial except that it doesn't even mention the wife! What a fool ... was Clover. Wasting herself on a man!

FDR

(from the dark) Don't you think, Babs, she was over-reacting?

ER

(to Franklin) I can forgive ... but I can not forget!

FDR

I'd say you did a good job of getting even!

ER

You promised you'd never see her again.

FDR

But I was the President!

ER

(breaking off the bickering with FDR and turning to the audience)
When it sunk in that I was trapped in this phoney marriage, totally

alone ... We were formally correct, we had a grand trip together to Europe and all that ... but no more sex. No more children.

Anyhow ... somehow ... I determined to change my life. ... I decided that I would take control. Life is meant to be lived! Don't ask me where the idea came from. I just don't know. Only that I would not be a domestic drudge to a feckless, pretty boy who fucks the servants! (*she is shocked at first with her vulgar vehemence and then delighted.*)

And how do you take control of *such* a life?
What is the first rule? Get all new servants.

We had ten. Well, there were seven of us! Ten not including the children's tutors!
You laugh. Anyhow all the servants were all chosen by his Mummy. *His* mummy! They answered to her and they treated *me* as a child!

After the first rule ... 'Never let your husband forget it', the second rule, of a successful life is, 'Never let your mother-in-law hire your servants'. That's *two* good things you've learned from me tonight!

And I hired all Negro servants just for good measure! They were very, very, nice ... *to me*.
Mind you, I was afraid they might touch me at first. But I got over that. I learned to touch ... and kiss ... them. Then I couldn't stop! I made a show of it when Franklin was President. That was a lark. They got their money's worth out of Eleanor Roosevelt! Mind you, just a fraction of what America owed them. But that's another story.

I learned to type! No more 'social secretaries' in my house! At least not till the White House. Then I hired a dyke.^v

And I learned to cook! I even did a five course dinner all by self – once! Just to say I could. After that, as you may have read, I specialized in scrambled eggs ... in a silver chaffing dish for Sunday supper. Try it! But *don't* put the silver dish on the burner of the stove.

Did I mention that Franklin was the Democratic candidate for Vice President – the Democratic Party – in 1920. With James Cox. Ever heard of him? Chosen on the forty-fourth ballot! Thank goodness I stayed home from that convention!
They lost to Mr. Harding. Franklin loved the campaign.

It was the first time women could vote. He wanted the Mrs. along on the campaign. Imagine that. You should have seen the women swarming all over him!

FDR *(slyly)* They pinched me!

ER Not hard enough!
He's the man I ever saw who could flirt from a moving train. He was what you now call an 'air head' in those days.

FDR And two years later, I got polio! Damn bad luck. Not much action after that! Well ... more or less ... sort of ...
And ... *she* got me back! *(some bitterness)* Just the way she wanted, too – helpless! At first she was all over my crippled body, massage, sponge bathes, you name it.^{vi}

Say, let's just forget about Eleanor until Scene Four.
How about a very dry Manhattan? With a splash of Vodka and a twist of lime and a teaspoon of Tabasco! My very own invention!
Franklin looks about for an answer, and starts to mix drinks.

Marvellous!
Then you decide who's hard done by! I mean, who lost his legs!

ER But *not* his little dingle dangle.

FDR *(losing it slightly)* And who took up with the ... down in the Village, and the body guard ...
and that commie shit disturber, what was his name?

ER 'Student organizer'. Joe, was his name.

FDR Ya. Right! Hello Joe!
... and the doctor?

ER David Guerswitsch.^{vii} He had tuberculosis.

FDR *(quickly shaking off his moment of self pity and handing the audience a cocktail)*
Say, did I ever tell you about ... Try this ... the Christmas that ...
Walter? ... Winston ... Churchill ... from England ... came over for the holiday? Right after Pearl Harbour. He stayed with us in the White House? Now there was a man who could hold his liquor!

ER *(to audience)* Such a charmer! 'Have a cocktail!' 'Walter Churchill'! The weasel!

Watch what he puts in your drink! It's never the same! Don't ask me how I know!
And, yes, Mr. Churchill did hold a lot of liquor.

Lights

Scene Four - Breakout

1920s

ER continues.

Louie Howe strolls on stage, coughing.

ER They hired Margarite LeHand as a secretary for Franklin for the campaign. She could type like the wind and drink cocktails and laughed at his inane jokes. We brought her back to help out after Franklin got polio. She never left and was a great help. The children couldn't say Miss LeHand and she became 'Missy' to the whole family. She lived with us all the time looking after Franklin until *she* had *her* stroke in 1941. In the second Act. Just before the war. And they dragged her out of the White House, a babbling idiot. And guess who looked after the sick Missy? Franklin wouldn't even take her calls. She was heir to half his estate. I insisted.

FDR It was very upsetting. There was a war.
Thank you, for that.

ER I was Wife No. 1. She was Wife No.2. She did all the work. It was perfect. I had other fish to fry.

 And that's the third rule. Have your rich feckless husband, *hire another* wife ... to do all the work, so you can have a good time ... with your body guard.

Louie (*sitting down beside her, teasing*) Or the she-males from Greenwich Village.

ER Not your style. Louie.
We're coming to that.

Louie stands – talks to the audience

Louie I figured FDR could be President and I got to work. I was crazy for him. I kept at it even after the polio. Eleanor ... well ... damn ... she was smart. She started out *against* women voting! Until she figured *she* – as a woman - could deliver more women voters than the Boss ... because there were far more women to appeal to than the squealers who swarmed all over him, women had real problems! She could too. The Boss began to see her in a whole new light.

ER I started getting active in politics all by myself. I joined ... the League of Women Voters, the Women's Trade Union League ... I went to the International Congress of Working Women.

I met some very interesting women. I mean women with brains! Who did so much! We were .. 'Bolsheviks'... to some people.

And then Franklin got polio. At Campobello. I'd call it 'the cottage' but 14 bedrooms is not what normal people call a 'cottage'. Not that I knew any normal people in those day. But I'd read about them, what they think and so on. Franklin's mother did not approve of normal people, and so ... the enemy of your enemy is your friend.

The polio was at the end of the summer of 1921. It was dreadful. I was the only one there to look after him. And I did! Food on trays. Sponge baths. He couldn't get out of bed ... and I had a house full of people. Eighteen bedrooms!! At Campobello. ... The first doctor was awful. Louie got another. I was massaging those legs till my arms ached. I didn't know what to do! I was his nurse. I cleaned his shit!!! I was his mother!!

Strange ... not strange ... I liked it! He was much more appealing when he was helpless! I had *control* for the only time in my life! I could *do something for him*. He needed me!

ER stands aside.

Attendants bring in FDR on a stretcher. Howe and

Missy fuss over him.

FDR sits up.

FDR Yes ...and two years later the Feather Duster got polio! Damn bad luck! Not much action after that! Well, not so much. Difficult. Let's not talk about it.

(to Eleanor) Eleanor, two minutes ago you didn't want to have anything to do with me. You are such a moral sneak!

(to the audience) She is *distracting* you! Yes she is! What's the real question for this play? Who is the *real* victim? That is question! Who is the *real* hero! Who has no legs!

FDR collapses back on the stretcher and they carry him off

Louie I arranged to bring him back from Campobello, in secret, so the public won't know how bad ... We weren't sure he would live. He was determined he'd get better.

ER His mother wanted him at Hyde Park. *She* would look after him ... in seclusion. Perfect for her! An invalid son, just like her invalid husband!

Louie But Eleanor and I knew he wanted to stay in the City. Franklin had this dream he would recover and get back into politics. He was my only chance, seemed slim. But

ER Recover! That was a pipe dream! Good thing I kept my mouth shut that subject!
But you know, the polio brought him down ... to earth. He learned how to fight to survive, like normal people, poor people, ugly people. (*She starts to cry*) Made a 'man of the people' out of him! Slightly. Better than nothing. Well ... if he hadn't been my husband I would have voted socialist – against him.^{viii}
What's that, the fourth lesson? 'Polio is good for you'.

Anyhow Sarah retreated back up the Hudson to Hyde Park and we got nurses and servants and doctors for everything in New York ... the first time I beat his mother at anything! Louie kept up the political correspondence ... and ... I started appearing *publicly* ... on *his* behalf. Well, at first, it was ... on *his* behalf. But, first, I had to learn how to speak! ...

Lights out, then a spotlight comes up sharply on ER standing a lectern. Howe is seen dimly on the other side of the stage.

ER is awkward and fumbling in the blinding light.

Howe Stand up straight. Look into the lights. They won't hurt you.

ER (*giggling*) Where are you?

Howe It doesn't matter.
Start.

ER Four score and seven years ...

Howe I can't hear you.

ER Four score ...

Howe Louder. There are people talking all over the place. Sound like you own the place.

ER *(As she gets louder her voice goes shrill)* ... Four score ... four score ...

Howe Pitch!

ER *(lowers her voice)* Four score ... Four score ... Our fathers brought forth ... our fathers ... our fathers brought forth on this continent ...

Howe Start again. Poise!

ER *(improves)* Four score and seven years ago our fathers ... and mothers ... brought forth on this continent a new nation conceived in liberty and dedicate to the proposition that *everyone* is ...

Howe 'Everyone!?' Get off it Eleanor! Women! Niggers!?

ER EVERYONE ... LOUIE!!!!

(now, with confidence) Everyone IS created equal ...

Lights dim and then up again on the accomplished speaker, Eleanor Roosevelt. As lights fade we hear Louie say:

Howe *(aside to ER)* Keep it brief and ...tell a joke.

Announcer I am proud to present ... Mrs. Franklin Roosevelt.

Applause

ER I'm so glad you could join me this evening. My husband has asked me to convey his deep appreciation for all your support.

When your name is Roosevelt, things can get busy at election time. Yes, it's true, that *is* my cousin, running for Governor, against my good friend, Al Smith! Don't blame me. It's a fine family but some members do get confused.

Isn't it grand to be a Democrat. You know, my heart goes out to loyal Republicans. It must be so difficult.

Your first candidate is a ... XXXXX

GET THE QUOTE

Laughter, applause.

Franklin and I want to ask you to join us in pledging a little money, well, for some of you, a lot of money, you know who you are, for the Women's Committee for the next election. I need a little help ... to help my cousin find his way back to Oyster Bay!

Before I sit down, I want to say just a few serious words about the importance of a World Court

*Fade,
Lights.*

Scene Five - Separate Lives

1927

Set is 1920s drawing room, in the Roosevelt's 65nd Street townhouse, NYC. As rich looking as budget allows. Furniture is pushed to the side so a set of parallel bars can sit in the middle of the room. Franklin struggles mightily along the parallel bars trying to work his legs – and simultaneously engages in detailed strategy with his two assistants. Missy LeHand and Louie How are with him, talking business. Just reading the script you would miss FDR's remarkable ability to do two difficult things at once. The briefing is rapid fire. He gets it all.

Howe The Missus will go to the Buffalo dinner and then see that farmers' group in Elmira.

FDR In Buffalo ...tell her to ask Carmine diGratso, Ward ??? Seven

Missy (*efficiently*) Six.

FDR ... about his mother. One hundred, April 10.

Missy One hundred *and two*.

FDR No!
(*turning back to Howe*) One hundred and *two* in April.
He likes Jack Daniels, straight.

Howe *You !!!* tell her he likes Jack Daniels - straight.

FDR laughs

Howe I've briefed her on the Boundary Fences Act amendments and Farm Equipment Coops and the Dairy Marketing.

FDR Splendid!

Missy (*touching FDR to help him*) She'll be back in the city Monday morning to teach, and then to the Democratic Women's Steering Committee. And she's having a fund raiser here, Thursday. She says you are to appear, briefly, at 4:45, max 15 minutes.

FDR Fifteen minutes!

Howe She has dinner and the theatre with Miss Cook.

Missy Miss Cook has it all worked out.

FDR Now there is a splendid woman! Leave it to her and every woman in the State would vote Democrat.

Howe Then they're all going – Miss Cook, Mis Dickerman - to Connecticut to Ester Lape's and Miss Reed's place Then the three are going back to Val Kill ... then

FDR Now there's a party! Love'em all! Love 'em all! A Sunday in country with the 'girls'!

Missy She will be back in the city the following week late Sunday night -

Howe For a meeting with a publisher about another article about ...
And a radio interview.

FDR *(to Howe, joking)* She's more famous than I am! Say, who do you
work for?

Howe She's one smart cookie!

Missy You can see her for lunch, Tuesday. If I book it now! After her
teaching!

FDR Invite her to lunch. But don't let her ...

Missy Nice try. She'll bring egg salad sandwiches for three and sweet
pickles ... no matter what I say.

Howe I've done two letters - the Colorado Ranch Democrats and the
Boston Back Bay group - on the League of Nations.

FDR *(with twinkle)* And are they the same?

Howe Sort of, more or less. Not exactly. You're 'against it, depending' in
Colorado. And 'for it, but not now.' In Boston.

FDR Show them *both* to Eleanor.

Howe Both! She won't be pleased.

FDR Trust me ... She's 'for it, *depending*' ... on whether she wants me
to be President.

Howe There's no 'depending' with her, Boss.

FDR I'll straighten that out. Send the letters.

Missy And we're cleared to go to Warm Springs, on November 7. Two
months.
(again touching him, the romance between them is clear)

FDR I can hardly wait. Marvellous. Warm! Warm! And the pool! You
know I can actually walk in the pool.

Missy Oh, Franklin! But you *are* making progress.

- FDR How are the bookings? Are we full? We have to make some money, you know! I spent a bundle buying the place!
- Missy All booked – when you are in residence.
- FDR *(proudly)* ‘Dr. Roosevelt’s Spa for the Rejuvenation of Infirmities’!
Tell Eleanor, we’re fully booked all winter. She thinks ... I can’t make a go of it! We’ll show her! *(good natured rivalry)* She does very well with that school of hers, you know.
- Howe The Missus says she might come down for the week of Thanksgiving. But not before. She’s booked solid the first two weeks of November.
- FDR Make sure she has the *far* cottage. Is she bringing Nan, or any of those ...
- Howe What do *you* want?
- FDR What ever makes Eleanor happy for a week. In the far cottage.
- Missy Five days.
- FDR Five days! Hell, invite ‘em all. They smoke cigars! They drink! God love ‘em, those ‘new women! And they vote Democrat!

Lights down on FDR group.
Lights up on Eleanor, Nan, Marion at Val-Kill.
Nan and Marion are a lesbian couple, dressed mannishly, ties etc. They smoke! They cuddle in front of the fire.
Eleanor has tea, chats and knits.

- Eleanor *(reading a note)* It’s from Missy. Franklin invites us all to Warm Springs over Thanksgiving. Either of you want to come with me. I *have* to go, at least for a few days.
- Nan The man is ... remarkable!
Certainly, Darling, I’ll go, just a few days.
- Marion A note from Missy!
Eleanor, you must ... I mean ... his *mistress* writes to *his wife* at the “Honeymoon Cottage”, he calls it, that *he* built for her and *her* ‘*she male*’ friends ... that’s ‘yours truly’, darling ... that he built on his mother’s rather vast country estate, that we should join *them* that’s the husband and the mistress ... at his private hot springs

and polio spa, in Georgia, for the first Thanksgiving dinner of the new owner.

Darling, it's a fabulous play. What happens next?

Nan Do you think it's our 'honeymoon cottage', or *his* honeymoon with Missy, he was referring to?

ER Missy is not a mistress. She works for him.

Marion Ahhh ... I'm glad you cleared that up.

ER The man is a darling, from a distance. As long as you're not looking after him! He couldn't find his socks if he didn't have ... Thank god for Missy!

Marion Missy could move in! That would be fabulous for Act II. Missy, who works for him, and his number one wife and his mother take turns ... finding his socks. Then one day ...

Eleanor I don't do socks annnnnny more! And Missy has moved in down at Warm Springs already.

Nan You don't care, do you?

Eleanor She's moved in because I am too busy to spend all winter down there.

Nan Do you think he'll ever get back into politics?

Eleanor He *is* determined. There is nothing much else in his head. Except learning to walk.

Marion Darling, will you make a spot for him. On *your* ticket?

Eleanor (*mocking*) I couldn't do that! That's Franklin's job.

Nan get up, crosses the room and give ER a neck massage, somewhat sexual. ER's response is dramatic. She drops her knitting.

Nan Relax, Eleanor. You're all tight.

Marion (*She smiles approvingly at Nan.*) He can be President any time as far as I'm concerned.

Eleanor (*lost in thought*) If Mummy could see ...

Marion I've never even seen her over here. Has she ever come over?

Eleanor Once, when my 'friends' were not around!

Marion Do you suppose we could get her to write *us* a cheque for the Red Socialist She-Male Battalion in the Glorious May Day Parade? "Sponsored by Sarah Delano Roosevelt of Hyde Park" – or some such?

*They all laugh.
The massage continues, much more sexual, Marion
smiles encouragement to Nan and leaves the room.*

Eleanor He does love it in Georgia! He thinks he's discovered a cure for polio in that spa.

Nan He has discovered a cure for Franklin in that spa.

Eleanor It's good for him to work with the others ... who aren't going to inherit a thousand acres. And an opium fortune.

Marion Hush, Darling.

Nan All things considered, he is the best we've got.

Lights

Scene Six - **The Governor**

1928

*The Governor's Office – Albany
FDR is at his desk. Missy is very efficiently presenting a
series of things for him to sign. He does, without reading.*

Projection -

Headline – 1928 - FDR squeaks in as Governor of
NY State – Smith defeated in a landslide for Hoover

- Missy She'll be in Buffalo week after next.
- FDR Ask the Missus, *please*, to fix things up with Carmine diGratso! A lovely man, lovely, but we can't just give his cousin then contract to build that new gatehouse! Eleanor is very friendly with his wife. She could ...
And ... we need some pressure about the safety legislation. See if she and Nan can do another round at the Assembly before next month.
- Missy ER will be through here, tomorrow ... I think. Then she's in the city, teaching and then she's driving to the Women's Democratic Club Convention in Syracuse tonight or tomorrow, with Miss Read and Miss Dickerman and ... the others ... and then she's going to Groton to see James, I can't say when, and then back here Friday. Then she's ...
- FDR Is she driving? (*Missy nods*) She was suppose to take a driver! The Governor's wife should not be driving!
- Missy She left on her own. She ... refused the car.
- FDR She has a tendency to bump into things and I am deeply concerned that it not be voters. The Governor's wife can NOT have an accident! In the company of one her 'unique' friends. Not to mention she could be kidnapped.
- Missy Did you have some silly idea you controlled your wife?!
- FDR Where's Sergeant Miller?
- Missy On guard outside. It's his shift. You want him?
- FDR Wasting his time sitting out there! The anarchists are over in the Capital Building.
I am more in danger from Eleanor loose in the streets!

Earl Miller enters.

FDR motions Missy to leave.

Earl and Missy flirt as she exits.

Sergeant Miller ... Earl, my man, how are the pretty girls treating you?

Earl glances at Missy

Earl Good, Governor, real good. (*Giving Missy the eye*) When they have the time.

FDR (*chuckling*) Earl, do a few for me. I need to know ... but don't tell me all the details ... it's still ... you know ... hell, somebody's gotta be having a good time. But, mind, Sergeant ... I keep Missy very busy, Sergeant, very busy.

Earl (*sly grin*) It's still good, Sir. Still very good.

FDR You remember that place in Southampton you took me, in 1918.

Earl The 'navy club', you mean?

FDR After that exhibition fight. Your upper cut! Ya! 'The navy club'. I remember *you* got very drunk. Not me, of course. Those were the days! I appreciate your discretion, Sergeant. Paris. The Western Front. Paris. The Naval Yards.

Earl Paris.

FDR Why were you following you around?

Earl Protection, Sir. Either the Huns or the Republicans ... I can't remember.

FDR Guarding me then was a hell of a lot more interesting than now, don't you think?
Damn fine coincidence we meet up again. In Albany. Damn fine.

Earl Never boring, Boss.

FDR Earl, I have a mission for you, that is fairly *dangerous*, in a way.

Earl You're the boss.
... I can handle myself pretty well. I stay in shape.

FDR A very difficult mission. Requires a man of your ... special skills!

Earl Yes Sir.

FDR I'd consider it a great favour to me.

The party concerned is very ... unpredictable, unusual.

Earl Difficult! Yes Sir. Tammany?

FDR Worse.

Earl Wobblies?

FDR Even more rebellious!

Earl Yes Sir!

FDR I want you to take charge ... as 'bodyguard' ...

Earl I like that

FDR For my wife!

Earl Mrs. Roosevelt?

FDR That the one. She's going to get into some kind of trouble, I don't know what? She drives all round the state ...

Earl The Lady does love that convertible!

FDR She's ... she's ... Earl ... she's got her own money! Which is always trouble, Sergeant. Her own car is just the beginning of the trouble! The company she keeps! Of course that's her business, except now, with politics ... you understand.

Earl Understand Mrs Roosevelt?

FDR That's the one. I think you might be able to handle her, better than I can. And keep her out of trouble. I need her to be presentable.

Earl Yes Sir.

FDR There'll be a little something extra ... for your services.

Earl I'll see to it.

Missy comes back in. Earl exit with a look of resignation to Missy. She closes the door behind him and turns off the desk light.

Missy What did you do to Mr. Handsome?

She start to rub FDR's shoulders. He responds. She hikes up her skirt and sits on his lap. They embrace passionately.

FDR

I gave him a very difficult job. But I know Earl. He can handle it!

Lights

Scene Seven - Eleanor and Earl^{ix}

1930

Eleanor and Earl in riding jodhpurs. They are doing revolver practice. He is teaching how to adjust her aim according to her breathing. He wraps his arms around her to assist. Also shooting from the hip. He demonstrates how to thrust the hip forward for steadiness and aim. He holds her at various point to demonstrate body posture. A very sexy pistol practice.

Projections -Headline - 1930 – Roosevelt
re-elected Governor NY State in landslide

*Photos – ER with revolver
ER and Earl*

Earl

Missy says he might win for President in '32.

ER

He just won the governorship by a landslide! It's a short hop from Albany to Washington. Just ask him. If Mr. Hoover continues as is, a Democrat is a shoo-in. And that nominee could well be my dear Franklin.

My goodness! I haven't called him 'dear' in ten years! Do you really think somebody might shoot me? Wouldn't they prefer to shoot my husband? I could just stand aside.

Earl

When you breathe out, you naturally droop slightly. Fire when you've finished the breathing in.

*Scene Eight**The Nomination***1932 - August**

Howe and Nan Cook in Chicago at the Democratic Party Convention prior to the vote and the arrival of FDR. background – roar of Convention crowd. Howe enters, waving a letter. ^x Nan follows.

Projections - Clippings

- of Roosevelt nomination campaign
 - get Hurst allegations he's an internationalist
 "Roosevelt family set to fly to Chicago for Acceptance"

Howe We need this like a hole in the head!
 We get the nomination, finally ... FD is a shoe in ... and ...

Nan *(reading)* "Franklin has his heart's desire and I am thrown to
 wolves. I simply cannot bear the thought of four, or eight years, in
 Washington, in a gilded cage. I just cannot do that job! I will be a
 laughing stock.
 Earl loves and cares for me! I will leave the country ... become a
 missionary in Africa. Earl will join me.
 Missy can take care of Franklin.
 ER"

Howe Jesus, God save us!
 She doesn't know what's good for her!

Nan Maybe she does.
 I have no idea whether she has given this to the Boss!

Howe I don't think so. He hasn't said anything to me. And, the last
 I heard, she's getting on the plane to fly here with him.
 Burn it!

Nan There are plenty of rumours. About her and Earl.
 Which is hardly surprising. He is very good looking. Not my taste,
 I should say.

Howe I never thought of her as ...

Nan You should see them in private. They can't keep their hands off each ...

Howe Well, Earl is getting married ... next month ... and not to her ...

Nan Does he know?

Howe Not yet.
Who can we get?

Nan For?

Howe For him to marry!
Hyde Park. (*checking his diary*) August ... September ... 12, 19!
Elliott ... best man!

He grabs the letter and tears it up.

Nan She dotes on him.

Howe She can dote on him ... after the election.

Nan What do we tell Earl?

Howe We tell him ... he's getting married ... and smile. And cool it with ER if he knows what's good for him!

Nan I am ... disappointed with ER. We've come so far.

Howe We'll go and meet the plane. And everybody will smile, smile, smile. She knows what side of the toast has the marmalade. Trust me.

Projections - *Photos and clippings of Earl Miller's Hyde Park wedding*

Lights

Scene Nine *The Campaign*

1932

Lorena Hickok comes on stage alone. She puffs a cigarillo as she speaks.

Hick

It was *my* idea, originally, to have someone assigned full time to cover Mrs. Roosevelt during the campaign. I was following the candidate. A top drawer assignment, you can appreciate. I'd just come off the Lindberg case. The editors set up the Mrs. R gig for one of the new girls. But then the bitch buggered off ... and I got stuck with it! I was pissed. What did I know about a Missus. Mine left me to marry a guy. Broke my heart.

I'd met her, Mrs. R, before, of course. Matron stuff. I knew she had a brain. But she kept you at a distance. Not my idea of good time.

So ...we're on the campaign train, tracking all over the f—g country. She was very chatty but I wasn't learning any secrets. She was all about her wonderful husband! She liked her privacy. Why not? But then, what right does a person in her position have to privacy, you know what I mean.

This guy Earl Miller was on the train ... very good looking ... FDR's 'bodyguard'! Ha! Stuck to *her* like fly paper. Now I'm romantically inclined ... hell, I got a dirty mind ... I figure, hey, she wants a poke, a little tussle ... not gonna get it from old Frankie boy, you know what I mean, so why not ... maybe she's paying a little extra for the muscle guy, I mean she is definitely no movie star ... aside from her chin and her teeth and her mouth and her neck and her clothes and how tall she was, she wasn't that bad. Thin. I like 'em thin. Look at me! Hell, I definitely like 'em thin! But, hey, I know nothing about any money ... I mean that kind of thing happened, even back then ...I knew a few guys, but that's another story. The rich buy quality and they buy in bulk.

But then ... Miller got married in the middle of the campaign. At the Roosevelt country house, up the Hudson at Hyde Park, la-di-da, don't you know. Anna as the bridesmaid and Elliott as the best man. No less. He's one of the family, I thought, he can't be the *hey hey*. But, then, there he was, back on the train. Seemed a bit of rough trade to me, but, like I said, I had a dirty mind. Hey, I'm rough trade!

Then I developed this feeling she was not happy about her man becoming the President. I mean politically. But she was along for the ride. Why not? More *power*! She would deny that! Hit me!

And she definitely didn't want to be *Mrs President!* Live in the fish bowl. Serve tea for the Presidents' guests. She'd seen the game when her Uncle was President. And she told once, she had lost FDR in the Washington whorl during the First War. She didn't think she could cut it. Not to mention she liked being Number One with the women Democrats in NYC.

Now I had heard that Mrs R ... I had heard that she was tight with Nan Cook and Marion Dickerman and Ester Lappe and ... the lesbo crowd in Greenwich Village. Turned out to true fact.

Now, she wasn't that type, swish, if you get my meaning. So I'm trying to figure her out.

Her and me got fairly relaxed a couple of times. She's very nice to talk to. Very. One time, after the funeral of FD's secretary's mother ... that's the mother of Missy LeHand, his other wife, number two wife ... the first wife was attending the funeral for her husband, a bit strange And we, Mrs. R. and myself, were coming back on the train and she got me talking about my bastard of an old man, who f—ing raped me ... and I never talk about that that ... she was a very nice lady ... very, very kind, in a machine-like kind of way, and she told me about her bitch of a mother ... and her poor drunk father, well, we got close. She liked me. I liked her. She gave me a few quotes for my stories. We had dinner. It was surprising.

I didn't think I would fall again.

She had so much energy. Amazing lady. I'd tell about the stories I was doing about her. She's give me quotes. No big deal. I'd tell her what to watch out for from the press pack. Then, we were more or less writing the stories together. Well, *yes*, it was a big deal. Very unprofessional ... getting into bed with your subject, so to speak, well, not so to speak.

This is difficult.

One time, we missed the train from Albany, we drove down to the City in her Buick. She really let her hair down. Arrived late, spent the night at my apartment. Let's just say, she was very responsive.

Light dim.

ER sits on stage exhausted and sad watching the news reel and/ or clippings of FDR victory. She cries.

Projections - *clippings of FDR election victory.*

Scene Ten - 1932 - Christmas

ER and Hick cuddling on a couch. A little Christmas tree.

ER Did you ever actually meet Wild Bill?

Hick Once. Granddad wasn't around much.

ER What was he like?

Hick Wild. What were you thinking? Pansy Bill Hickok?

ER I love your eyes.

Hick You're a wild lady.

ER Making up for lost time.

Hick I brought you ... go ahead open it.

*Hands ER a small present which she opens.
It is an sapphire ring.*

ER Hick !!!!! Why it's ... it's gorgeous.
I don't know what to say.

Hick Try it on.
ER puts it on. Hick kisses her.
The good cowboy always gets the girl.

ER This is so extravagant. I can't ...

Hick It was a present to me ... from an admirer ... years ago. I've been keeping it for ... you.

ER (*giggles*) I'll wear it at the Inauguration.

They kiss.

Hick What will you wear?

ER Oh ... God What will I wear?! Don't you start on that!
My best house dress. I'll have laundered and pressed.

Hick And the matching hair net.

ER No, I think I'll wear the blue one.

Hick I'm teasing.

ER I'm sensitive.
Alright, alright, I am going shopping with Anna next month. I will
dress up.

Hick It's not a punishment. Think of it as a passport to ...

ER Don't lecture me about *power and influence*. I'm losing all I've
got. I'm losing my life, my friends, I have to give up my teaching,
my life!

ER starts crying. Hick comforts.

Hick But not yet.

Lights

Scene Eleven **Assassination**

1933 – February

ER and FDR enter stage from opposite directions

Projection - *Headlines Assassination attempt*

ER There you are!
I've seen you since you got back. You're alright? Not everybody
who survives an assassination.

FDR Well, I'd say it was exciting if weren't for poor Mayor Cernack
taking the bullet for me. They tell me he's in serious condition.

ER Oh Dear.

FDR *You* must be more careful, Babs.

ER Me!?

FDR I've got five guards. You ... you refuse to take one.

ER And I will continue to do so. Nobody would want to shoot me!
Besides I have Earl.

FDR Babs, he's married!

ER No, he's no!

She stamps off.

FDR *(hollering off stage)* Missy!

Lights

Scene Twelve **Tuesday February 28, 1933**

*Roosevelt New York City, Apartment, 65th St.
Missy is arranging docs on FDR's desk. Louie Howe
enters.*

Projections

Clipping - "Mrs Roosevelt plans to drive ..."

Howe	Is the Boss down yet?
Missy	He'll be down in a minute. He was up late working on the big speech ... with Mr. Rosenman.
Howe	Where is it. I need to fix it.
Missy	You don't know if anything is wrong with it.
Howe	If Rosenman had his hand in it, I need to fix it! "Nothing to fear ..." great line. Mrs R around? Any sign of that Hickok ... woman?
Missy	No. Mrs. R. is shopping with Anna. Finally. Anna says, 'it's blue'. (<i>Howe is uncomprehending</i>) The dress. <i>The dress</i> . For Saturday.
	<i>FDR wheels himself in He is in ebullient good cheer.</i>
FDR	Blue will be lovely. What are you wearing, my dear?
Missy	I am not to be seen.
Howe	Mornin' Boss. <i>Missy hands FDR a coffee</i> Hoover's people are calling again.
FDR	Marvellous. Marvellous. (<i>chuckling</i>) I'll bet he wants to know whether I'll have a white or a red carnation?
Missy	We put an extra coach on the train to Washington. It will be leaving at Friday night at 9:30 instead of 10.

Howe (sly) Something about some banks.

FDR (chuckling) That man can't do anything right. Those banks should have been closed last week! The first thing I'll do. Don't know what I'll do next.
(taking up the docs to sign, to Missy)
Where is the one for Earl?
(She hands it to him)
(Grandly) Director, Personnel, New York State Prisons. He deserved it. Don't you think? The last appointment I'll sign as Governor.

Missy Actually, I think he wanted to come to Washington.

Howe Too close to Mrs. R. for comfort.

FDR (sly) I never thought of that, Louie. Never. But, it will ... I mean if he's not around, what's to write about.
Does Mrs R know about this?

Missy I assume Earl has told her. But, she doesn't confide in me.

FDR "Nothing to fear but fear itself!" Good line, Louie.
Twenty more bank closures! (grinning) Those damn Republicans are going to ruin the country!
We'll look after things next Monday.

Howe The Hoover people want to talk at 11, Boss.

FDR Where's mother? Does she know the train is leaving earlier on Friday?

Howe This is serious Boss.

FDR Nothing is that serious it should interrupt a good breakfast. Mother said she would join me at 10.

Missy Rosenman wants to see you.

FDR Splendid. Ask him to come back this afternoon. Not your department, Louie.

(Ignoring Louie who is about to object. To Missy) Here's the speech. Can you read my writing?

Missy What have I done for ten years?

FDR You are such a dear. I'd be lost without you.

Sarah Roosevelt enters

Sarah And how is my darling boy today?
Missy, be a dear and have someone bring me some tea.
Missy exits. We hear a phone ring off stage.
John and Frank Jr. will be ready. I've seen to their clothes.
The family will be in the third car. I've arranged it all.
Is Eleanor coming with us, Franklin, or is she driving that
car of hers? The paper said she was going to drive down
with her dogs.

Howe *(Aside to FDR)* Not the dogs!

FDR Try some of the new guava jelly, mother.

Missy returns with a tea tray

Sarah Don't try to distract me.

FDR Thank you ever so much, Missy. This is not really your
responsibility.

Missy Earl called in. Mrs Roosevelt is across the street talking to
the reporters.

FDR Isn't she splendid. Where would I be without her!
Heart of gold! Hope she doesn't ... She'd hire Mr. Hoover
if he asked her nicely.

Howe What about the Treasury people? They want to talk. What
do I tell the press?

FDR Tell them ... I've sent a letter. Missy, did that letter go out?
Tell them we'll meet just as soon I'm sworn in. Or
something.

Howe They're saying the banks won't last that long.

FDR We're not getting into bed with those boys just because of
banks!
What are you going to wear, Mummy?

Scene Thirteen – Wednesday March 1, 1933

FDR is reading a news article. ER enters loaded down with shopping bags and hat boxes.

ER Well, Franklin, they won't be able to say I did not be dressed for the part, at least on the first day.

FDR Marvellous, marvellous.

ER Blue. All blue. Anna's doing. She certainly had a good time. Shopping.

FDR It looks like you bought all of Fifth.

ER Just this once. What a spree! The reporters were in seventh heaven. And I smiled. *She flashes a phoney grin, and strikes mock poses.* I bought for a year! Seven hats.

FDR I'm at a loss for ... 'I'm proud of you'? Thank you. I know this was a sacrifice.

ER *(testy)* You are welcome.
What does Mr Hoover have to say?

FDR The same.

ER There will be 60 family for a supper on Saturday. Nothing fancy. They tell me there will be 1200 for Tea Saturday afternoon. I will shake every hand.

FDR XXX banks closed today.
Aren't you even a little excited? First Lady is ... extraordinary.

ER Pouring tea!

FDR Yes, well there are some sacrifices necessary. For the greater good.

ER And when do we get to the greater good?

FDR Monday ... or Tuesday.

ER Ah, ...

FDR I read here you plan to drive down with the dogs!

ER That is what I said.

FDR The rest ... I believe all of us ... should go together on the train.

ER And who is this 'us'?

FDR The family, the cabinet ... Nan, Earl, Gus, Missy ...

ER Earl! Earl! That's lovely. You appoint him Supervisor of Prisons for the State. He has to stay here!

FDR He can come for the weekend.

ER I am travelling with Lorena Hickok. And that is final.

FDR Splendid. But not in the Buick.

ER Why not!

FDR Eleanor, we have come to a point where we must avoid scandal. There are too many larger things at risk.

ER For whom, dear husband? For whom?

FDR She is very, very, congenial, splendid reporter ... but she makes no secret that she is ...

ER Indeed she does not! And more power to her.

FDR I can't have it!

ER You mean I can't have it.
There is not a single person on that train party who speaks to her in a civil tongue. Starting with your children!

FDR You can dabble with whomever you want, but if you want to live in the White House, you will travel with the official party or not at all.

ER And you can dabble with whomever you want!

FDR Don't tell me ... what can I do!!!!
Earl is fifteen younger than ...

ER Twelve, thank you very much!
And Missy is ...

FDR I need her!

ER I need Hick! And you need me!

FDR Of course, my dear, we all need each other, on the train together.
We'll tell the world she's got an exclusive on the First Lady.

ER What am I getting out of this? What! You've sold out the Party.
Abandoned the League at the whisper of that ninny, Hearst.

FDR Marvellous man. I'm writing a film script for him.

ER About a glorious ... let's not discuss it.

FDR Father has spoken.

Projections

Photos

Roosevelt's riding in their car to the station
- *of 30s train pulling out of stations*

Lights

*Scene Fourteen -- **Friday March 3, 1933** -*

ER and Hick are necking on a sofa in the XX Hotel.
The remains of a dinner for two are on a trolley.
They reading FDR's speech for the next day.

Projections - Clippings

- *Pre-Inauguration stories*

ER It's very good. Louie says he wrote it. Moley says he wrote.
Franklin says he wrote it.

Hick "ACTION ...XXX LIKE WAR" [GET QUOTE]
He's threatening to assume dictatorial powers!
In my hand I hold the biggest scoop of my life ... I can't use it.

ER Of course you can't! That would spoil it. We'll get you something else. What would you like? Another apple turnover?

Hick I'm ruined, professionally. Everything I know is ... confidential!
Are you going to stay here with ... him?

ER I'll get an apartment in New York! We can travel together.
I'll see if I can find you a job here in Washington.
Will you write to me?

Hick Why don't you write to me? A diary. *Everything* that happens.

ER "The Lost Letters of Eleanor Roosevelt".

Hick I won't lose them!

ER Then, I won't write them.

Hick There is a lot you can do, really!
Why don't you have a press conference, for women reporters only?
Give them, us, the inside stuff.

ER Franklin would be upset.

Hick Not half as upset as he would be if the President's wife left town with a ...

ER Come with me tomorrow morning, early, before all the ceremonies. I want to show you something.

*Scene evolves – Projection - photo of Grief, appears again.
ER stands reverently, she takes Hick's hand.*

I use to come here, the last time we lived in Washington. After I discovered ... the love letters ... Franklin and Lucy ... I was devastated ...
I recovered!

Hick Rather well, it seems.
(Reading the inscription)
Oh steadfast deep inexhaustible eyes
Set look, inscrutable, nor smile, nor frown,

Oh tranquil eyes, that look so, laid down
 Upon the world of passion and of lies.
(pointing to ER) 'Inscrutable' ...
Our world of passion

ER

And lies?

Hick

You can tell whoever you want.

ER

(ponders, then reluctantly then smiling)
 I think not, if you don't mind. Lies it will be.
 We better hurry, things start at ten.
 And tea for *ten* thousand!

*ER holds out her hand, Hick admires the ring.^{xi} ER kisses it
 and ER rushes off stage.*

Lights fade. We heard the noise of a crowd.

Projections

FDR and Hoover riding together. Other photos.

We hear bits of FDR's First Inaugural Address.

Shots of ER at the Inaugural Ball

Lights

Act II

Scene One - Franklin

Lights up on Franklin in his bed sitter, as in Act I. Add a dumpy armchair. Newspapers strewn about. FDR is working on his stamps sipping a martini and sorting stamps and listening to the radio. We hear 'Anything Goes'. He turns up the volume for the last verse and sings along.

FDR

*If Sam Goldwyn can with great conviction
Instruct Anna Sten in diction,
Then Anna shows
Anything goes.
When you hear that Lady Mendl standing up
Now turns a handspring landing up-
On her toes,
Anything goes.
Just think of those shocks you've got
And those knocks you've got
And those blues you've got
From that news you've got
And those pains you've got
(If any brains you've got)
From those little radios.
So Missus R., with all her trimmin's,
Can broadcast a bed from Simmons
'Cause Franklin knows
Anything goes.^{xii}*

Then we hear one of his speeches. He listens proudly, revelling in the sound of his own voice. He is slightly drunk.

FDR Voice

'For too many of us the political equality we won is meaningless in the face of economic inequality. A small group has concentrated into their own hands an almost complete control over other people's property, other people's money, other people's labour – other people's lives.

...

The royalists of the economic order have conceded that political freedom was the business of the Government but they have

maintained that economic slavery was nobody's business. They granted that Government could protect the citizen in his right to vote, but they deny that the Government could do anything to protect the citizen in his right to work and his right to live.

[2rd Acceptance Speech]^{xiii}

[If this – FDR's most 'radical speech - is not available, FDR could recite the above or play another.] He switches channel and we hear Wartime music, Benny Goodman, Vera Lind.

Volume fades.

FDR Well, hello, again.
Come on in, keep the President company. Cocktail?
Our play writer is off on one of her trips, so I'm in charge of Act II. It'll be a lot more fun.

He fiddles the radio dial.

FDR Voice '... A day that will live in infamy ...' ^{xiv}

Radio crackle drowns the voice. He childishly imitates a dive-bombing war plane, then turns sound off.

FDR (wistfully, annoyed then relieved) Nobody wanted to go war!
Those Japs attacked just in the nick of time!

Pause

Now you can forget all that 'prisoner-of-the-White-House-I-did-it-all-for-Franklin' balderdash from Act I. She loved it! She took to it like ... (mock Churchill) 'Never in the term of a President has one woman made so much trouble for so many people in so short a time'. (He chuckles.)

She had an all girl Press Conference when we moved into the White House before I had my first change of underwear!

Right after the first election, Louie took her out to Hoover-ville, you know, where all the veterans were camped outside Washington. They wanted some damn bonus they were promised from the First War. Which we couldn't afford. Before the election President Hoover, sent General MacArthur out and 'dispersed' the poor sods by force of arms. None too friendly! It cost him the election.

After we got elected they came back to Washington. Louie dropped her by the road and, damn, she marched right in, all alone.

They loved her! Because she loved them! Came out an hour later
and they were all singing to her. And loving me!
She went on inspection trips for the President. All over the
country. (*gesturing to his legs*) Reporting on situations ... the poor
and people like that ... around the country.
One time she went down a coal mine!

Projection

Cartoon – 'Say isn't that Mrs. Roosevelt'

I pulled 80% in West Virginia!
Damn fine woman!
"You should control your Missus", is what they said. Ha! Not me!
Puerto Rico, England, South Pacific, visiting the troops.

Projection

ER visiting bedsides in the Pacific

The boys loved her!
She loved to travel. Good for her. And good for me, too.

But (*Exasperated*) the lord giveth and the lord taketh away.
She wanted ... wanted Jobs for women! Homes for Jewish
orphans! A World Court! Voluntary compliance! And 'justice' for
the whole Negro race!
She never stopped! She always right, and she never had a drink!
(*He motions to the basket full of documents hanging beside his
bed.*) Do you know what this is? Here! The 'Eleanor In-basket'.
Every morning! Full of Memos!
It's as close as she ever got to my bed!
And nag! In a good cause. 'Franklin, they're lynching black boys
all over the south.

Projection

clippings of fight over lynching.

You simply must put a stop to it! 'Can't!' I said, 'and get re-
elected. I need those cracker votes. Can't.' Well', she said, 'if you
won't stop the lynchings, then you simply must let the black boys
into the Navy!!!' And ... if THAT didn't stop the lynchings!
Damn, she was clever!

*We hear a noise off stage. Something falling on the
floor. He grins, winks to audience, wheels over to
side and calls in an imitation Eleanor voice.*

Lorena, is this you?

He nods knowingly to the audience.

She doesn't know that I knew that she was living in the White
House for four years, right next door to Eleanor ... even when
Babs was in New York ... with Earl! She's still sneaking in and
out! Sometimes Eleanor had Lorena and Joe Lash stashed in the

White House while she was in New York with Earl! *(He holds up three fingers)*

(Calling, mischievously) ... Lorena ... Lorena ... Eleanor's not back yet. Com'on for a drink! Hick...Hick... You can't hide from the President! ... Lorena! Drink! Hicky, Get your fat ass in here!

Hick enters, sheepishly
(jovial) Let me fix you're a cocktail.

Hick Scotch, straight up.

FDR *(Disappointed)* Scotch! Scotch, it is! Did I ever tell you about my honeymoon with Eleanor?

He pours another for himself from the shaker for himself.

Hick Did I ever tell you about my honeymoon with Eleanor!

He hands her a drink. They raise their glasses

FDR Do you know they named a rose after her? The Eleanor Roosevelt rose. "Not good in a bed. Better up against the wall."

Hick chokes on drink laughing.

Real jobs for everybody. Welfare wasn't good enough! Indoor plumbing, even. To what I learned from that woman!

Hick To all the people Eleanor ... left behind!

FDR Amen to that!

Cheers.

From the feather duster ... who screwed up the depression, and ... tricked America into going to war ... and handed East Europe to the Russians ...

Hick And couldn't pack the Supreme Court if his life depended on it!

FDR Touché!

Hick But great speeches!

FDR Nobody writes play about me! Except as a cripple, for Eleanor to look after!^{xv}

... I am *not* bitter!
 She *was* a great lady. (*Toast*)
 (*To Lorena*) Thank you for looking after her.
 Are you bitter?

Hick (*Sullen*) Do you know ... where she is, this time? She said she'd be here.

FDR (*drunk*) Who knows? She could be with Earl? Or maybe that little Joe what's-his-name! Or that Doctor? ^{xvi}Who can keep track?!
 Have another.

He pours her another drink.

Hick I never could keep up with her.

FDR When I had legs ... she couldn't keep up with me! But then ...
 Did you ever see her sleep?
Lorena laughs.
 A dervish! Left us in the dust! You should have seen her Uncle,
 Teddy! Same thing!

Hick She wrote that newspaper column after everyone went to the letters! She sent me ... thousands of letters.

FDR Say, that's right! And you were going to write a biography of the First Lady!

Hick Except her wrote her own. ^{xvii}
 Did it bother you, her getting it on ... with ...?

FDR You? Noooo. Who was I to complain. She did her job. As long as she didn't ... put it in her column!

Hick Just in her letters ... which disappeared.

FDR I always wanted to ask, how many of Eleanor's letters did you burn?

Hick (*evasively*) I can't remember. ^{xviii}
 How many your letters did *you* burn?

FDR Not enough!

Hick Did it bother you ... her getting it on ...

FDR / Hick ... with ... her body guard? *(They laugh)*

Hick *(getting into her cups)* Earl? A little. Sort of ... rough trade ... I mean for the President's wife.

FDR Don't be bitter!

Hick I am *not* bitter!

FDR Say, do you mind ... would you like to meet ... I mean Eleanor's not around. My friend, 'Mrs. Johnson', is coming over. About now.

Hick 'Mrs. Johnson'? You mean ... Lucy Mercer?

FDR You knew?!

Hick She never stopped talking about her!

FDR Ah, yes, well, she's Lucy Rutherford now. A lovely lady. Depends on your point of view. I see her ... when Babs is away.

Hick 'Away'? ... Why not!

FDR She can have Earl whenever she wants. And that gorgeous Dr. Guerswisch. Or ...
(sigh) Why take me back ... a withered old wreck ... More power to her!
 I am not bitter.

Hick I am not bitter.
*FDR pours himself another drink and fills Lorena's glass.
 Phone rings. FDR flips open a cell phone.*

FDR *(into the phone)* Sweetie! ... Coast is clear. ... There's someone here I want you to meet. ... Old friend of Eleanor's. ... That's the one. ... Well, of course she knows about us. Everybody knows, now! ... *(He hangs up. To Hick)* She'll be here in a few minutes.

Hick *(sarcastic)* Why not invite Missy, make a real party of it?

FDR What kind of a man do you think I am / was?
 I'll invite Earl if you want!

Hick *Not* Earl! Unless I can I invite Marion.

FDR Who's that?

Hick fills FDR's cocktail glass full of Scotch. He downs it. She fills her own glass and refills his. They both down their drinks.

Hick Marion Heron. She's my wife. My current wife. After Eleanor.

FDR Ohhhhh! Nope.

Hick Why not?

FDR Not enough actors.
Just kidding. Sure why not?

Hick I was just kidding.

FDR Earl almost married Missy. Once. They were great friends. Until he married ... what was her name? *His* number two.

Hick He almost married Eleanor, too!

FDR That's what she thought. Say, do you know that Earl knows Lucy!

Hick Earl and Lucy!!!! Eleanor would ... shit!

FDR I set that up too. Sent them out together ... inspecting prisons. In 1942. Great duo! Just like Eleanor and Earl in the 20s. Same thing! Inspecting the jails! I read all the reports very carefully. Did I send Eleanor with Earl in the 29 or 31? I can't remember.

Hick Don't look at me.

FDR Marvellous. Marvellous! ... *(mocking, sensational headlines)*
Extra! Extra! – President sends wife and mistress to jail with the same ..."

Hick *(She interrupt the word with a gesture)* Escort!
Marvellous!
You got a way with words!

Lucy appears stage right. With Earl in his trooper outfit.

FDR Well, well, well, welcome! Marvellous. *(Aside to Hick)* Don't they make a marvellous couple!

Lucy, I'd like you to meet Lorena Hickok, Wild Bill's granddaughter ... and Eleanor's protector from the First New Deal. Who drinks Scotch ... and burned the best letters?

And Lorena, you remember Earl, Eleanor's body guard from Albany and ... Eleanor was correspondent in his third divorce.

Lucy and Hick shake politely. Earl and Hick are distant.

(to Earl) Don't think I didn't know, you dog you. No hard feelings.

Lucy, what can I mix for you? A Havana Zinger?

Lorena's pretty well sauced. Eleanor's not here. Drink up!

Earl The Lady gets around!

FDR *(aside to Earl)* Did you know Joe Lash, the 'Campus Cutie'?^{xix} Pal Joey?

Earl Sure, we use to party.

Lucy Franklin, perhaps you've had one too many.

FDR Who cares! Bottoms up!

Suddenly from off stage they hear a car honk, tires screech, a car door slam, and the front door open. They all look up in frozen horror. The front door slams.

FDR *(calling off stage)* Babs? Is that you?

ER *(from off stage)* Yes, it's *me!* Who exactly were you expecting, Honey?

FDR shoos them all off stage left tries to sober up and arranges himself at his stamps.

ER enters stage right, carrying her beat-up suitcase and a valise. She puts her bag down, takes off her coat and flops down in the arm chair. But she up again within seconds. She gets a laptop out of the valise. She takes it over to her side of the stage, puts it on her table, opens and starts it. She never tops talking.

FDR My, my ... it's good to see you. Can I help you unpack?

ER Thank you so much Honey, but I do that myself.

FDR So, where have you been?

- ER *(ER is as hypo-manic as ever, still trying to impress her husband.)*
 Gathering material. For my play. Retracing my steps.
 San Francisco, Russia, India ...
She takes a wrapped sandwich from her pocket.
 Would you like a ham sandwich? I didn't have time to eat it on the plane. ...
 Washington! I swore I'd never go back there! London, ...
- FDR Would you like ... a ginger ale? *(He fumbles the pouring.)*
- ER I sent reports. Paris, Boston, Chicago ...
She picks up the phone ...
 Helsinki, Venice, very nice ...
 Housekeeping I'll hold ...
 Rome, not the Pope, thank you very much ...
- FDR Marvellous! Marvellous!
(ER is counting. She is pleased.)
- ER Berlin, you can't imagine!
- FDR *(FDR interrupts)* And did you see the children?
- ER *(into the phone)* ... Yes, Mrs. Roosevelt. I've just arrived. Is my room ready? No, I'm not staying with the ...
 And ... do you have wireless ... high speed ... Thank you.
 Thank you. *(she hangs up)*
She types in the WIFI code.
She gets crumpled sandwiches out of her pocket and offers one to FDR. He declines.
- Where is your mother?
FDR motions 'down below'.
- FDR I've read all your books. *(aside to audience – big yawn)*
 autobiography.
He dives into her suitcase and takes several packets of letters.
 But not the letters! Letters! Oh my goodness, letters! Joseph ... Earle ... David ... Hick...
(mock shock as he starts to read) ... 'My darling ...' Why these are love letters!
- ER The idea that you would search my luggage is simply shocking!

'My darling' is merely an express ... an ... men have dirty minds
... women don't ... merely a term of ... affection ...'

(She burst out laughing at grand irony)

Don't waste your time, Franklin, we burned all good ones!
I call you *Honey* and it doesn't mean anything!

They smile.

*She goes to her table and sits at her laptop and turns it one
to display **Projection** of photos.*

FDR is looking at a photo album on his lap

Lights fade.

Projections

*The series of photos more or less picks up from Act I Scene
One and Two.*

*Family photos. Election photos. Stressing good looking
men.*

FDR turns on the radio. 'You're Driving Me Crazy'.

FDR There's your brother and Teddy. Where'd that come from?

ER *(Young FDR)* Weren't you a handsome devil!

FDR Oh, look, there's young Frank, and ... Winston !!!

ER Is that the picture when he was sober?

FDR No, he burned that one.

ER Ohhhhhh There's Earl's wedding. Anna and Elliot

Lights

Scene Two First Term

1933 – 1936

ER is at her typewriter - as she types we see the words projected. There is a file box beside her from which she takes out various items and reads, sorts, or tosses into a metal garbage pail for burning.

ER (reading) **Projection** “Darling, all day I thought of you and another birthday I will be with you, and yet tonight you sounded so far away and formal. Oh! I want to put my arms around you. And hold you close. Your ring is a great comfort. I look at it and think she does love me, or I wouldn't be wearing it.”

Eleanor to Lorena Hickok - March 7, 1933. ^{xx}

Projection *We see another letter on the screen. This one she doesn't read.*

“I wish I could lie down beside you tonight and take you in my arms.”

She takes out an item from the box. She is reading it silently as FDR wheels in.

FDR What are you doing, Babs?

ER One ought not trust reputation to historians, or the writers of the second Act of plays, Franklin.

FDR Eleanor, do you have something to hide?

ER *Moi?*

FDR (reading the projection) Should have burned that one, Babs!

ER (Defiantly) That's nothing!

ER takes another from the box, starts reading it, embarrassed, FDR grabs it, reads ... it is projected.

FDR (reading aloud) **Projection** “Only eight more days... funny how even the dearest face will fade away in time. Most clearly I remember your eyes, with a kind of teasing smile, and the feeling

of that soft spot just northeast of the corner of your mouth against my lips..."^{xxi}

FDR The "northeast corner"?

ER My make-up ... was smudged!
Which I only wore for you, Honey.
Oh, not to worry, *she* burned all *my* more 'poetic' letters!^{xxii}
(*from memory*) "You are the only reason I can carry on, my sweet, my love ..."

ER sighs. She takes an office bound document from the box. She hands it to FDR. He looks at it.

Here, why don't you read *this* one!

FDR "Unemployment in Western Ohio, 1934." Read it.
ER hands him another.
"Foreclosure - Sheriff Sales and Popular Protest - Kansas 1934."
(*mocking, from memory*) "The author deploys her descriptive power to great effect but the chapter on remedial policies is weak and confused."
ER hands him another.
"Poverty in Puerto Rico".
Derivative.
FDR is about to toss it aside but finds a photo in the flap.

Projection

Photo of group of women - ER and Hick included - in Puerto Rico.

Say, wasn't Lorena on that trip?

ER Yes.

FDR tosses it in a trash can.
ER takes news clipping out of the box. She starts to burn it.
FDR snatches it from her.

FDR (*Reading a news clipping*) "Mrs. Roosevelt and her traveling companion, former AP star reporter, Hickok, were last seen fleeing from the hotel under police escort and have disappeared somewhere in the Nevada desert."

Projection

Photos - 1934 trip to California.

The honeymoon!

ER No, Franklin, that was *not* the honeymoon! For our honeymoon we went to Quebec!

Projection *FIND SOME CLIPPINGS – 1933*
OR 34

ER stalks off stage left. FDR doesn't notice.

FDR Ah ...
FDR picks up a folio
Arthurdale^{xxiii}

Projections –
*The cover of a Report – “Arthurdale- A Residential and
Employment Project for the Chronic Unemployed.”*
Photos
ER square dancing,
meeting with residents, etc
Clipping - fight over cost of in-door plumbing for the poor.

Now, Eleanor, really, which was better for the poor? ... Eleanor ...
this dump in the mountains ... *(he notices she has gone)*
(to audience) She'll be back! ...*(shouting off stage)* ... or ...

ER *(re-enters stage left)* Or what? The war!

FDR *(Wheeling himself almost off stage right)* That fiasco almost ruined my first term!

ER Next you'll be telling them that the war was 'unfortunate' but good for the poor!

ER starts to exit right.

FDR Well, it was *fortunately* good for for America.

ER Unless you got killed!

FDR You could never see the bigger picture. *(exit)*

ER Where would you be without indoor plumbing! *(exit)*

Lights

Scene Three - Captured by the Pirate

1934

The porch of Earl Miller's rustic cottage at Chazzy Lake,

Projection - generic lake etc. ^{xxiv}

ER is typing furiously. We see some of her words and correspondence projected.

(FDR in his bed reading reports very dim stage left)

Earl *(from off stage)* Come on, Lady. We're ready to roll.

ER I just need to finish this. Just hold your horses!
She has a large pile of letters. She is answering them.

(Exasperated)

Why do people send me all these ...

We see what she is typing.

Projection –

"Mrs. Henderson, thank you for your letter. Indeed it is a difficult job! If you get in touch with my Assistant, Mrs. Thompson, she will be able to help you with the medical issues you mentioned. Sincerely, Eleanor Roosevelt."

... letters!

Earl appears dressed as a pirate. He has rope.

Earl Because you ask them to. ^{xxv}

He drags her and her chair off a bit then ties her to it. She shrieks with delight.

Projection

- clips or stills from the Pirate movie - Earl tying up the First Lady

Earl holds her on stage as they watch.

Fade

Lights up, dim on FDR in his bed, he is reading reports.

Missy comes in. Kisses him. He pulls her down on the bed.

^{xxvi}

Fade, Lights

Scene Four - - Second Term - Eleanor Red Hot

1937 – 1940

ER is at her desk typing. Earl stands behind her, massaging her neck, trying to drag her away from her work. ER resists.

Hick wanders on from stage right and takes the spot light.

Hick

Things were pretty well washed up between me and The First Lady by the second term. I mean sexually. She told me to find a husband ... I'd feel better!^{xxvii}

But we still wrote and I saw her often but on the fly, hardly ever with her other friends ... who did not like me.

I was finished as a reporter and she got me a job in New York working on PR for the World's Fair. Ugh! *She* ... she ... in 1935 she started a daily column, called *My Day*. Dashed it off each night before she went to bed! Mostly drivel about the tea parties and such. But it was a huge hit.^{xxviii}

Projection

rapid sequence of her My Day columns

I was still thinking I could turn her letters into a biography. I mean that was the plan. Until she wrote her own!!! *This Is My Story*. A smash best seller in 1937. Don't bother looking it up for even a breath Earl or ... anything like the truth!^{xxix}

Mostly she went back to Earl. She kept a room for him in her New York apartment on 11th St.

Projection

photo of the 11th St building. It is the same today.

Very sweet ... for her. (*maliciously*) Frank never saw the inside of that place, I guarantee. Fifth floor! She didn't care how many other girls he fucked. ... Earl ... I think she got off on it. Very sweet ... for him.

She had separate little Christmas parties for Earl and me!

I'm being cranky. She *was* very sweet to me. She had a room for Earl in New York and one for me *at the White House*. I stayed there often, trying to visit, and lived most of the time after 1940 when I was working for the Democrats in Washington. But I hardly saw her.

What was I thinking! Come, darling, stay with my *husband!* *I'll be out of town!*

The little dwarf, Joseph Howe, died in 1936 and after that FDR floundered. The second term was a disaster. You know all this. The Supreme Court quashed all the New Deal legislation, FDR went ballistic and developed a plan – in secret – to pack the Court with ... Democrats. He announced this all of sudden, after his re-election. The Congress went ballistic! Even the Democrats! There was a very public pissing match, the usual stuff about FDR as a dictator. Anyhow the Court backed down and started approving the New Deal legislation but Franklin ... but Franklin didn't. He kept pushing his Court-packing plan in Congress. Big mistake! 'Roosevelt the Dictator!' Sometimes he was really stupid!

He then started campaigning against some of the southern Democrats in the mid-term elections in 1938. To get control of Congress. That blew up in his face and in the Democrats lost control of both Houses of Congress. By 1938 he was a very, very, very, lame duck.

And, funny thing, *then*, FDR discovered his *friends* on the left. Hello Eleanor!

Hicks wanders off stage. Light dim left then up on ER typing frantically, giving directions to Earl and her secretary, packing and unpacking her suitcase and at the same time talking effortlessly to the audience.

As she works, packs etc. Earl tries to smooch her and she brushes him off.

ER

(typing, then looking up to the audience) Yes, Franklin was pretty much washed up after the 1938 mid-terms. Lost his moxie when he lost Louie. Lost his *lust* for the job.

Did I say 'lust'. Oh, my! *(mockingly, shouting off stage)* Franklin, did you hear what I called it? *(no response)* I think he's gone to get his Navy 'costume' re-fitted!

Until the *war*, and the chance, maybe, to *fight* the Nazis. *That* got him fired up again. But that was a long time coming.

(brushing off Earl) Earl, darling, I'm going to Washington in twenty minutes! I'll be back Thursday on the overnight. Can you keep yourself busy.

We're driving to the lake on Sunday.
Earl exits

(again to the audience) There were the unions, of course. Franklin couldn't get the Congress to do anything more for the workers, but the unions got to work. There were very lovely strikes.

Projection

Clips or photos of Ford strike

The unions were full of communists. One of their great strengths! ^{xxx} We weren't afraid of the communists in those days. They were very good organizers. The Nazis and fascist everywhere were their main enemy. And starting in 1935 they supported the New Deal. 'The enemy of my enemy is my friend.' Franklin-Honey thought ... like that.

They called it the Popular Front. We didn't. But in politics, you take it where you can get it. That's an expression, in politics.

FDR wheels himself on stage left, in dim light as she speaks and then lights up on him.

Even in America. Lindberg and the America First-ers were open backers of the Nazis. There was a plot by some of them. The interventionists were hardly organized at all. Franklin was worried. ^{xxxi} He was right to be worried.

FDR She's right! Did I tell you before, 'she was *always* right'? I was exaggerating, for effect. As playwrights are allowed to do. But this particular time, she is really right.
 And about the Navy Uniform. *(boasting, sly)* Let it out in the shoulders! Narrowed it at the waist!

ER Thank you, Franklin.
 Was I right about the Negros?

FDR You were always right.
They both turn on watch projections. They are each side of the stage.

Projection

Clippings

Marion Anderson – excluded by Daughters from their Hall and then singing in the Mall
 ○ the lynching fight of 1938 ^{xxxii}

CHECK DATE

ER *(sarcastically to FDR)* Now the Negroes thought that in the 20th century they ought not to be lynched without a trial. A strange notion to the southern states.

FDR is exasperated

Didn't put that in Act II script, Mr. Play writer!
Surely you didn't think you could write my lines on this one!

Whatever had came over them! Franklin wouldn't speak about it.
(sarcastic) 'Not a federal matter', he said.

FDR *It wasn't!*
(to the audience) She didn't have to deal with the Congress!

FDR wheels himself off

ER Did you know the Navy wouldn't let Negroes actually fight on the Navy ships. Let them serve dinner to the officers and wash up! And I was for letting the Negroes get killed. If they wanted. On deck! With the white boys! No, even if they didn't want. It took ... it took ... that the first man killed at Pearl Harbour was a black man! ^{xxxiii}

Projections -

Photos - Pearl Harbour

Clippings - News headlines on first death

Lights

Scene Five - Hello Joe

1939

Lights up on ER and young Joe Lash slowly making their way through an imaginary scrum, coming out of the Congressional Hearing room at the lunch break, into a barrage of flash bulbs and crowd noise.
ER is smiling, for the Press. Lash stares at her in astonishment as she talks to the Press.

Projection

Clipping - December 1939 Dies Committee - US Congress ^{xxxiv}

Press *(voices from off stage, rising above the hubbub)* Mrs. Roosevelt ...
 Mrs. Roosevelt ...
 Do you know these students?
 Mrs. Roosevelt ... Mrs. Roosevelt ...

ER *(answering the Press)* I'm here to watch and learn. Our young people need to know we are interested in what they have to say.

Press Mrs. Roosevelt ... Are they Communists? ... Are you going to testify?

ER No further comments. Let's all listen to the evidence this afternoon. I'm here to listen and learn.

ER and Lash proceed off stage, slowly, she shields him, pushes through (invisible crowd. Light fade. We hear ...

Voice *(Walter Winchell type voice. The words might be Westbrook Pegler, ER's arch enemy and Red baiter, who was a columnist but not a broadcaster.)*

The surprise appearance last week of Eleanor Roosevelt at the House Dies Committee Inquiry into the penetration of America's youth by the communists of Russia has everybody in Washington asking. The student leaders refused to disclose their specific connections with the communists. And she took this man *(photo)* Joseph Lash, the Executive Secretary of the American Youth Congress back to the White House ... This man ...

ER and Lash enter stage right, now in private.

ER ... But perhaps calling the Chairman a drunk, publically, was not the best way ...

Lash Hit them where it hurts!

ER *Singing* it, doesn't make it better.
 ...Frankly, young man, *(starting to scold)* your performance was So funny I could barely contain myself. *(she giggles)*
 You come straight back to my house as soon as ...
 You weren't in the Communist Party, were you? Neither was I!
 Besides. who *is* ... is none of their business!
 The problem is ... do you need some dinner ... You can sing for your supper! For the President. He will love this!

Lash *(singing)* "If you see an un-American lurking far or near,
Just alcoholize with Martin Dies and he will disappear."^{xxxv}

ER Of course ... you're not one? are you? ... We need ... we must ...
the communists ... they've turned into a nuisance, haven't they?
On my goodness ... I have to run ... we'll expect you at 6:45.

ER rushes off, leaving Lash on stage.

Lash She was something!
At the time I was the Executive Director of the American Student
Federation and what you call today a 'shit disturber'.
The Administration was in trouble at the end of the Second Term.
Congress was totally against the President. Lindberg and the
America First-ers were powerful. They were looking for support
from the unions and the student movement even if they were full of
communists!

There were communists everywhere. In 1935 Russia told us stop
making revolution and form alliances with middle of the road
organizations to fight the Nazis and fascists everywhere.

The Communists were supporting Roosevelt! Until Russia's Pact
with Hitler in 1939! Then we changed sides. 'Don't fight our
German friends!' 'Roosevelt's a war monger!' It was a joke! And
when Russia was invaded we changed sides again.^{xxxvi}

I broke with the Party after the pact with Hitler. I was against the
Nazis. But the Student Movement – me included – was still
strongly against going to war. And I was still employed by the
student movement. I didn't know what side I was on and what to
say when they called me to rat on the ... all my friends ... the
communists in the student movement!^{xxxvii}

Was I a communist? Well, I never actually signed up but I was
pretty solid with them but it depends on which year, which month,
you asked me!

Mrs Roosevelt had the same problem as me in 1939 and 1940.
How to distance ourselves from the communists who more or less
controlled all the organizations on the left, without denouncing the
organizations ... up to ours necks in which we were ...
organizations that might, or ought, to support the President ... who
was, or might or ought to run for a Third Term!

Not to mention ... I was separated but not divorced, and breaking up with my girl friend Agnes and starting up with a married woman, Trude Pratte.

I was fascinating.

Projection - Date - 1940

After the White House supper she wrote me ... 'to come up and see me some time' ... in her New York apartment. I did. We talked a lot of politics ... what to do about the communists. *Now* they were *not* desirable allies. She was pretty smart. And ... and she gave me the keys to her place in the country for 'rest and rehab'. Val Kill. Remember that from Act I.

I took her up on it. I mean, if the revolution is falling apart, better make friends with ... the President's wife!!!!
And her 'body guard', Earl Miller, dropped in to check on me. We had a good talk. Smart like a fox, that guy. On the right side. We got alone. She was more than both of us could handle!

'You need money?' Of course I needed money! And she gave it. And I ... helped her out.

I was, for a while ... *at the same time* ... a secret stooge of the communist devils and a lapdog of the queen of the capitalist apologists. She was trying to turn me ... and I was trying to turn her!

ER re-enters

ER There you are!

Lash (*aside to audience*) I was never far away.
We had this running debate about ... about ... sacrifice ... Nazis ... war ... class ... youth ... I was *youth*!

ER The President says the Nazis are a very serious ... a problem ... we may have to fight ... But *youth* doesn't seem to see the necessity of defending democracy. Except my sons !!! who can hardly wait! So *hypothetically*, what would it take to get 'youth' to fight ... if war, hypothetically becomes necessary.

Lash As in 'die'?

ER Not you, personally, my darling. Others, your age.

Lash For what? The capitalists are making out like bandits? Why should I fight? What am I going to get out of this war?

ER The President says ... he has to ... he ... needs them, the capitalists ... alright yes ... he's 'bribing' them. He admits it.^{xxxviii}

Lash I want a bribe.

ER That would be improper.

Lash For 'youth'.

ER How about a promise!

ER The President said to tell you that you're 'fighting for freedom'. And, I asked him, I did ask him, 'what does that mean'? But he had to go to a meeting of the Joint Chiefs.

Lash Freedom! Eleanor, you can't eat 'freedom'.

ER Of the Press?

Lash Can't eat a newspaper! Even though they shove it down your throat!

ER Well what about democracy!

Lash What about a job!

ER We've been trying!

Lash Planting trees in Montana!^{xxxix}

Lash How about food.

ER Sounds communist.

Lash It is!

ER How about 'freedom from 'fear'.

Lash I feel better already! What are relief! That's meaningless!

ER Perfect for Franklin!

Better than nothing.

Lash I'll enlist today! Where is my gun!
How about 'freedom from want'.
Absolutely meaningless!

ER Absolutely perfect! For Franklin.
Freedom from want? So what *do* you want?

Lash How about Food. And a job!

*Eleanor looks at her watch, grabs her suitcase and rushes
off stage left.*

ER Oh, my ... I'll miss my train! See you next week.

Lash Eleanor stuck by the 'youth' – this *grandmother* telling the country
what youth wanted, needed! It was in her little book, *The Moral
Basis of Democracy*. I had more influence as her ... ghost writer ...
than I ever had as the leader of the biggest student group in the
country.^{xl}

That's how it went. She wanted to deliver 'youth' to ... Franklin.
So Franklin promised us 'freedom from fear and want! What
rubbish. My 'bribe'!

And there it was 'freedom from want, freedom from fear, in State
of the Union Speech in January 1941. Two of the four famous
'freedoms' – which were the official war aims.

It was a start. She said.

Projection

Clipping or Sound — Four Freedoms - Jan 6 1941.
Also – Norman Rockwell, famous paintings – Family
Turkey dinner "Freedom from Want

We got along ... like a house on fire.

Light dim on Lash.
Lights up briefly, on FDR, at a typewriter.

FDR I knew the kid was trouble the moment I laid eyes on him.
She was nuts about him! And he played his hand well.
'Freedom from want.'
Sounded good.

Who knew!
 And ... if you think that's 'communist' ...
 Well it is. Just a *little* bit.
 So eat my bum!
 And prey to me that I saved your capitalist ass!

Lights dim on FDR.
Lights up on Lash is lying on a cot.
ER enters sits down beside him, strokes his head.

Scene Six **Third Term**

July 1940

Projection

Photo - Val Kill

*Lash on stage lying on a cot. ER enters. ER sits
 stroking his head.*

ER You just sleep in as late as you want. Anything you want, just ask.
 My darling boy.

Lash (*Sleepy*) How are things at the Convention?

ER They're ... not good. Franklin got the nomination, without
 campaigning for it, but now he's threatening not accept it unless
 the Convention nominates Wallace as his VP. Certain 'factions' ...
 certain factions are against that. I'm off to Chicago, first thing, for
 the Convention, Franklin wants me to speak for Wallace.
 You don't need to get up. Play tennis with Earl.
 I'll be back on the midnight plane.

Projection

*ER's speech - short - clippings - secures FDR's
 third term ticket.*

Lash 1940 and 41 were a blur.
 Pay attention. There'll be quiz after the play.

Who knew!
 And ... if you think that's 'communist' ...
 Well it is. Just a *little* bit.
 So eat my bum!
 And prey to me that I saved your capitalist ass!

Lights dim on FDR.
Lights up on Lash is lying on a cot.
ER enters sits down beside him, strokes his head.

Scene Six Third Term

July 1940

Projection

Photo - Val Kill

*Lash on stage lying on a cot. ER enters. ER sits
 stroking his head.*

ER You just sleep in as late as you want. Anything you want, just ask.
 My darling boy.

Lash (*Sleepy*) How are things at the Convention?

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 campaigning for it, but now he's threatening not accept it unless
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 You don't need to get up. Play tennis with Earl.
 I'll be back on the midnight plane.

Projection

*ER's speech – short – clippings – secures FDR's
 third term ticket.*

Lash 1940 and 41 were a blur.
 Pay attention. There'll be quiz after the play.

*Run various **Projections** quickly. Play like farce. Mug shots of individuals and White House, war action etc.*

In the spring of 1940 the Nazis moved into Norway, Denmark, Holland Belgium and France.

Projections –
Clippings of Nazi invasion

And Princess Martha ... of Norway moved out ... of Norway ... and into the White House. For a month. A perfect flirt and the President was ... happy. Missy was not!

Projection Photo
CHECK DATES

Lash

(sitting up as she leaves)

Eleanor put me to work in the Democratic Party office organizing the Youth vote in the 1940 campaign. And I stayed in the White House a lot.

Hick lived there most of the time. Across the hall from Eleanor. She worked at the Party headquarters in Washington and couldn't afford her own place in the Capital.

Franklin promised the country in the election no American boys would go to war. NOTE THE WORDING. He was sneaky.

Projection
Wording of FDR's promise

In November - FDR beat Wilkie and won a third term. And he did not move out of the White House.

Projection - *Clipping – Third Term*

My old friends who were still very anti-war and isolationists and they all thought FDR would go to war.

1941

In January FDR made the famous Four Freedoms speech to Congress – as if we would go to war. Eleanor was so excited. She

took Missy, Princess Martha and Hick as her guests !!!! to watch that from the Congressional gallery.

And in March FDR got Lend Lease through Congress. So the US could supply material to England. He keep saying all his war preparations were to protect the peace. He pushed hard to increase war production, sent the army in to smashed a strike in one of the war production plants and get war supplies to England. ^{xli}

Missy had a stroke and moved out of the White House in March 1941.

In August Germany moved into Russia. And my commie friends were ... very confused! None of them moved into the White House.

In August FDR met with Churchill off Newfoundland and sign the Atlantic Charter. Freedom from fear and want were part of that.

Projection - Famous photo

In September the President declared almost the whole of the Atlantic an American ocean so he could bomb the Nazi subs. 'War. Heavens, no'.

HOPKINS MOVED IN - DATE

And in December the Japs moved into Pearl Harbour! And FDR had his war!

Then Winston, quick like a bunny, he moved into the White House for the Christmas season in 1941. Doing his damn-est to get war supplies out of his good old friend, Mr. President. Who secretly thought Winston was an imperialist slime. But a much better quality of slime than the Nazis!

1942

Eleanor tried to get me an Officer's commission in the Navy. Funny, they did want a commie.

Earl married number three and moved out of Eleanor's New York pad. He had two children XXXX

I gave up on getting into the Navy and enlisted in the Army and in

April Eleanor gave me this big going away party.
And she financed my divorce from my old wife ... and I ditched
my girlfriend so I could to marry Trude ... but then Trude decided
she better give her marriage one last chance. And hung around
with Eleanor a lot!

And Harry Hopkins, FDR's major domo, got married and moved
out of the White House.

FDR got ... lonely. And who wouldn't! He started seeing Lucy
again, in the White House. When Eleanor was away.
Remember her. From Act I.

Now, rank in the correct order, who saw more action in 1940, 1941
and 1942 – A – the U.S. Army, B - the U.S. Navy or, C - Mr.
And Mrs. President?

Lights

Scene Seven -

Reconciliation – Not

1942

*FDR and ER on a train. She knits. He looks out
the window.*

FDR

Gosh this has been fun! Did you see the look and their faces
when we wheeled into that plant!

Projection –

*Cartoon of plant workers – “Say Isn’t that old
Frank?”*

Photos of FDR rolling into war plant.

The people need to see us together! I’m glad you came along.

Babs, remember 1919, the Vice-Presidential campaign. We were
on the train for weeks. God that fun! Thank you for coming back
for the rest of the trip.

ER

You were such a flirt. Too handsome for your own good!

FDR I still am!

ER The people need to see us together.

ER Do you know what the foreman at Consolidated plant in Fort Worth said one of the *women* reporters? He said, "Listen girl, I'll deny it to the end of my days if you use my name, but if you want to know how I feel, I'll tell you ... I say to hell with the men. Give me women workers any day!"

FDR You predicted.

ER Well, don't tell anybody it's what the Missus predicted.

FDR It's grand to get out Washington. The only way to win this war is produce planes and tanks ... (*trailing off*)

ER Ah ... do you know what they say about ...

FDR About the Negroes ...

ER The 'Eleanor Clubs'.

FDR What do they say?! (*he is laughing already. He knows.*)

ER That the domestics are organized in my honour, not to do their chores and demand more money! Just plain uppity.

FDR "A white woman in every kitchen by Christmas."
(*they laugh*)
What is the latest on Missy?

ER Poor darling. Not good. There is no significant recovery from the stroke. She still thinks she'll be coming back to the White House any day. Franklin, don't torment her by allowing her to think she could.

FDR I need her, someone! There are so many little things.

ER Well, you may need her, but you will have to find another. And or goodness sakes, don't let the next one worship you to death. *Her* death!

FDR Well, why don't you come back?^{xlii}

ER To Washington? I'm going to ...

FDR To be my wife.

ER You mean – stay home!?

FDR Would that be so awful?

ER Me?

FDR We are still married. Most people think we are.

ER Oh, for goodness sake! What about Princess Martha?
And Cousin Daisy?

FDR They're nothing.

ER Stay home?

FDR I need some ...

ER I know about what you need! What about what I need!

FDR There's a war on!

ER When are you going to Casablanca?

FDR What that's got to do with ...

ER I'm going to England next month. Maybe another time.

Projection

Clippings of ER in England

Lights

Scene Eight - Camp Follower

1942 - 43

*ER is on stage typing furiously. We see what she writes.
Very fast paced. Excerpts below can be condensed.*

*Wartime romance music – eg. 'You're driving me crazy'
Photos – GI in basic training*

Projections – letters

(ER) My darling boy, Trude and I will be staying at the hotel just down the road from your camp for the whole weekend. Whenever you can get away, we are waiting for you.

"It is futile to tell you that I love you and want to help when I know just now it can't help than there is only one love that matters and that is yours I believe that it is swamped by other considerations."

"I've grown to love you so much ... p.354

" Wherever I am, there is a home for you and those you love.
P. 354

.. Of course you can say anything to me and out my love for you I think I will understand. I am glad you are happy to be with me for that makes me happy. I want you to as sure of me as my own children are ... p. 358

"... This is just to say good night and I love you. Sometimes I think when we have chosen to love someone, we love then even more than the children of our own bodies and so that is why I shall be looking forward to every chance of seeing you.

You are friends and yet you can ask anything of me and I can give you anything I wish because you are my children too. Is that too close a relationship to accept, Joe Dear? ...^{xliii}

Love Eleanor

Projection

Joe Lash - "Fascination works mysteriously, absent, particularly, the sexual element."^{xliv}

Love Eleanor, pp. 308-09

Joe Darling, I will be in Illinois in April and we see you. Do hope you can get some leave. Trude send her love.

Scene shifts to seedy hotel room.

Lash lies on bed, ER stroking his forehead. ^{xlv}

Projection: *The Blackstone Hotel, Chicago*
– March 12, 1943

- ER I love just looking at you. How are they treating you, my darling boy?
- Lash I'm ok. Rather be in the Navy. Could do worse than studying how to be a weatherman.
- ER We all must do our part.
- Lash I saw Trude last weekend.
- ER We thought we'd visit together ... I was coming through Chicago with Tommy on my way to Seattle.
- Lash rises from bed, naked from the waist. Cards scatter from the bed.*
- Lash Where's Tommy?
- ER I sent for some food. Are you hungry?
- Lash What time is it? How long have I been asleep?
- ER Not long.
- Lash Sooo ... how are you!?
- ER No rest for the wicked!
- Lash Your boys still safe?
- ER As much as I know. They are Franklin's children! Rush to the front. Looking for glory. I love them dearly but not like you.
- Lash I shouldn't be sleeping in your room.
- ER I'm not telling anyone.
- Lash God, I'm tired.
- ER You go back to sleep. We can go out for a walk later.

Lights Fade – we see the following as Lash 'reads'/recites

Lash I am sorry I was such a drowsy soul after the dinner, but it was nicer drousing in the dark with you stroking my forehead and playing gin rummy especially when I couldn't seem to win again.^{xlvi}

Lash, *Love Eleanor*, pp. 308 - 09

Lights

Scene Nine – Dispatched^{xlvi}

April 12, 1943

FDR in his office with General Marshall and two Army Intelligence officers.

FDR Tell me something important! I've got a war to run! So what! She's been following him around ... with his wife ... for months.

Marshall They go shopping together.

FDR The sky will fall!

Marshall She's buying him underwear.

FDR Underwear.

Marshall (*disdainfully*) ... "flashy underwear ...

FDR Eleanor? Ho! Ho! That little commie rat! Eleanor?

*One of the officers advances the tape and turns on the sound. We hear the noise of sex.
FDR is shocked again. He laughs again.*

Marshall Army Intelligence have this tape ...

FDR Army Intelligence is the dumbest bunch of ... What tape?

Marshall You better listen.

*Marshall turns on the tape. FDR at his desk listening to primitive tape machine with ear phones on. General Marshall stands next to him. Also some other officers from Army Surveillance.
FDR grim.*

FDR Who knows about this?
I want the whole damn file on my desk in one hour!
Army *Intelligence*! My bum! What is the point?

Marshall They have reason to believe he might be a Communist.

FDR They could have asked me! Of course he *was* a Communist! I have spent hours with him and Eleanor gabbing strategy.

Marshall I wouldn't tell Army Intelligence that, Mr. President.

FDR The Communists are on our side! Now.

Marshall A recent conversion, if I might point out!

FDR Damn fool nonsense!
(shout to outer office) Get Eleanor in here, right now!
(shouting at Marshall) Who made this tape?! How many people in Army Intelligence know about this! Are they trying to undermine the Administration?!

ER enters in her nightie and hair net.

ER WHAT do you want now!

FDR Listen to this!

*He plays the tape.
ER looks momentarily alarmed but she is quick ...*

FDR Do you know who that is?

ER Sounds like ... Errol Flynn. And Carole ... No, no ... Clark ??...
Betty Grable ? Noooo ... Ohhhh ... Jimmy Cagney ... No ...
Couldn't be ... she would never ... Clark Gable ... Jimmy
Durante ... I give up. ... Who?

FDR *They say* it is Joseph Lash ... and ...

ER And Trude!!!! Yes ... his girl friend ... I recognize her ...

FDR *(realizing the deception)* General!

ER Where did they get this! Can I have a copy?

FDR General!

ER Franklin, you know they follow us around.

FDR General, who put this together?

ER It really is unfair to Joe ... All he wants is to be a weatherman.

FDR Just like you follow Joe around!

ER Well, not really, I follow his girl friend around ... and she follows him around.

Marshall The report says ... it was alternating weekends ... Roosevelt in Urbana ... Trude in Urbana, Roosevelt in Chicago ...

FDR Buying him UNDERWEAR!!!

Projection

Eleanor Roosevelt to Joseph Lash:

"Consider the underwear as a gift from me and I'll think of you cavorting in the flashy one."

Lash to Trude Pratte

"Mrs. R. insisted I buy one garish pair to set off the monotony of GI clothes. I shall don them with some apprehension."

J. Lash, Love Eleanor^{xlviii}

ER Well, I had to buy him something! He's going away.

FDR He is going *far* away!

ER Really, Franklin, it is none of your business. I certainly wasn't dreaming of *you*!

FDR I am running a war not a scandal factory! Everything is my business!

ER stomps off

FDR

General I want you to personally burn every copy of this file!
Every single copy! And I want ... the little commie rat ... I want
his whole platoon ... I want every single person who has seen this
file ... and all their commanding officers ... on the next transport
to ... Guadalcanal In ten hour. General. That is an Order!

Projection and Sound of bloody fighting.

To the front. To the front of the front. With no leave.

Fade to Lash

Lash

(solemn, to the audience) FDR, vicious, ruthless, vengeful and
deceitful?

Projection

*FDR - "I am willing to mislead and tell untruths if
it will help win the war."^{xlix}*

The Weathermen platoon was shipped out, all of a sudden but it
was two weeks later, not ten days. We arrived in Guadalcanal and
nobody there even knew we were coming.

Colonel Bissell got sacked. Colonel Boyer, the other Army snoop,
spent the rest of the war doing surveillance of the alligators in the
swamps of Louisiana.

As much as I knew, the Army Intelligence file was destroyed, but
not before Colonel Bissell made a synopsis of it, and gave it to the
J Edgar, for his 'Personal files'. Get it! As in: 'The FBI has
absolutely no files on Joseph Lash.'

Which file surfaced in 1981 which I did an FOY search.

I never mentioned any of this in my books about Eleanor. Why
should I tell the truth in her official biography. Nobody else told
the truth about her!¹ At least not until after the FBI file was
disclosed in 1981.

Like he said 'I have a war to run.'

The 'flashy' underwear? I'm not telling.

Projection

*There were some of us in the family who suspected
that a certain amount of backdoor influence had
been exerted to get him sent to other end of the
earth.*

Elliot Roosevelt, *Rendezvous
With Destiny*, p.339

Lights

Scene Ten - Pacific Rendezvous^{li}

1943

FDR is on stage having drinks with Lucy and Anna.

Projections - *A series photos of ER in uniform touring Pacific hospitals.*

FDR ignore the photos and parties with Lucy.

FDR Now, this is my favourite, Crème de Cacco, Vermouth, and three parts gin.

Anna, where are the olives? Oh ... there ...

Lucy Franklin, you are a dear. I don't know what I would have done with you.

FDR Nothing too good for you, my darling. War is such a bore!

ER and Lash emerge from opposite sides of the stage, in army gear, embrace in dim light as FDR entertains Lucy. ER and Lash are torn apart to opposite sides of the stage ... lights fade on them ...

Lucy Now Franklin, you work very hard at it. And the country is very grateful. You are the only one who could possibly ...

FDR Flattery will get you everywhere!

Anna Father, you have dinner with Soviet Ambassador at 7.

FDR Don't be such a spoil sport. I haven't seen Lucy since last week.

Lucy I must get going. I told Mr. Rutherford I would be by the hospital in the early evening.

FDR Anna, you've invited 'Mrs. Johnson' for next week?

ER and Anna fade and projection

Projection

*The famous clip of ER telling her Jap joke.
[If not available a still of it and ER
performs]*

*Then Lights up on ER in her uniform at her portable
typewriter and her words are projected or she recites...*

Lash is dimly seen on other side.

[Projection]

ER (reads) *"How I hated to have to leave you last nite. When the war is over I hope I never have to be long away from you. It was so wonderful to be with you, the whole trip now seems to me worthwhile. It is bad to be so personal but I care first for those few people I love deeply and then for the rest of the world I fear."*

ER to Lash^{lii}

Lash I wrote to her often from the Pacific. Yes, complaining. She wanted to hear my complaints. How the lower ranks were treated and what a rotten deal the war was for us.

ER What can we do for you, darling boy?

Lash I wrote a blistering piece for her, for publication. She didn't need much persuading. She had seen so much on her trip.

ER (writing back)
I discussed this with the President. He was pleased. He'll use some of it in his speeches, I'm sure you don't mind.

Lash After she got back, that fall, 1943, FDR got passed a great GI Bill. With education, pensions, great stuff ... for those who survived.

And later, in his January 1944 in his State of the Union speech he went even further. He announced a Second Economic Bill of Rights including civilian conscription to war jobs – so us soldier boys were not the only ones to have to bear the burden. Graduated income tax. Price controls. Heavy duty stuff. Now he was calling it a 'right to a job'. What was he thinking! Maybe he wasn't such a bad guy after all.

Eleanor said he was going 'liberal' in a big way after the war.

It was what ER proposed right at the beginning of the war. And he rejected.

This time, Congress rejected it. Maybe he knew they would. Maybe he was just posing. Who the fuck could tell with him!

But my Eleanor wasn't done yet it! She was no poseur!

Fade to FDR and Lucy in compromising sexual position.

Lights

Scene Eleven – Death in the Afternoon ^{liii}

A very frail FDR in his wheel chair sits posing for an artist who paints. The famous portrait could be projected. A group of women fuss about him. XX paints. [Project the famous portrait] Lucy, his two cousins.

FDR I have a terrific headache.

*He passes out. They rush about.
Scene shifts to ER and Earl. He sits with a beer in hand watching. She is on her knees cleaning his floor.*

ER (Looking up at the audience)
Are you looking at me!?
Well, I never got to wash a floor. It's wasn't done, by women ... of my class. And Earl is completely helpless. It's the downside of being so good looking. To women.
And I am helpful. Besides, Joe is away at the war.
Earl had children. Named XXXX [Eleanor ???]
I am the godmother.

Back in Warm Springs we see the doctor shaking his head over FDR's body. And Lucy hurriedly taking her leave. The cousins fret then one picks up the phone and calls ER. We see her take a call, look grave and rush off.

Projection – photos of the funeral train and funeral and the grieving ER continue to the end of the scene.

ER and Anna enter looking solemn and arguing fiercely.

ER Anna, darling, how could you not tell me! How! Have you no shame! What if the press had discovered.

Anna Mother, he wanted to see her! He needed some ...

ER And *I* needed?

Anna Nothing, as much I could tell!

ER
back! How could you! I mean you were arranging these ... behind my
I was his wife!

Anna Were you!

Projection and Sound

Funeral March swells and drowns dialogue.

Projections of funeral

On Stage ER goes to her side of the stage and takes some idolatrous photos of FDR from a box and hangs them on the wall and sits, mooning over them.

Lights

Scene Twelve - - Closing

FDR is in his bed sitter, sitting looking at photo album. (a continuation of Act II, Scene One)

Projection

Photos - ER, Earl, photo with her hand on his knee.

FIND

He studies it at length, sighs

ER enters with a large poster to hang on the wall -

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

FDR Was he good to you?

ER Yes, in his way. Thank you for setting that up ...

FDR looks puzzled
That he should 'look after' me.
FDR gestures 'Moi!'

FDR I know it was hard.

ER What?

FDR Moving to Washington without him.

ER Oh, well ... yes, at the time ... But he would have been underfoot.
I had this framed for you.

*Hands him the Poster of The Universal Declaration of
Human Rights.*

Projection

First page – Title - date

FDR It's yours, Babs. All yours.

ER *Nothing* is mine, Franklin.

FDR You did it!
Whether any government can deliver – all this – is another
question. But let them feel the heat. The people have a *right* to
expect – jobs, - not the back hand of the rich.

ER I never went to so many meetings on a single subject!

Projection

ER at UN sessions

FDR You done good.

ER You know Earl was proud of that job you gave him in New York.
Prison Personnel. Did you know he became quite an expert. He
was consulted by some of the southern states about conditions. I
was never in a *southern* prison.

FDR You don't say.

ER I had all of Earl I wanted, thank you very much.

FDR At the Greenwich apartment?
Hardly big enough for two!
And Chazzy Lake.

I am not jealous or offended or embarrassed or upset.

ER Well, if I can't have jealous, I'd settle for upset.
You and Lucy Mercer! 'Mrs. Johnson'!

FDR Mrs. Rutherford, please! She was married! To a very rich man!

ER Oh ,,,, that makes it better!
... direct breach of a condition precedent ...!

FDR Oh, give it up, Eleanor! It's just a little background colour.
Pales ... to being corresp ... getting named as the
corresponding adulteress in Earl's third divorce?!

And wasn't that a lovely ring you were wearing Inauguration Day.
Diamonds and sapphires.

ER Tea for two thousand! 'Oh how nice to see you'. 'Martha, you look
divine. Me!? You are *too* kind! Blue is Franklin's *favourite* color.'

FDR You were magnificent! You weren't expecting me to come down
and dance!

ER I *performed* brilliantly!

FDR (*valiantly changing the topic to his stamps*) Did you know that
British Honduras issued three different commemoratives in 1905
for George V, all printed in Hoboken.

ER (*sarcastic*) Why no, Honey, I didn't know that.

FDR What about that cute little student, Joey Lash. You moved into the
third floor?

ER He was just a child.

FDR Didn't he have a girl friend at the time?

ER And a wife! So did Earl. Darling, We should always share.

FDR (*teasing*) You *are* a communist!

FDR You had *three at once*!

ER One was not enough. I was working very hard ... for you!
You had three!

- FDR I did not!
- ER You did! Princess Martha, Missy and Lucy ... four ... and your mother ...
And when you died ... Lucy, Cousin Daisy and Cousin ...
- FDR Well, it wasn't planned I would die just then. She was a friend of that portrait painter who was doing me ...
Anyhow, she was very nice, nice arms ... to die in. If you must.
- ER Well I was that busy! You could have called me.
If I could do the Inauguration I could have done the death scene!
Besides, Lorena was just a passing fancy. She was doing a story on the wife of the President. I couldn't ... just say no.
- FDR Lucy was ... just a passing fancy ...
- ER If you want to be jealous, be jealous of Earl!
- FDR But he was my buddy. No reason to be jealous of him.
Did you know I set him up with *Lucy* one time.
- ER He told me. Inspecting prisons in the south.
- FDR You knew!
- ER The *other* thing Earl did really well was gossip!
Why did you barricade the door between our rooms? ^{liv}
- FDR I was afraid you would attack me!
- ER Only with memos, Honey.
- They sigh together and abandon the bickering.*
- FDR Would you like a cocktail?
- ER *(pause)* Just a small one.
FDR hides his shock. He mixes.
How is Lucy anyhow?
- FDR *(As he mischievously mixes something weird)*
She drops by now and then. She's in the south wing.
Earl was in yesterday. Fit as a fiddle. Anxious to see you, of course. See Cousin Daisy now and then.^{lv}

- ER Now there was an empty-headed puff ball! Still taking her for drives?
FDR hands her the drink.
- ER What do you put in these things?
- FDR Gin. Vodka. Vermouth. Whiskey.
They toast. ER drinks.
 Wine. Sherry. Drambuie ...
- ER I hear you live longer if you have just a little ...
- FDR Scotch, Rye, Contreau ...
- FDR Well, what do you think? We came out about even, more or less?
- ER I'm thinking.
- FDR In another era, I admit it, you should have been the President. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was ... more important ... than winning the war. Which I didn't!
- ER Yes you did!
- FDR Well ... I couldn't have done it without you.
- ER One good thing about you, is that you lie about the nicest things. Act II is not that bad!
- FDR Look at this one - a 1923 Mexican half peso blue in mint condition. The *truth* has no place in politics. That's what I say.
- ER *(Tasting)* Marvellous. Marvellous.
- FDR The Japanese would never attacked if a woman had been President. Don't you think? Most ungallant.
- ER If I had been the President I would never ... would have lent a rowboat to that drunk, Churchill. And then, where would we have been?
ER comes over and looks at the stamps.
- FDR San Salvador, 1905, standard delivery The Burma Plantation Commemorative. New Zealand whaling. The three penny Canadian Beaver.

ER That's a nice one.

FDR (*exhausted and disoriented*) Is the war over? I'm very tired.

ER Long ago.
You go to bed, sweet heart. Say good night to the people.

FDR Could you look after the ...

ER ... the stamps?

FDR No ... the historians.

ER I've already done it, Franklin.
I'll have Missy put away the stamps away.

FDR (*wheeling himself off*) Good night, Babs.

ER Good night, Franklin.

*ER takes up her knitting and watched the
Projections, the photos turning like the pages of an
album*

Fading Visuals and Sound

– Hail to the Chief

– Happy Days Are Here Again

• *Benny Goodman*

Photos -

- *FDR with Churchill and Stalin at Yalta*
- *FDR funeral train,*
- *ER at United Nations as US Representative
moving the final version of the Universal
Declaration of Human Rights,*
- *A wedding photo*
- *... ER and Earl*
- *The young Family*

Lights

Notes

Act I

Scene One - Eleanor

Eleanor Roosevelt was 5'11" tall, great hair, receding chin and buck teeth, with a high pitched voice. She was extremely self conscious about her appearance. She often told of her mother, a society beauty saying of her as a little girl she was "an ugly duckling". The 'suffering child' was the picture of her youth she gave out to her children and biographers.

As a young woman ER was notorious for her unfashionable wardrobe. She improved as required, for her role in Washington and made the Best Dressed List in 1934.

If her romance with her husband failed and morphed into something very strange, she was ever the romantic in her personal affairs, her "passionate friendships. She was a schemer and romance plotter with her children and friends, e.g. daughter Anna and her second husband, Martha Gelholm and Earnest Hemmingway, Joe Lash and Trude Pratte and Earl Miller and his numerous girlfriends.

Scene Two – Opening Statements

- vi. ER's book about her father was *Big Game Hunting* written in 1933 before going to the White House. He was such a drunk, his brother, the President, had to have him committed.
- v.

There is no proof her long time secretary "Tommy" Thompson was a dyke, just a suspicion based on all the time she spent with ER and the marriage she abandoned. REVIEW THIS

Scene Three - Lucy

FDR was Assistant secretary of the Navy in Democratic Administration of Woodrow Wilson. ER and FDR moved to Washington with their five children. FDR loved it. ER, not.

Cousin Alice Roosevelt was TR daughter, a Washington social fixture and a gossip columnist famous for – "if you don't have something nice to say about the others, come and sit beside me."

Son Elliott Roosevelt says there was no sharing of the matrimonial bed from before this period to reduce the rate of procreation, though how he would know this is not disclosed. Generally family sources put out that the Roosevelt's stopped having sex. Whether this was 'the deal' at the time is unclear. Certainly after the polio there was no sexual relations.

- vi. Joe Lash – see Act II
- vii. David Guerswisch was ER doctor and constant companion starting in 1946. The same pattern – a handsome young man and great friends with his wife. Dr. G. was being treated for tuberculosis when ER started up with him.

Scene Four - Breakout

FDR came down with polio at the Roosevelt's summer 'cottage' Campobello, an island on

New Brunswick – Maine border. ER was in a panic and at her best trying to care for him and a house full of summer guests.

Eleanor made connection with the women's community that flourished in the 20s in Greenwich Village. The connection was political, social and intellectual. She became and remained close friends with several lesbian couples. She kept a studio in a lesbian building owned by Ester Lappe.

Louie did teach ER effective public speaking, especially to lower her high squeaky voice. They became close friends. The Gettysburg address as the text for their lessons is fiction.

Scene Five - **Separate Lives**

In 1925 – 26, within months, FDR took step to get ER established in her separate summer residence at Val-Kill with the lesbian couple, Nancy Cooke and Marion Dickerman and bought the rundown Georgia spa, Warm Springs where he spent most of his winters with Missy. ER rarely went there.

Nan was active and effective Democratic Party organizer. The suggestion of ER's physical relationship with Nan is speculation. She is one of the couple to ER was attracted. The three and Caroline O'Day operated a small craft factory at the site.

ER also co-owned a girls school with O'Day CHECK where she taught.

ER's relationship with Nan and Marion broke up in 1938 and ER converted the then abandoned furniture factory into her own cottage, which she still referred to as Val-Kill.

Scene Six - **The Governor**

FDR ran for Governor of New York in 1928 when the then Governor, Al Smith, ran for President. FDR won narrowly as the Democrats lost nationally big time. He was re-elected by a landslide in 1930.

ER commuted between Albany and NYC where she was teacher and broadcaster. Missy ran the show in Albany.

ER resisted guards and drivers as the Governor's wife – perhaps to protect her life in the Village. Earl Miller was indeed part of FDR guard on his European tour in 1918 as Assistant Secretary of the Navy. Exactly what he did with FDR and FDR drunken tour mate, Livy Davis, is unknown. Earl was throughout his life a lady's man. No apologies. Exactly what was going in FDR's head when he assigned Earl to look after his difficult wife is speculation. A body guard for the wife of Governor Roosevelt of New York in the era of the Lindberg kidnapping was not unreasonable. The conversation here seems is plausible.

Scene Seven - **Eleanor and Earl**

ix

Son James Roosevelt believed Earl was his mother's one romance outside marriage.

ER was 44 and Earl 32 when they began their affair. Like Missy Earl more or less moved in with the family. He called her Lady, taught her to ride, shoot and dive. According to Marion Dickerman he manhandled her inappropriately.

Earl Miller squired ER off and on for many years. He more or less moved in with the family, like Missy. FDR held him in NYC when the family moved to Washington. But ER established an apartment in the Village for herself and her friends, especially Earl.

Earl married three times. The first, during the 1932 campaign, referred to in Scene Eight, was a set up, to bury the rumors that ER, the candidate's wife, was carrying on.

He never 'spilled the beans' publically. His only statement on the subject was brief denial.

ER was rumored to be the correspondent in his third divorce, after the war. The court papers were sealed.

Scene Eight – **Nomination - July 1932**

-
- x The story of ER letter that caused panic for Howe at the Convention is told several places. The letter is real. The actual wording is here is speculation based on ER's well known abhorrence to becoming the wife of the President and losing her hard won independent life. Anna and Elliott were Maid-of-Honor and Best Man at Earl's marriage to his teenage second cousin. This marriage lasted a few months, until after the election.

Scene Nine - **The Campaign – 1932**

ER met Hick on the campaign trail.

Scene Ten - **Christmas 1932**

The scene is fabricated but not the closeness of the relationship. The surviving letters from 32, 33 and 34 are telling. See Act II, Scene Four.

Scene Eleven - **Assassination Attempt**

The assassination attempt was in February 1933 in Miami. FDR's almost assassin, Giuseppe Zangara, an Italian anarchist was electrocuted just weeks later – and famously told the warden – 'Goodbye to all poor people. Pusha da button'.

CHECK

Scene Twelve - **February 28 1933**

Between the election and the Inauguration ER was on a frenzy of activity as her 'independence' evaporated. She published three books, one for young voter, an idolatrous portrait of her deceased father as a big game hunter and one XXXX

She took on an editorship of a journal, *Babies, Just Babies* with her daughter. She gave up her teaching and went underground as the editor of Democratic women's newsletter.

FDR and ER had serious words over ER's plan especially after it was disclosed she planned to travel with Lorena Hickok. *That* was not in the press. ER caved and went on the train with the family and took Lorena with her. Exactly what they said to each other on this occasion is speculation. Freidel, *Launching the New Deal*.

Scene Thirteen - **March 1 1933**

ER and Lorena Hickok conferred in the bathroom of ER hotel suite and scandalized the staff.

Source -

Seeing the Inaugural Speech before it was delivered and not being able to report it, not even thinking she could or might, was the end of LH 'fire' as a reporter. She was compromised and ruined professionally by her personal relationship with The First Lady.

Scene Fourteen - **Inauguration**

- xi ER wore Hick's sapphire and diamond ring to the Inauguration as reported in ER's letters.

ACT II

Scene One - **Franklin**

Cole Porter's famous words reference ER's notorious 20s gig as a radio 'pitch-person' - selling mattresses. She was that famous as a politico she was worth hiring. By the time she hit the White House she was making more from her radio and journalism than Franklin. She was doing commercials not only for Sealey mattresses but other commercials. There was much criticism of her commercial activity. She gave it up for a while then resumed.

After coming to the White House she took on a twice yearly paid lecture circuit for big fees. Famously, she wrote in her column in *Women's Home Companion*, in 1933 that she wanted the people to write to her with their problems. She got 300,000 letters and allegedly answered them all. She pestered the Washington bureaucracy throughout the Presidency on behalf of the downtrodden. It was her primary White House job. She was in some polls more popular than the President. And, of course, an offence to all who believed a woman's role was to be quiet. She made more money than the President – and gave it away.

xiii Second Acceptance Speech, Text - <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=15314>

NEED TO FIND AN AUDIO or use another speech

xiv From the Dec 7, 1941 address to Congress, regarding the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

xvii Eleanor Roosevelt, *This Is My Story*, 1937, was the first of several volumes of ER's autobiographies. They are kindly, evasive and maudlin.

xix ER's nemesis and arch rival columnist, Westbrook Pegler, often wrote about ER and Lash, who referred to him as 'the campus cutie'.

Scene Two – **The First Term** – 1933 – 1937

xx The remaining ER-Hickok correspondence has been published and the most colourful letters repeatedly quoted and debated by those who care whether ER got it on with Hick. Many of ER's letters in the 'hot' period have disappeared. I'm with those who think the disappearance of the evidence is persuasive proof they did.

xxiii Arthurdale was an Appalachian re-settlement project sponsored by ER in 1934 and intended as a model of self-help for the poor. There was non-stop controversy regarding its cost, especially, ER's insistence on indoor plumbing.

Scene Three – 1934 **Captured by Pirates**

xxiv ER helped organize Earl's rustic holiday spot and probably paid for it and spend many weeks there with Earl and his friends in very casual fun.
White House got xxx letters in 1933. By comparison Hoover got xxxx

Scene Four - **Eleanor Red Hot** – The Second Term

xxviii "Of course you should have had a husband and children and it would have made you happy if you loved him and in any case it would satisfied certain cravings and given you someone on who to lavish the love and devotion you have kept down all the time." Feb. 1 1935
GET CIRCULATION NUMBERS

Earl himself kept very mum on the subject of his relationship with ER. Miller is quoted, once, before he died in xx on his relationship with ER: You don't have sex GET
There are no letters between ER and Miller anywhere. This seems highly unlikely, if not impossible given ER's habit of a life time.

xxx NOTE MAJOR STRIKES – WESTCOAST SEAMEN – FORD STRIKE
 xxxi GET PLOT INFO
 xxxii GET NOTE
 xxxiii GET REFERENCES Some biographers say this quotes means that the whole theory of ER's lesbian relationship with Lorena Hickok is a misunderstanding. Others comment that all the meaningful letters in the sequence of correspondence have been deliberately destroyed, and THAT proves the case.

SOURCES

Scene Five - Hello Joe

- xxxiv ER met Joe Lash in conjunction with her support of the American Student Union. He was Executive Director. That organization was strongly influenced by Communist Popular Front organizers. In 1939 the student leaders were summoned to testify in Washington on their communist affiliations. ER caused a sensation by appearing out of the blue at the Hearing. These are the words Joe Lash *sang* at the Dies Hearing, mocking the Committee Chair XX Dies, a would-be Joe McCarthy, who in fact did not appear at the Hearing that day. See . XXX Lash refused to name names. (In fact, that day, Lash appeared, and sang, at the Committee Hearing, after the lunch break at the White House.)
- xxxvi In 1935 Moscow directed communist parties around the world to ally with progressive forces in a Popular Front to defeat the fascists. In 1939 when Stalin and Hitler sign a pact to divide up Poland, the communists around the world were now suppose to oppose all efforts to make war on Germany. In the US this meant supporting isolationism. When Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in 1941, communists around the world had to change sides again and unite to defeat Germany.
- Lash broke with the Party when Stalin allied with Hitler in 1939. But like most students, he still opposed the US going to war, and just about every gesture of aid to England. From 1939 to 1941 he moved to support of the pre-Pearl Harbour Roosevelt position of strong support for England. His role in how the Roosevelt position shifted is a big part of the story of his relationship with ER.
- xxxvii See Lash J. *Love Eleanor*, p. 450
- xxxiv In 1940 FDR's programme to shift from consumer to war production on a voluntary basis was going no where. Big industry stuck with more profitable consumer goods.

SOURCE

ER fought within the New Deal for better jobs for 'youth' than provided by the programme of rural work camps. All programmes of direct subvention of employment, e.g. the Works Progress Administration, for artists, were attacked and destroyed by opponents, criticized as hotbeds of communists.

Eleanor Roosevelt, *Civil Liberties – The Individual and the Community*, March 14, 1940, Address to the Chicago Civil Liberties Committee.

Eleanor Roosevelt, *The Moral Basis of Democracy*. 1940.

Lash asserts that ER wrote this book during her Florida vacation with Earl and his girl friend Chancy D. in the winter of 1940. (Lash, *Love Eleanor*, p. XX) It doesn't appear from this account he went to Florida with her. Chapter One is a good and scholarly summary of the constitutional history of 'freedom', perhaps cribbed from a book then current by Dos Passos on Tom Paine. If cribbed, it was well done and of a much higher quality than the rest of her writing. It would be easy work for Lash. The Chapter on "What Youth Wants" reads like ER's wandering, vague prose but most likely reflected her discussions with Lash. Lash did other ghost writing for ER. She acknowledged and paid him for Liberty Magazine, *Why I Still Believe In the Youth*

Congress (April 1940) about ER's appearance at a Congress meeting. Lash, *Love Eleanor*, XXXX

Around this period Lash refers to 'a programme for democracy' which he sent her and I can't find. And see Scene Nine for the references For ER and FDR 'borrowing' from Lash's letter from the South Pacific regarding the GI Bill of Rights.

The account of FDR creating the 'four freedoms' section of his address to Congress, makes it clear that he had the language from some other source. (See Goodwin, *No Ordinary Time*, p. Xxx and Rosenman, his speech writer. Goodwin asserts it came from ER.

FDR's speech to Congress spells out the content of 'freedom from want' – 'it was - jobs, jobs, jobs'. Let it not be said that FDR did not treat seriously, and saw as a government obligation, if private industry would not provide jobs, that the government help the poor. (See xxxx) But his notions ran to welfare and make work. ER was far more demanding – real jobs.

xli SOURCES

Scene Eight - **Camp Follower**

xliii Lash, in *Love Eleanor*, quoting ER letters, pp. 354 – 358

xlvi *Love Eleanor*, pp. 308-09

Scene Nine – **Dispatched**

ER following Lash from camp to camp, caught in a hotel room with him by Army intelligence. Buying him flashy underwear comes from Lash's own book *Love Eleanor*, pp. 436 – 503, esp. 448-9.

There was some kind of complaint by ER and confrontation with FDR but exactly what is unclear. Army Intelligence files are lost – destroyed? But a summary from Army Intelligence to the FBI was made and excerpts survive. This is what Lash discovered in his FOI search on himself in 1980 and felt compelled to rebut in *Love Eleanor*, (1981). The rebuttal is persuasive - that FDR did hear indeed hear about this and take action. Lash says – he wouldn't have been vindictive. Perhaps, not vindictive ruthlessly and probably illegally decisive in squashing a scandal? Lash must have known more than he tells. The FBI Summary of FDR reaction is more scandalous than the original event – supposedly 'get everyone involved to the Front in 48 hours and keep them there until they are dead.'

vi See Lash, J. *Love Eleanor*, pp. 436 – 503, esp. pp. 448-9. Lash also includes excerpts from the FBI version of the Army Intelligence file.

xlx See Ward, *A First Class Temperament*, p. xiv

Doris Goodwin's otherwise impressive book *No Ordinary Time*, 'launders' this incident. She comments ER was indiscrete. Assume all she did was spend the night in the hotel room with a soldier half her age and buy him racy underwear. What would the press today do to her?!

Scene Ten - **Pacific Rendezvous**

ER made a gruelling trip to the Pacific under heavy security to visit the troops. She was a roaring success. She pressed hard with Army brass to make the further journey to Guadalcanal and was rewarded and had her visit with Lash as described. FDR knew about it before she got back to the U.S.

lii *Love Eleanor*, p. xxx

ER vigorously advocated for GI rights with FDR when she returned. FDR followed this up with his most radical programme proposal, the Second Economic Bill of Rights. Note the UK turned radically left right after the war. Rosenman, the speech writer, is the only writer I read, so far, who discusses this in detail. His version says nothing of ER. I doubt this. The programme is what she wanted of FDR all through the war. I don't know if she was surprised. Lash's editing of ER's letters omits everything from this period.

Scene Eleven - **Death in the Afternoon**

- liii FDR died while his portrait was being painted by Elizabeth Shoumatoff. This was set up by Lucy Rutherford. Daughter Anna Roosevelt also arranged this visit, like many others, with Lucy. His cousins Alice Daisy Suckley xx and YY were present. Immediately on the death Lucy took off. ER arrived. The cousins confessed to ER. So did daughter Anna.

Scene Twelve - **Closing Statements**

- liv DESCRIBE
Alice 'Daisy' Suckley was FDR's spinster cousin who he saw regularly, took on drives, entertained in the White House and once kissed! She was present at FDR's death. She kept their 'love letters' hidden. They were recently discovered and form the basis of a book by Roosevelt scholar, XX Brand, *Closest Companions*.

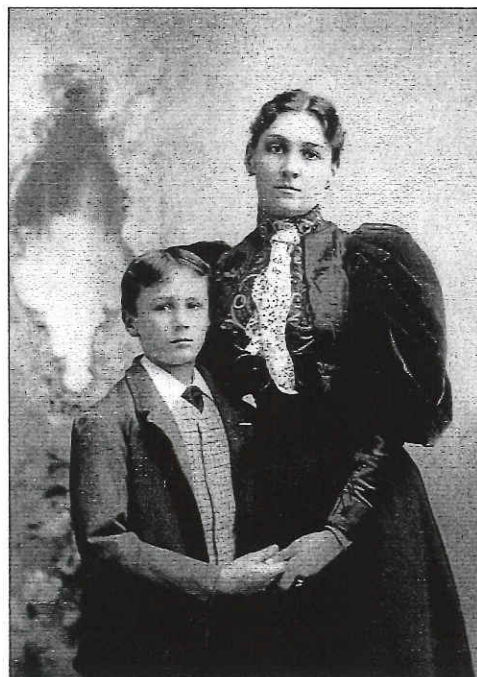
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Sara Delano Roosevelt, mother of Franklin, who first fell in love with the brilliant, roguish architect Stanford White, a suitor her father found unsuitable. Sara subsequently married a Hudson Valley squire and widower twenty-seven years her senior, James Roosevelt. FDR LIBRARY



Franklin, age eleven, with his mother, Sara, the most formidable force in his life. He once noted, "What vitality I have . . . comes from the Delanos" instead of the Roosevelts. FDR LIBRARY



Franklin, age seventeen, with the Groton football team. While reasonably skilled at tennis and golf, the then spindly Roosevelt had scant success on the gridiron. Lucy Mercer Rutherfurd kept a similar photograph of FDR all her life. FDR LIBRARY



er was a stunning
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Washington society
her husband,
aged to squander
and find themselves
genteel poverty. Their
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age fifteen. Though
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Lucy and her older
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MONTAGUE BLUNDON

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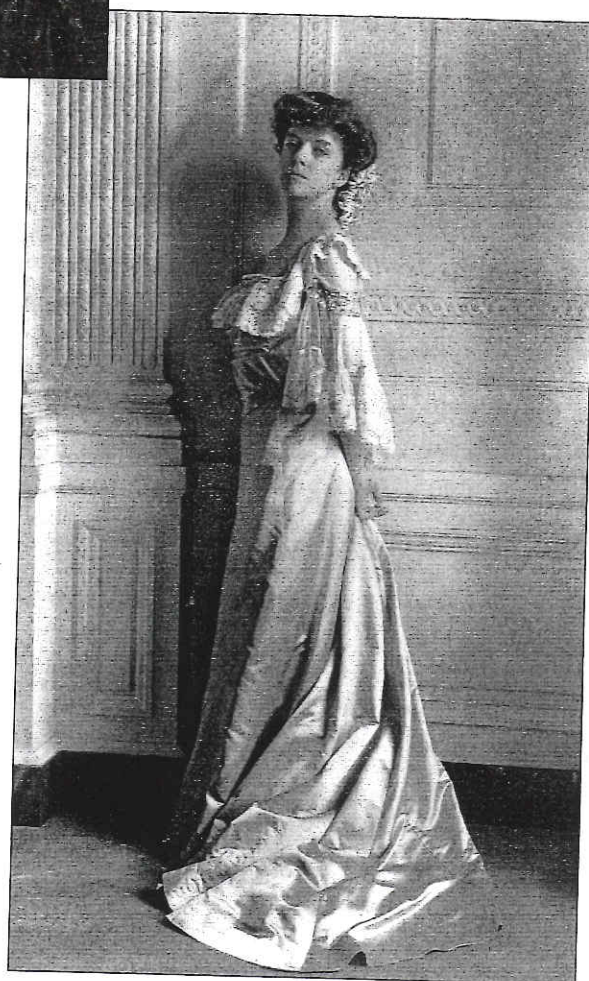
Lucy Mercer shortly before she became
Eleanor Roosevelt's social secretary in
1913. Her family needed the money and
Eleanor, overwhelmed by a houseful of
children and the protocol demands of the
wife of a high-level official, was desperate
for help. KNOWLES FAMILY

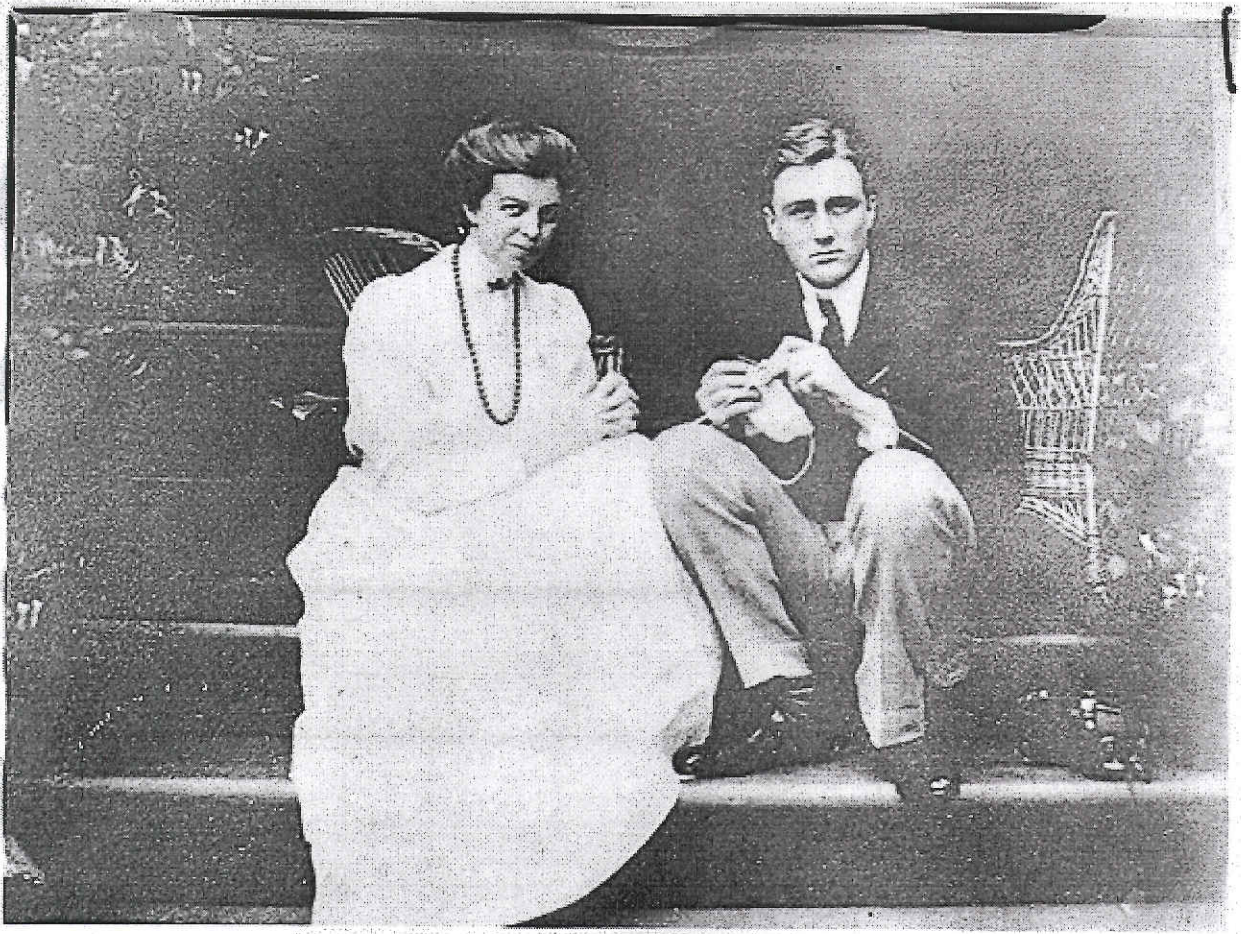
Alice Roosevelt Longworth, daughter of
President Theodore Roosevelt, possessor
of a mischievous charm and a waspish
tongue, was Eleanor's first cousin, a
lifelong rival, and an accomplice in
furthering the romance of Franklin
and Lucy. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



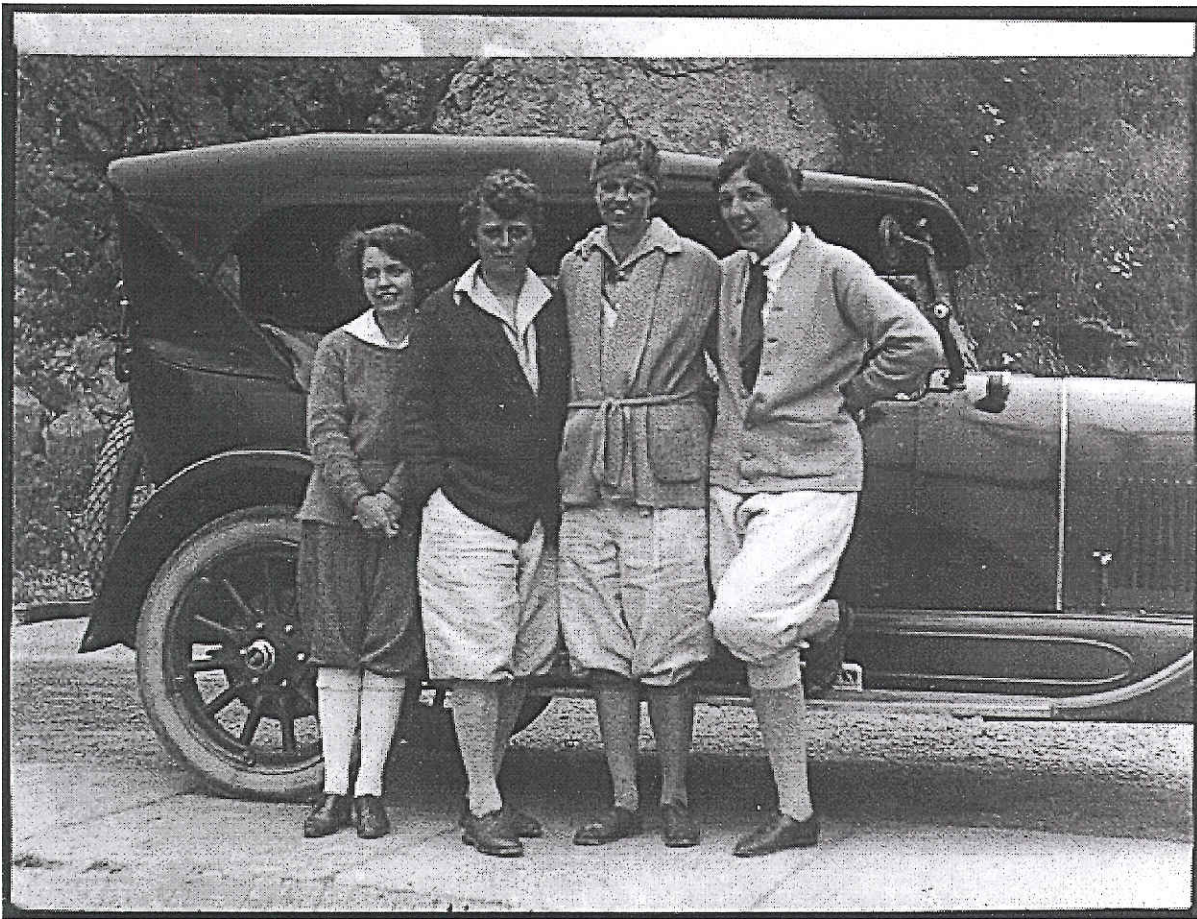
Lucy Mercer at the time of her
romance with FDR. Her poise
and blueblood background led
an initially trusting Eleanor
to bring her social secretary
into the Roosevelts' circle as
a member of the family.

FDR LIBRARY

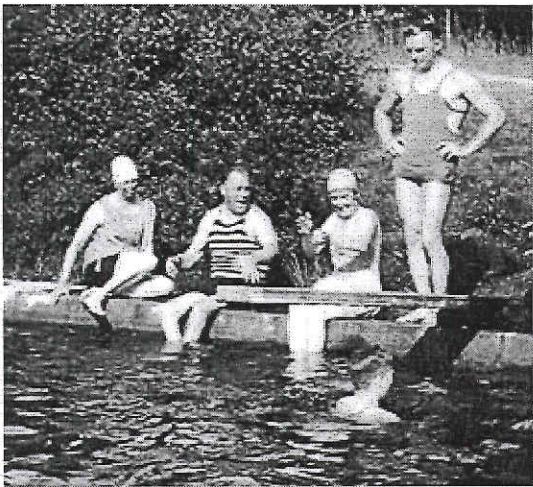








No C-



Dickerman Collection / National Park Service

ER, FDR, Missy Le Hand, and Earl Miller at the Val-Kill swimming pool, 1932







FDR | Amy | ER



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

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Before Dies Committee. Washington, D.C., Dec. 1. The Dies Committee Investigating un-American activities today questioned Joseph P. Lash, Executive Secretary of the American Students' Union, and Miss Agnes Reynolds, College Secretary of the Union. Lash testified that he was a member of the Socialist Party from 1929 to 1937. He said he resigned because he believed that the Socialist Party was subordinating the interests of the people of a whole to the interests of factional strife

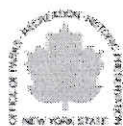
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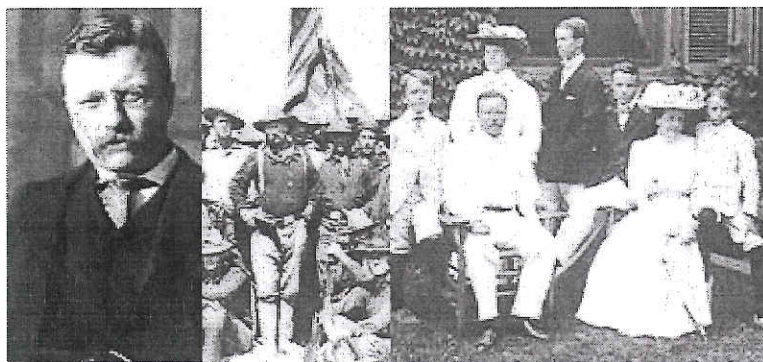
Theodore Roosevelt was one of our nation's greatest leaders and a great New Yorker.

Statesman

At age 23, he was the youngest man elected to the State Assembly and served as Governor of New York and President with distinction, promoting efficiency and honesty in government and fairness in society.


Conservationist

As President, Theodore Roosevelt created 150 National Forests, 51 Federal Bird Reservations, 5 National Parks, 4 National Game Preserves, and 21 Reclamation Projects. Roosevelt provided federal protection for nearly 230 million acres across America.



War Hero

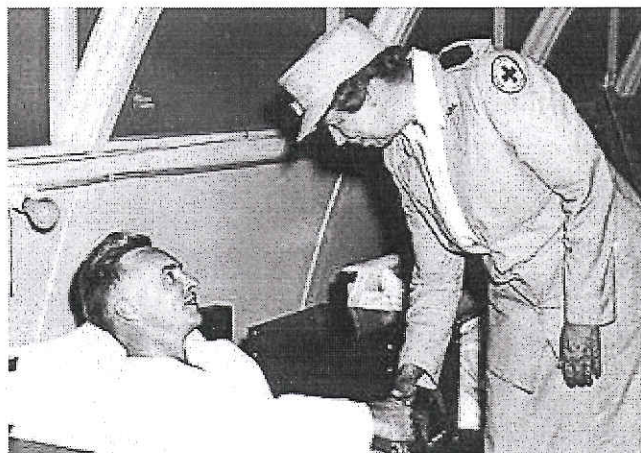
Roosevelt was a medal of honor recipient and Colonel of the Rough Riders Volunteer Cavalry Regiment during the Spanish American War. His accomplishments on the battlefield were matched by his efforts as a peacemaker. Roosevelt is the only President to receive the Medal of Honor and the Nobel Peace Prize.

Discover the historic sites and museums along the Heritage Trail  linked with the accomplishments and life of this New Yorker as Governor, President and national hero.

Additional Theodore Roosevelt Resources

Theodore Roosevelt Association (TRA) 

This Long Island-based non-profit organization was chartered by Congress in 1920 to preserve the memory and ideals of the 26th President of the United States. TRA offers excellent resources on its website, ranging from lesson plans to cartoons and speeches, to a bibliography of books by and about Theodore Roosevelt.



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The Atlantic Charter

August 14, 1941

A joint statement by Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill of their mutual goals for the post-WWII world.

The President of the United States of America and the Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill, representing His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, being met together, deem it right to make known certain common principles in the national policies of their respective countries on which they base their hopes for a better future for the world.

First, their countries seek no aggrandizement, territorial or other;

Second, they desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned;

Third, they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them;

Fourth, they will endeavor, with due respect for their existing obligations, to further the enjoyment by all States, great or small, victor or vanquished, of access, on equal terms, to the trade and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity;

Fifth, they desire to bring about the fullest collaboration between all nations in the economic field with the object of securing, for all, improved labor standards, economic advancement and social security;

Sixth, after the final destruction of the Nazi tyranny, they hope to see established a peace which will afford to all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries, and which will afford assurance that all the men in all lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want;

Seventh, such a peace should enable all men to traverse the high seas and oceans without hindrance;

Eighth, they believe that all of the nations of the world, for realistic as well as spiritual reasons must come to the abandonment of the use of force. Since no future peace can be maintained if land, sea or air armaments continue to be employed by nations which threaten, or may threaten, aggression outside of their frontiers, they believe, pending the establishment of a wider and permanent system of general security, that the disarmament of such nations is essential.

They will likewise aid and encourage all other practicable measure which will lighten for peace-loving peoples the crushing burden of armaments.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

Winston S. Churchill

Britannia's British History Department

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CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

February 2, 1954

THE DIRECTOR:

The thought occurs that if the President does not know of the furor that was caused in G-2 some years ago as the result of G-2's investigation of [redacted] his connections with Mrs. Roosevelt, you might want to consider mentioning this incident to him. *Qu*

[redacted] a close friend of Jimmy Wechsler and the last word I had was [redacted] working for the New York Post which has been exceedingly critical of the President as well as of us. Wechsler, of course, is a kingpin in the Americans for Democratic Action along with Mrs. Roosevelt [redacted]

The attached memorandum [redacted] connections with Mrs. Roosevelt along with the G-2 investigation, the subsequent confrontation with Mrs. Roosevelt and the order issued by FDR that everyone knowing of this action should be sent to the South Pacific until they were killed. The information was furnished to George Burton when he was assigned to Liaison by a Colonel Kibler and Colonel Bissell. *Qu*

This, of course, could have a relationship to the subsequent orders given the Army to destroy the files on subversives. *Qu*

We have photostats of the G-2 investigative reports on their coverage [redacted] there is no question [redacted] tie-in with Mrs. Roosevelt. G-2 files contain Mrs. Roosevelt's letters [redacted] invariably start with [redacted] and end with "All my love, ER." *Qu*

Indicative of the type of data in this file is a report dated March 7, 1943, reflecting that Mrs. Roosevelt checked into the Urbana-Lincoln Hotel, 11:45 a.m., March 5, 1943, accompanied by Malvina Thompson. She expressed the wish that no publicity be given to her arrival. At the time of her registration, she stated she expected a young friend from Chanute Field to visit her and reserved Room 330 for him. She occupied Room 332. The rooms were joined by a connecting door. At 9 o'clock on March 5, [redacted] at the Urbana Lincoln Hotel stating he understood Mrs. Roosevelt had a room reserved for him. He was directed to Room 330. *Qu*

Mrs. Roosevelt ordered dinner for the three sent to Room 332 at 8:30 p.m. Upon the arrival [redacted] Malvina Thompson had her luggage moved into the room occupied by Mrs. Roosevelt. Neither Mrs. Roosevelt nor [redacted]

LBN:FML
Attachment

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Nichols _____
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Glavin _____
Harbo _____
Rosen _____
Tracy _____
Gearty _____
Mohr _____
Winterrowd _____
Tele. Room _____
Holloman _____
Gandy _____

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ON 11-20-80

left their hotel rooms during the entire day of March 6, 1943, except to have lunch in the hotel dining room. Other meals were served in their rooms. *Tu*

When Mrs. Roosevelt checked out on the morning of March 7, she paid all the bills. *Tu*

for
L. B. NICHOLS

CONFIDENTIAL



FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

XXXII President of the United States: 1933-1945

82 - Acceptance Speech for the Renomination for the Presidency, Philadelphia, Pa.
June 27, 1936

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James K. Polk
John Tyler
William Henry Harrison
Martin Van Buren
Andrew Jackson
John Quincy Adams
James Monroe
James Madison
Thomas Jefferson
John Adams
George Washington

Senator Robinson, Members of the Democratic Convention, my friends:

Here, and in every community throughout the land, we are met at a time of great moment to the future of the Nation. It is an occasion to be dedicated to the simple and sincere expression of an attitude toward problems, the determination of which will profoundly affect America.

I come not only as a leader of a party, not only as a candidate for high office, but as one upon whom many critical hours have imposed and still impose a grave responsibility.

For the sympathy, help and confidence with which Americans have sustained me in my task I am grateful. For their loyalty I salute the members of our great party, in and out of political life in every part of the Union. I salute those of other parties, especially those in the Congress of the United States who on so many occasions have put partisanship aside. I thank the Governors of the several States, their Legislatures, their State and local officials who participated unselfishly and regardless of party in our efforts to achieve recovery and destroy abuses. Above all I thank the millions of Americans who have borne disaster bravely and have dared to smile through the storm.

America will not forget these recent years, will not forget that the rescue was not a mere party task. It was the concern of all of us. In our strength we rose together, rallied our energies together, applied the old rules of common sense, and together survived.

In those days we feared fear. That was why we fought fear. And today, my friends, we have won against the most dangerous of our foes. We have conquered fear.

But I cannot, with candor, tell you that all is well with the world. Clouds of suspicion, tides of ill-will and intolerance gather darkly in many places. In our own land we enjoy indeed a fullness of life greater than that of most Nations. But the rush of modern civilization itself has raised for us new difficulties, new problems which must be solved if we are to preserve to the United States the political and economic freedom for which Washington and Jefferson planned and fought.

Philadelphia is a good city in which to write American history. This is fitting ground on which to reaffirm the faith of our fathers; to pledge ourselves to restore to the people a wider freedom; to give to 1936 as the founders gave to 1776—an American way of life.

That very word freedom, in itself and of necessity, suggests freedom from some restraining power. In 1776 we sought freedom from the tyranny of a political autocracy—from the eighteenth century royalists who held special privileges from the crown. It was to perpetuate their privilege that they governed without the consent of the governed; that they denied the right of free assembly and free speech; that they restricted the worship of God; that they put the average man's property and the average man's life in pawn to the mercenaries of dynastic power; that they regimented the people.

And so it was to win freedom from the tyranny of political autocracy that the American Revolution was fought. That victory gave the business of governing into the hands of the average man, who won the right with his neighbors to make and order his own destiny through his own Government. Political tyranny was wiped out at Philadelphia on July 4, 1776.

Since that struggle, however, man's inventive genius released new forces in our land which reordered the lives of our people. The age of machinery, of railroads; of steam and electricity; the telegraph and the radio; mass production, mass distribution—all of these combined to bring forward a new civilization and with it a new problem for those who sought to remain free.

For out of this modern civilization economic royalists carved new dynasties. New kingdoms were built upon concentration of control over material things. Through new uses of corporations, banks and securities, new machinery of industry and agriculture, of labor and capital—all undreamed of by the fathers—the whole structure of modern life was impressed into this royal service.

There was no place among this royalty for our many thousands of small business men and merchants who sought to make a worthy use of the American system of initiative and profit. They were no more free than the worker or the farmer. Even honest and progressive-minded men of wealth, aware of their obligation to their generation, could never know just where they fitted into this dynastic scheme of things.

It was natural and perhaps human that the privileged princes of these new economic dynasties, thirsting for power, reached out for control over Government itself. They created a new despotism and wrapped it in the robes of legal sanction. In its service new mercenaries sought to regiment the people, their labor, and their property. And as a result the average man once more confronts the problem that faced the Minute Man.

The hours men and women worked, the wages they received, the conditions of their labor—these had passed beyond the control of the people, and were imposed by this new industrial dictatorship. The savings of the average family, the capital of the small business man, the investments set aside for old age—other people's money—these were tools which the new economic royalty used to dig itself in.

Those who tilled the soil no longer reaped the rewards which were their right. The small measure of their gains was decreed by men in distant cities.

Throughout the Nation, opportunity was limited by monopoly. Individual initiative was crushed in the cogs of a great machine. The field open for free business was more and more restricted. Private enterprise, indeed, became too private. It became privileged enterprise, not free enterprise.

An old English judge once said: "Necessitous men are not free men." Liberty requires opportunity to make a living—a living decent according to the standard of the time, a living which gives man not only enough to live by, but something to live for.

For too many of us the political equality we once had won was meaningless in the face of economic inequality. A small group had concentrated into their own hands an almost complete control over other people's property, other people's money, other people's labor—other people's lives. For too many of us life was no longer free; liberty no longer real; men could no longer follow the pursuit of happiness.

Against economic tyranny such as this, the American citizen could appeal only to the organized power of Government. The collapse of 1929 showed up the despotism for what it was. The election of 1932 was the people's mandate to end it. Under that mandate it is being ended.

The royalists of the economic order have conceded that political freedom was the business of the Government, but they have maintained that economic slavery was nobody's business. They granted that the Government could protect the citizen in his right to vote, but they denied that the Government could do anything to protect the citizen in his right to work and his right to live.

Today we stand committed to the proposition that freedom is no half-and-half affair. If the average citizen is guaranteed equal opportunity in the polling place, he must have equal opportunity in the market place.

These economic royalists complain that we seek to overthrow the institutions of America. What they really complain of is that we seek to take away their power. Our allegiance to American institutions requires the overthrow of this kind of power. In vain they seek to hide behind the Flag and the Constitution. In their blindness they forget what the Flag and the Constitution stand for. Now, as always, they stand for democracy, not tyranny; for



freedom, not subjection; and against a dictatorship by mob rule and the over-privileged alike.

The brave and clear platform adopted by this Convention, to which I heartily subscribe, sets forth that Government in a modern civilization has certain inescapable obligations to its citizens, among which are protection of the family and the home, the establishment of a democracy of opportunity, and aid to those overtaken by disaster.

But the resolute enemy within our gates is ever ready to beat down our words unless in greater courage we will fight for them.

For more than three years we have fought for them. This Convention, in every word and deed, has pledged that that fight will go on.

The defeats and victories of these years have given to us as a people a new understanding of our Government and of ourselves. Never since the early days of the New England town meeting have the affairs of Government been so widely discussed and so clearly appreciated. It has been brought home to us that the only effective guide for the safety of this most worldly of worlds, the greatest guide of all, is moral principle.

We do not see faith, hope and charity as unattainable ideals, but we use them as stout supports of a Nation fighting the fight for freedom in a modern civilization.

Faith—in the soundness of democracy in the midst of dictatorships.

Hope—renewed because we know so well the progress we have made.

Charity—in the true spirit of that grand old word. For charity literally translated from the original means love, the love that understands, that does not merely share the wealth of the giver, but in true sympathy and wisdom helps men to help themselves.

We seek not merely to make Government a mechanical implement, but to give it the vibrant personal character that is the very embodiment of human charity.

We are poor indeed if this Nation cannot afford to lift from every recess of American life the dread fear of the unemployed that they are not needed in the world. We cannot afford to accumulate a deficit in the books of human fortitude.

In the place of the palace of privilege we seek to build a temple out of faith and hope and charity.

It is a sobering thing, my friends, to be a servant of this great cause. We try in our daily work to remember that the cause belongs not to us, but to the people. The standard is not in the hands of you and me alone. It is carried by America. We seek daily to profit from experience, to learn to do better as our task proceeds.

Governments can err, Presidents do make mistakes, but the immortal Dante tells us that divine justice weighs the sins of the cold-blooded and the sins of the warm-hearted in different scales.

Better the occasional faults of a Government that lives in a spirit of charity than the consistent omissions of a Government frozen in the ice of its own indifference.

There is a mysterious cycle in human events. To some generations much is given. Of other generations much is expected. This generation of Americans has a rendezvous with destiny.

In this world of ours in other lands, there are some people, who, in times past, have lived and fought for freedom, and seem to have grown too weary to carry on the fight. They have sold their heritage of freedom for the illusion of a living. They have yielded their democracy.

I believe in my heart that only our success can stir their ancient hope. They begin to know that here in America we are waging a great and successful war. It is not alone a war against want and destitution and economic demoralization. It is more than that; it is a war for the survival of democracy. We are fighting to save a great and precious form of government for ourselves and for the world.

I accept the commission you have tendered me. I join with you. I am enlisted for the duration of the war.

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Civil Liberties--The Individual and the Community

Address to the Chicago Civil Liberties Committee, March 14, 1940

Reference Shelf 14 (1940): 173 -182.

[See also Speech and Article File, Anna Eleanor Roosevelt Papers, [Franklin D. Roosevelt Library](#), Hyde Park, New York]

Ladies and gentlemen: . . . Now we have come here tonight because of civil liberties. I imagine a great many of you could give my talk far better than I could, because you have had first-hand knowledge in the things you have had to do in Chicago over the years to preserve civil liberties. Perhaps, however, I am more conscious of the importance of civil liberties in the particular moment of our history than anyone else, because as I travel through the country and meet people and see things that have happened to little people, I realize what it means to democracy to preserve our civil liberties. All through the years we have had to fight for civil liberty, and we know that there are times when the light grows rather dim, and every time that happens democracy is in danger. Now largely because of the troubled state of the world as a whole civil liberties have disappeared in many other countries. It is impossible, of course, to be at war and to keep freedom of the press and freedom of speech and freedom of assembly. They disappear automatically. And so in many countries where ordinarily they were safe, today they have gone and in other countries, even before war came, not only freedom of the press and freedom of assembly and freedom of speech disappeared, but freedom of religion disappeared and so we know that here in this country we have a grave responsibility. We are at peace. We have no reason for the fears which govern so many other peoples throughout the world, and, therefore, we have to guard the freedoms of democracy. Civil liberties emphasizes the liberty of the individual. In many other forms of government the importance of the individual has disappeared. The individual lives for the state. Here in a democracy the government still exists for the individual, but that does not mean that we do not have to watch and that we do not have to examine ourselves to be sure that we preserve the civil liberties for all our people, which are the basis of our democracy. Now you know if we are honest with ourselves, in spite of all we have said, in spite of our Constitution, many of us in this country do not enjoy real liberty. For that reason we know that everywhere in this country every person who believes in democracy has come to feel a real

responsibility to work in his community and to know the people of his community, and to take the trouble to try to bring about the full observance for all our people of their civil liberties.

I think I will tell you a little story that brought home to me how important it was that in every community there should be someone to whom people could turn, who were in doubt as to what were their rights under the law, when they couldn't understand what was happening to them. I happen to go every now and then to a certain mining community and in that mining community there are a number of people who came to this country many years ago. They have been here so many years that they have no other country. This is their country. Their children have been born here. They work here. They have created great wealth for this country, but they came over at a time when there was not very much feeling of social responsibility about giving them the opportunity to learn the language of the country to which they had come, or telling them how to become citizens, or teaching about the government of this country. I had contact with a family where the man had been here over thirty-five years, and the first time I went to see him in his house it came about this way. I was standing with a group of people, and a young girl with arms full of packages came along the road. She stopped to look at me and said, "Why, you are Mrs. Roosevelt. My mama say, 'She is happy if you come to her house.'" I said, "Where is her house?" "Up the run." So I walked with her and when I got to the house a Polish woman was sitting at the table. The girl walked in and said, "Mama, this is Mrs. Roosevelt," and the woman got up and threw both arms around me, and I was kissed on both cheeks. She told me she had been expecting me to come for a long time. She wanted me to come because she wanted me to see how really nice her house was, and we went through the four rooms and it was nice. She had made crochet pieces which decorated every table. The bedspreads were things of real beauty. We admired everything together. We came back to the kitchen and she said, "You eat with us?" and I said, "No, I just had breakfast." She wouldn't let me leave without eating something, so we had a piece of bread there together.

Six months later I came back and I went again to visit my friend. The minute I crossed the threshold I knew something had happened in that house. It was quite dark. In a few minutes the old man came through from the back room and said, "Mrs. Roosevelt, you have come. I have wanted to ask you something for a long time. The mine, it close down, no more work. I work on W.P.A. for a time and then they tell me I no citizen. Mrs. Roosevelt, I vote. I vote often. Why I no citizen?" There was nobody that stood out in the community that he dared trust, that he felt he could go to find out what his rights were, or what he should do. Well, of course, it was true that he had never become a citizen. His children were born in this country; they were citizens, but he was not. And they had lived, those two people by being allowed by the county to take in four old men who would have gone otherwise to the county poor house. Six people were living on the allowance of those four old men. The allowance was pitifully small. As I looked at the stove at what they were going to have for supper, I realized the woman wouldn't again say, "Sit

down and eat." There wasn't enough for a stranger, and that was the breakdown of her morale. It hurt you. Something was wrong with the spirit of America that an injustice like that could happen to a man who, after all, worked hard and contributed to the wealth of the country. It should have been somebody's business, first of all, to see that he learned the English language well enough to find things out for himself. Secondly, when he was in trouble, to fight for his rights and to tell him how to go about to remedy what was wrong. I felt there was something wrong with any community where you had to wait many months for a stranger to come to listen to your story and help you straighten out what was a manifest injustice. He couldn't be on W.P.A. He could start out to become a citizen, and he could get relief and, at least, have the feeling that there was an interest on the part of someone in justice. I think that is, perhaps, one of the greatest things that the civil liberties committees do, and I wish we had one in every place throughout the country--one group of people who really care when things go wrong and do something when there is an infringement of the individual's rights.

There are many times when even with freedom of the press and freedom of speech, it is hard to get a hearing for certain causes. I often think that we, all of us, should think very much more carefully than we do about what we mean by freedom of speech, by freedom of the press, by freedom of assembly. I sometimes am much worried by the tendencies.