

# THE COMPLETE TALE OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR (ABRIDGED)

By **Eddie McPherson**

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THE COMPLETE TALE OF THE AMERICAN  
CIVIL WAR (ABRIDGED)

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**SYNOPSIS:** The American Civil War: Fast, furious, fresh and fun...really? Explore history like never before in this severely abridged satirical historical comedy by funnyman Eddie McPherson. Join Ms. South, three bards, a few soldiers, King Cotton and many other notable Civil War entities as they skewer history for fun. The American Civil War is back and more combative than ever in this humorous dramatic presentation that's fairly short and nearly brilliant.

**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*(10 – 38 either)*

FIRST BARD (m/f) .....	Tells the story. <i>(40 lines)</i>
SECOND BARD (m/f) .....	Also tells the story. <i>(33 lines)</i>
THIRD BARD (m/f) .....	Also tells the story. <i>(25 lines)</i>
KING COTTON (m/f) .....	King of the Southern crops. <i>(14 lines)</i>
FACTORY WORKER (m/f).....	<i>(4 lines)</i>
PLANTATION OWNER (m/f).....	Represents plantation owners in the South. <i>(33 lines)</i>
KING INDUSTRY (m/f) .....	King of the economy in the North. <i>(15 lines)</i>
MS. ABOLITIONIST (m/f).....	Wants to abolish slavery. <i>(19 lines)</i>
LLOYD GARRISON (m/f).....	Editor of an abolitionist newspaper. <i>(7 lines)</i>
PAPER BOY (m/f).....	Sells newspapers. <i>(1 line)</i>
FREDERICK DOUGLASS (m/f).....	“FRED,” an escaped slave who became an abolitionist. <i>(12 lines)</i>
ABRAHAM LINCOLN (m/f).....	Became President of the United States. <i>(22 lines)</i>
JEFFERSON DAVIS (m/f).....	<i>(1 line)</i>

FORT SUMTER (m/f).....	Where the first shots of the Civil War were fired. (9 lines)
YODA (m/f).....	Makes a few “cameo” appearances. (3 lines)
FIRST REPORTER (m/f).....	Reports on the Civil War. (24 lines)
SECOND REPORTER (m/f).....	Reports on the war. (14 lines)
THIRD REPORTER (m/f).....	Reports on the war. (28 lines)
MR. NORTH (m/f).....	Is interviewed by the Reporters and represents the Northern states. (13 lines)
MS. SOUTH (m/f).....	Is interviewed by the reporters and represents the Southern states. (30 lines)
EUROPE (m/f).....	(6 lines)
SIGHTSEER ONE (m/f).....	Is there to watch the war from the sidelines. (6 lines)
SIGHTSEER TWO (m/f).....	Is there to watch the war from the sidelines. (4 lines)
SIGHTSEER THREE (m/f).....	Is there to watch the war from the sidelines. (1 line)
SIGHTSEER FOUR (m/f).....	Is there to watch the war from the sidelines. (1 line)
MR. SCOTT (m/f).....	Traps Ms. South with a sneaky plan. (13 lines)
FIRST POET (m/f).....	Tells the story. (27 lines)
SECOND POET (m/f).....	Also tells the story. (20 lines)
THIRD POET (m/f).....	Also tells the story. (19 lines)
GRANT (m/f).....	A General who led the Union Troops. (13 lines)
LEE (m/f).....	(7 lines)
LEAD SOLDIER (m/f).....	Soldier in the war. (15 lines)
FIRST SOLDIER (m/f).....	Soldier in the war. (5 lines)
SECOND SOLDIER (m/f).....	Soldier in the war. (4 lines)
THIRD SOLDIER (m/f).....	Soldier in the war. (4 lines)
SHERMAN (m/f).....	A General who led Union troops through Georgia. (10 lines)

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- FIRST CITIZEN (m/f)..... A citizen of the United States.  
*(2 lines)*
- SECOND CITIZEN (m/f)..... Another citizen of the United  
States. *(1 line)*

**POSSIBLE DOUBLING OPTIONS**

- The BARDS, REPORTERS and POETS can be played by the same three actors
- The actor playing MS. SOUTH can also play KING COTTON
- The same actor can play PLANTATION OWNER, MR. SCOTT and GRANT
- The same actor can play KING INDUSTRY, MR. NORTH and SHERMAN
- The same actor can play LEE and GARRISON
- The same actor can play LINCOLN and FORT SUMTER
- The same actor can play GRANT and DOUGLAS
- The other characters who are on and off stage can be played by the same 4-5 actors: F. DOUGLAS, PAPER BOY, SIGHT SEERS, EUROPE, CITIZENS, SOLDIERS, JEFFERSON DAVIS, YODA, and MS. ABOLITIONIST

**PRODUCTION NOTES**

The action takes place on a bare stage with an old “wooden” fence stretching across upstage. You may choose to have a few cutouts sitting about such as a Civil War cannon, Union flag, Confederate flag, etc. The BARDS may double for the Reporters and Poets. If this is the case, they could be dressed in all black. But if they are to double as characters, they probably should have under dressing the same as the rest of the cast.

## COSTUMES

The Confederates wear gray and the Union wears blue. They may wear costume pieces to represent a particular character or a simple sash across their chest explaining who they are (Ex. A sash would read “Plantation Owner”) or they may choose to wear both. The below costume pieces are suggestions only. Remember, simple is okay.

PLANTATION OWNER—A Colonel Sanders’ goatee and skinny black ribbon for a tie and unlit cigar

KING COTTON—Bags of cotton balls connected together to create a wrap over his shoulders, a cheap scepter and a crown

KING INDUSTRY—A black apron, a fake sledgehammer for a scepter and a crown

FACTORY WORKER—A hard hat

MS. ABOLITIONIST—A complete formal gown with a sash and tiara, or just a tiara with the sash

LLOYD GARRISON—Round spectacles and bald cap (optional)

FREDERICK DOUGLAS—Short gray beard

ABRAHAM LINCOLN—Stovepipe hat and black goatee

JEFFERSON DAVIS—Short white beard and black bowtie

FORT SUMTER—Inner tube around his waist (and later, bandages)

MS. SOUTH—A long gown with poufy sleeves and large brimmed hat OR just a large brimmed hat

MR. NORTH—Kepi Civil War cap and sport coat OR just the hat OR just the jacket

SIGHTSEERS—Hawaiian shirts and sunglasses OR just sunglasses

GENERAL WINFIELD SCOTT—Homemade General shoulder tassels

MS. EUROPE—A flat hat with a large feather sticking from it

GENERAL ULYSSES S. GRANT—Short black beard, a bar with three stars on each shoulder

GRANT’S SOLDIERS—Union caps

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**PROPS**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> script                              | <input type="checkbox"/> large balloons and thumbtacks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cheap scepter                       | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 fedoras with “Press” cards  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a ring                              | <input type="checkbox"/> wooden crutch (optional)      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> play money                          | <input type="checkbox"/> sunglasses (optional)         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a green puppet that represents Yoda | <input type="checkbox"/> cameras                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> wheelbarrow (optional)              | <input type="checkbox"/> travel guides                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fake microphone                     | <input type="checkbox"/> foam hand                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> pocket Thesaurus                    | <input type="checkbox"/> cheap trophy                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> kazoo                               | <input type="checkbox"/> small stuffed animal          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> rolled up newspaper                 | <input type="checkbox"/> rope                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BINGO cards                         | <input type="checkbox"/> nail file                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Umbrella                            | <input type="checkbox"/> piece of paper                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ball caps                           | <input type="checkbox"/> brooms and mops               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a party blowout                     | <input type="checkbox"/> lighters                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Smartphone                          | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 phone receivers             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> hand fan                            |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> inner tube                          |  |

**MUSIC/SFX**

The silly songs sung throughout may be sung acapella or a guitarist might step out and play along. Recorded applause, music such as the “Mission Impossible” theme, Civil War songs/music such as “Johnny Comes Marching,” “Dixie Land,” “Ol’ Suzanna,” etc., sounds of blasters, movie themes such as *Star Wars* and/or *Gone with the Wind*, rim shot.

DEDICATION

*To Terry Abromitis*

*Thank you for encouraging me to write this script.*

*You are an awesome teacher who loves what you do and it shows.*

—EDDIE MCPHERSON

DO NOT COPY

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**AT RISE:**

*The three BARDS stand center stage.*

**FIRST BARD:** Allowest me to tellest thou a story of civil unrest.

**SECOND BARD:** Why are you talking so weird?

**FIRST BARD:** This story happened a long time ago.

**THIRD BARD:** It didn't take place in the Middle Ages.

**FIRST BARD:** *(To THIRD BARD.)* Who are you?

**THIRD BARD:** One of the bards.

**FIRST BARD:** But there are only two bards in this show.

**THIRD BARD:** No, there are three. *(Brings a script from her back pocket.)* See the cast list? First, Second and THIRD Bard.

**FIRST BARD:** Oh.

**SECOND BARD:** What is a bard anyway?

**FIRST BARD:** A flat-bottomed vessel usually intended to be pushed or towed in the water.

**THIRD BARD:** That's a barge. A bard is a poet or storyteller.

**FIRST BARD:** We're wasting time. *(Clears throat.)* As I was saying, this is a story of civil unrest.

*KING COTTON and PLANTATION OWNER enter. KING COTTON sits on his "throne" while PLANTATION OWNER sits at his feet.*

**SECOND BARD:** Back in the early 1800s, Cotton was king of all crops in the southern United States.

**KING COTTON:** *(Holds his scepter high.)* Hail to me, for I am King Cotton.

**PLANTATION OWNER:** *(Bowling.)* Hail to you, King Cotton.

**THIRD BARD:** Plantation Owner loved King Cotton.

**PLANTATION OWNER:** *(On one knee.)* I love you, King Cotton. *(Presents a ring.)* Will you marry me?

**THIRD BARD:** Not that kind of love.

**PLANTATION OWNER:** *(Putting the ring away.)* Sorry.

**FIRST BARD:** King Cotton made Plantation Owner rich.

*KING COTTON throws a wad of play money in PLANTATION OWNER'S face.*

**KING COTTON:** Here you go.

**PLANTATION OWNER:** Money, money, money! I love you, King Cotton, for making me rich.

**KING COTTON:** *(In a deep voice.)* Bow to me, Plantation Owner.

**PLANTATION OWNER:** Show me the money.

*KING COTTON throws more money.*

Money, money, money! I bow to you, King Cotton.

**SECOND BARD:** King Cotton was so popular that Plantation Owner used enslaved Africans to work in his cotton fields.

**THIRD BARD:** Boo to Plantation owner!

**FIRST BARD:** Yeah, that is so wrong is so many ways.

**PLANTATION OWNER:** But his Majesty, King Cotton, requires a lot of workers to bring in his plentiful crops.

**KING COTTON:** *(Loud and powerful voice.)* Hail to me, King Cotton!

**SECOND BARD:** Oh, be quiet.

**KING COTTON:** Sorry. *(Drops his head and sits.)*

**THIRD BARD:** Meanwhile In the Northern states, Industry was king of the economy.

**KING INDUSTRY:** *(Enters and poses like Superman.)* Bow to me, Factory Worker, for I am king of your economy.

**FACTORY WORKER:** *(Enters and bows.)* Hail to you, King Industry.

**KING COTTON:** *(To KING INDUSTRY.)* Wait one cotton pickin' minute! I am king!

**KING INDUSTRY:** That's a laugh for I am king.

**PLANTATION OWNER:** *(Singing a little off key.)* Oh, I wish I were in the land of cotton.

**KING INDUSTRY:** No, don't sing.

**PLANTATION OWNER:** Old times there are not forgotten –

**KING INDUSTRY:** Quiet!

**PLANTATION OWNER:** *(Singing.)* Look away!

**KING INDUSTRY:** Enough!

**PLANTATION OWNER:** *(Singing.)* Look away!

**KING INDUSTRY:** I'm warning you!

**PLANTATION OWNER:** *(Quickly.)* Look away Dixie Land.

**KING COTTON:** *(Crosses to KING INDUSTRY.)* There can only be ONE king.

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**KING INDUSTRY:** (*Meets him half way.*) And it shall be me.

**KING COTTON:** (*Face to face now.*) It shall be little ol' me!

**KING INDUSTRY:** (*Stomps his foot like a child.*) Me, me, me!

**FIRST BARD:** Differences between the Northern states and the Southern states began to grow and grow.

**SECOND BARD:** Southern states used slaves to serve King Cotton – (*KING COTTON and KING INDUSTRY are locked in a nose-to-nose stare.*) Gentlemen? (*They continue to stare.*) Excuse me, but we're in the middle of a play here.

**THIRD BARD:** Northern States used paid labor to work in their many factories.

**PLANTATION OWNER:** (*Breaks his stare.*) Wait a minute, they paid their workers?

**FACTORY WORKER:** That's right, Mr. high and mighty.

**PLANTATION OWNER:** (*Thinking aloud.*) Hmm, very interesting.

**KING COTTON:** Don't forget, Plantation Owner that I'm making you rich, rich, rich. (*Throws more money.*)

**PLANTATION OWNER:** You're right, your majesty. We will continue to use slaves!

**KING INDUSTRY:** We will never use slaves!

**KING COTTON:** I said slaves!

**KING INDUSTRY:** I said no slaves!

**PLANTATION OWNER:** Slaves!

*A handful of actors have entered and stand extreme stage left or right and sing softly under the dialog.*

**CAST MEMBERS:** (*Singing.*)

GLORY, GLORY HALLELUJAH.

GLORY, GLORY HALLELUJAH.

GLORY, GLORY HALLELUJAH.

HIS TRUTH IS MARCHING ON.

**FIRST BARD:** Tensions grew and grew.

**SECOND BARD:** The folks in the south were holding firm.

**THIRD BARD:** The folks in the north were holding fast.

**FIRST BARD:** King Industry used paid labor.

**SECOND BARD:** King Cotton used slaves.

**THIRD BARD:** This tension was so great that it was about to cause one of the bloodiest wars in United States history.

**ALL:** *(Singing loud and strong as a funny-looking GREEN PUPPET is rolled out in a wheelbarrow or simply carried out.)* His truth is marching oooooon!

**YODA:** *(In the quietness of the moment.)* Growing stronger now, tensions were. Yeesssssss.

**FIRST BARD:** Who invited Yoda?

*As everyone watches, the puppet is wheeled out. All but the BARDS exit quietly.*

**FIRST BARD:** So, between the years 1820 and 1860, slavery was the primary issue that divided the United States.

**SECOND BARD:** Some people believed that slavery was morally wrong.

**THIRD BARD:** Others felt slavery was necessary in order to continue a way of life they were used to.

**FIRST BARD:** So, by the 1830s many people in the United States wanted to abolish slavery.

*As MS. ABOLITIONIST enters dressed like a contestant in a beauty contest.*

**SECOND BARD:** *(Pulling a microphone from her back pocket.)* Those folks were called Abolitionists. Say hello, Ms. Abolitionist.

**MS. ABOLITIONIST:** Hello, Ms. Abolitionist.

**SECOND BARD:** No, that's you.

**MS. ABOLITIONIST:** Yes, I know.

**SECOND BARD:** May I call you Ab for short?

**MS. ABOLITIONIST:** I'd rather you didn't.

**SECOND BARD:** Okey dokey then. So, what do you think about our story so far?

**MS. ABOLITIONIST:** Terrible. Awful. Despicable. *(Brings out a pocket Thesaurus and reads.)* Dreadful. Ghastly. Shocking. Loathsome. In other words, yuck!

**PLANTATION OWNER:** *(Rushing in and crossing to ABOLITIONIST.)* Excuse me, but just WHO do you think you are?

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**MS. ABOLITIONIST:** My name, sir, is Ms. Aborigine.

*SECOND BARD whispers in her ear.*

My name, sir, is Ms. Abolitionist.

**PLANTATION OWNER:** I know you. You're the one who wants me to lose my cotton crops by doing away with slavery.

**MS. ABOLITIONIST:** Slavery is wrong. I even wrote a song about it. *(She brings a kazoo from her pocket and blows one note then clears her throat and sings to the tune of "Jingle Bells.")*

SLAVERY IS WRONG.  
THAT'S VERY PLAIN TO SEE.  
IT DOESN'T WORK FOR US.  
WE'RE ROLLING UP OUR SLEEVES.  
WE LOOK YOU IN THE EYE  
AND STAND FOR WHAT IS RIGHT.  
PAY YOUR COTTON PICKIN' HELP OR WE WILL PICK A FIGHT. OH –

*The CHORUS joins her.*

DOWN WITH SLAVES!  
DOWN WITH SLAVES!  
PAID LABOR ALL THE WAY!  
OH HOW SAD TO WORK FOR FREE FROM DAWN TO END OF DAY, HEY!  
DOWN WITH SLAVES! GIVE THEM PAY! IT IS ONLY FAIR.  
OH HOW SAD TO WORK FOR FREE.

**LINCOLN:** *(Runs out and throws his arms up, singing.)*

DON'T WORRY, I'LL BE THEEEEEERE! *(He runs out again.)*

**PLANTATION OWNER:** Oh yeah? I got a little ol' song myself.

**FIRST BARD:** No, no, no. Only one terrible song per scene.

**MS. ABOLITIONIST:** To help with my cause, I'd like to introduce you to two friends of mine. Mr. Lloyd Garrison.

*Recorded applause as LLOYD enters and bows.*

**LLOYD:** Thank you, thank you, but you may call me Lloyd.

**MS. ABOLITIONIST:** Thank you, Lloyd. Ladies and gentlemen, also help me welcome Mr. Frederick Douglass.

*More applause as FRED enters and takes bows.*

**FRED:** Thank you, but you may call me Fred.

**PLANTATION OWNER:** Are Lloyd and Fred against slavery?

**MS. ABOLITIONIST:** Of course.

**FRED:** Oh, yes.

**LLOYD:** Absolutely-dutely.

**PLANTATION OWNER:** In that case, I have nothing to say to them.

From this point I'm ignoring all of you. *(Folds his arms and turns away.)*

**MS. ABOLITIONIST:** But you should listen and learn.

**PLANTATION OWNER:** How can I talk to you if I'm ignoring you?

**MS. ABOLITIONIST:** *(Shrugs.)* Anyway, Lloyd, share with us how you helped the anti-slavery movement.

**LLOYD:** Well, Ms. Abolitionist, I was the editor of the abolitionist newspaper called the *Liberator*.

**PAPER BOY:** *(Runs out holding up a newspaper.)* Extra! Extra! Read all about it! Abolitionists attempts to do away with slavery!

*Recorded applause as PAPER BOY takes a bow the runs out the opposite side.*

**FIRST BARD:** Mr. Garrison was also one of the founders of the American Anti-Slavery Society.

**MS. ABOLITIONIST:** Excuse me, but this is my interview.

**FIRST BARD:** *(Offended.)* Well.

**MS. ABOLITIONIST:** And what about you, Mr. Douglas?

**FRED:** I was an escaped slave who became a leader in the abolitionist movement.

**MS. ABOLITIONIST:** Can you tell us how you escaped?

**FRED:** Like this. Hit it!

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*Music such as the theme from “Mission Impossible” plays as FRED rolls around on the floor, performs flips, cartwheels and other maneuvers. He sneaks up behind PLANTATION OWNER and taps him on the shoulder. When PLANTATION OWNER looks, FRED ducks, performs a few more maneuvers and ends up beside MS. ABOLITIONIST again. Music out.*

**MS. ABOLITIONIST:** That’s very impressive, Fred.

**FRED:** *(Combing his hair.)* Thanks.

**MS. ABOLITIONIST:** Tell us more about yourself.

**FRED:** I was a writer.

**MS. ABOLITIONIST:** And?

**FRED:** I gave speeches to further our cause.

**MS. ABOLITIONIST:** And?

**FRED:** I was a firm believer in the equality of all people.

**MS. ABOLITIONIST:** *(Holds up a BINGO card.)* Bingo! Thank you, gentlemen. Let’s give these two a hand, shall we?

*Applause as they proudly exit.*

Okay, Mr. Bard, you’re up.

Someone offstage pitches her an umbrella.

*My time here is done. I only go where I’m needed. (She opens the umbrella and exits as though she were flying away Mary-Poppins-style.) La tee da tee da. Goodbyyyyyyyyyy. (She’s gone.)*

**FIRST BARD:** That was weird. Fellow Bards, are you still here?

**SECOND BARD:** Present.

**THIRD BARD:** I’m right behind you.

**FIRST BARD:** Another important event that was happening prior to the Civil War was the Underground Railroad.

**SECOND BARD:** The Underground Railroad was a large network of folks who worked to help slaves escape to the Northern States.

**PLANTATION OWNER:** Wait a minute, why didn’t I know about this railroad?

**THIRD BARD:** Because it was a secret.

**SECOND and THIRD BARDS:** Duh!

**SECOND BARD:** To make this part of the play more interesting, we have adapted it –

*As someone offstage throws each of them a cap they wear.*

**THIRD BARD:** Into a rap.

**ALL BARDS:** Hey!

**FIRST BARD:** This railroad was a way for slaves

**SECOND BARD:** In secret to escape.

**THIRD BARD:** They couldn't walk in daylight, so

**LLOYD:** They'd wait 'til very late.

**FRED:** There were folks along this route

**FIRST BARD:** Who fed and hid slaves well.

**SECOND BARD:** They had to do this carefully

**THIRD BARD:** Or possibly be jailed.

**LLOYD:** It wasn't easy to decamp

**FRED:** From homesteads in the South.

**FIRST BARD:** But they believed it worth the risk

**SECOND BARD:** To trek this secret route.

**THIRD BARD:** The Underground

**LLOYD:** Underground

**ALL:** Underground Railroad!

**FRED:** Underground

**ALL:** Underground

**FIRST BARD:** Underground Railroad.

**SECOND BARD:** This little rap brings us to

**THIRD BARD:** A quite important door

*As YODA is rolled out.*

**LLOYD:** A passage that when it's opened,

**FRED:** Leads us to...

**ALL:** The American Civil War.

**YODA:** About to get started, the Civil War is.

**FIRST BARD:** Yoda, go home.

*All exit but the BARDS as music such as "Dixie Land" plays.*

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**FIRST BARD:** We move to the mid-1850s.

**SECOND BARD:** A new party was created by Northern abolitionists.

**THIRD BARD:** I love a good party. *(Pulls a blowout from his pocket and blows into it.)*

**FIRST BARD:** *(Sighs.)* Not THAT kind of party. This new party was called the Republican Party. A lawyer who lived in Illinois joined this new Republican Party.

**SECOND BARD:** His name was...drum roll, please.

**THIRD BARD:** We don't have a drum. *(LINCOLN enters.)*

**SECOND BARD:** Oh.

**THIRD BARD:** His name was Abraham Lincoln.

*Recorded applause as LINCOLN waves like the typical beauty queen.*

**LINCOLN:** *(Heavy British accent.)* Hello, I'm Abraham Lincoln, I am.

**THIRD BARD:** Lincoln wasn't British.

**LINCOLN:** *(American accent.)* Hello, I'm Abraham Lincoln.

**SECOND BARD:** Mr. Lincoln, it IS a pleasure, sir. I didn't know you were going to actually be here.

**LINCOLN:** I received an Evite.

**SECOND BARD:** *(Shaking his hand wildly.)* Welcome, welcome, welcome!

**LINCOLN:** Thanks. You see, I believe slavery is wrong and my first goal is to stop slavery from moving to NEW states.

**KING INDUSTRY:** *(Enters running.)* Mr. Lincoln, sir, you are my hero!

**KING COTTON:** *(Running in on the opposite side of the stage.)* Boo Lincoln!

**PLANTATION OWNER:** *(Following.)* I agree. Boo Lincoln!

**FIRST BARD:** *(To KING COTTON and PLANTATION OWNER.)* Listen, you two, if I hear one more peep out of either of you, you'll have to sit down. Got it?

**PLANTATION OWNER:** *(Pause.)* Peep.

**FIRST BARD:** Sit!

**KING COTTON:** *(Slaps PLANTATION OWNER on the shoulder.)* Why did you do that?

*They take a seat on the floor.*

**SECOND BARD:** You were saying, Mr. Lincoln?

**LINCOLN:** Later I ran against Stephen Douglass for the Senate. Mr. Douglas was a Democrat.

**SECOND BARD:** And is Mr. Douglas here?

**THIRD BARD:** *(Getting off her cell phone.)* Just called. He's stuck in traffic.

**SECOND BARD:** So, Mr. Lincoln, who won the Senate seat?

**LINCOLN:** I'll give you one guess.

**SECOND BARD:** You?

**LINCOLN:** *(Holds up a BINGO card.)* Bingo! Later in 1860, I was running for President of the United States.

**PLANTATION OWNER:** *(Stands with finger in the air.)* If Lincoln becomes President, MY southern state, South Carolina, is seceding from the Union.

**FIRST BARD:** Seceding?

**PLANTATION OWNER:** Seceding!

**FIRST BARD:** Then I have but one question.

**PLANTATION OWNER:** Yes?

**FIRST BARD:** What does seceding mean?

**PLANTATION OWNER:** *(Pulling a Smart phone from his back pocket.)* According to Dictionary dot com, it means: To withdraw formally from an allfance, federation or association.

**FIRST BARD:** So, let me see if I understand. South Carolina plans to separate from the Union if Mr. Lincoln becomes President of the United State.

**PLANTATION OWNER:** Ding, ding, ding! You are correct!

*The BARDS clap.*

**LINCOLN:** But I did win and many states did secede from the Union.

**PLANTATION OWNER:** Told ya.

**KING INDUSTRY:** I see how you are, Plantation Owner, you don't like the rules, so you make up your own.

**PLANTATION OWNER:** *(In his face.)* Oh yeah?

**KING INDUSTRY:** *(In his face.)* Yeah!

**FIRST BARD:** *(Has pulled a hand fan out and begins fanning her face.)* Things are really getting heated around here.

*THE COMPLETE TALE OF THE  
AMERICAN CIVIL WAR (ABRIDGED)*

**PLANTATION OWNER:** You bet your buttons they are. And now I am proud to announce that we, the Confederate states, have our very OWN president.

**KING INDUSTRY:** What do you mean?

**KING COTTON:** She means our OWN president.

**FACTORY WORKER:** (*Running in.*) So, what are you saying? (*To KING INDUSTRY.*) What is she saying?

**KING INDUSTRY:** Just calm down, Factory Worker.

*PLANTATION OWNER speaks as JEFFERSON DAVIS enters.*

**PLANTATION OWNER:** I introduce to you Mr. Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederate states.

*Applause.*

**KING COTTON:** (*Shaking his hand wildly.*) Mr. Davis, it IS a pleasure!

**SECOND BARD:** And now we are getting down to the nitty gritty.

**JEFFERSON DAVIS:** Wait a minute, don't I have any lines?

**SECOND BARD:** (*Pulls his script from his back pocket and looks.*) Uh, no sir, just the one you already said.

*JEFFERSON DAVIS throws up his hands in frustration and exits.*

As I was saying, now we're getting down to the nitty gritty. Fort Sumter, are you here?

**FORT SUMTER:** (*Enters wearing an inner tube around his waist.*)

Here I am, sitting right here on an island in South Carolina.

**THIRD BARD:** (*Placing her arm around his shoulder.*) We hate to tell you, but you're about to be fired upon.

*A handful of ACTORS enter with large balloons and thumbtacks.*

**FORT SUMTER:** Me? Fired upon? Don't make me laugh. (*A balloon is popped and he grabs his arm.*) Oww!!

**SECOND BARD:** Yes, you see, these shots fired at you are the first shots of the Civil War.

*Two balloons are popped.*

**FORT SUMTER:** *(Grabs his knee.)* Hey, that smarts! But why me?  
I'm just sitting here on my little Island.

**SECOND BARD:** It's a loooooong story.

*Two or three more balloons are popped.*

**FORT SUMTER:** *(Grabs his shoulder.)* Ouch! Ouch! Stop it!

**LINCOLN:** With these shots fired, the Civil War, the bloodiest war in United States history, was just getting started.

*More balloons are popped.*

**FORT SUMTER:** Stop the firing! Stop the firing!

*As YODA is rolled out.*

**FIRST BARD:** But the firing didn't stop. And the war had begun.

*More balloons are brought out and dropped on the floor as everyone runs out and begins popping them as FORT SUMTER holds his backside and runs out.*

**FORT SUMTER:** Owwwwweeeeeee!!

*Everything is quiet for a second as they freeze.*

**YODA:** Divided, the nation was. Yes, hmmm.

*They unfreeze as the popping continues and a Civil War song such as "Johnny Comes Marching" plays and lights fade to a BLACKOUT. In the darkness we hear a sound effect such as blasters shooting from Star Wars. Explosions. Suddenly a strong movie theme such as Star Wars or Gone with the Wind erupts then fades.*

**FIRST REPORTER:** The cannons are firing!

**SECOND REPORTER:** The muskets are blasting!

**FIRST REPORTER:** The American Civil War has begun.

*THE COMPLETE TALE OF THE  
AMERICAN CIVIL WAR (ABRIDGED)*

*Lights up as FIRST REPORTER enters wearing a fedora with a "Press" card in its band. He/She holds a microphone. FORT SUMTER enters all bandaged up, leaning on a solitary crutch.*

**FIRST REPORTER:** This is Ervin Hitserflass coming to you from Fort Sumter where the first shots of the Civil War have been fired. Mr. Sumter, how are you feeling?

**FORT SUMTER:** *(Sarcastic.)* I'm feeling just peachy. How the heck you THINK I'm feeling?

**FIRST REPORTER:** Well, you look just awful.

**FORT SUMTER:** I was sitting here on my little island minding my own business, when all of a sudden they started firing at me.

*A balloon is popped.*

Hey! I'm sorry, I can't talk right now, this hurts too much.

**FIRST REPORTER:** Thank you for your time, Fort.

**FORT SUMTER:** Whatever. *(FORT SUMTER hobbles out.)*

**FIRST REPORTER:** We go now to our second reporter, Anita Knapp. Anita?

*SECOND REPORTER enters also wearing a fedora with MR. NORTH and MS. SOUTH.*

**SECOND REPORTER:** Thank you, Erving. I'm standing here with Mr. North and Ms. South trying to find out what is going on. Ms. South, can you elaborate on what got all this fighting started, please?

**MS. SOUTH:** *(With a southern drawl.)* Well, honey pie, we just wanted to hang on to a way of life that we have come to know and to which we have grown accustomed, that's all, y'all.

**SECOND REPORTER:** And what kind of life is that, Ms. South?

**MS. SOUTH:** A life filled with plantations, and fields full of cotton, y'all.

**SECOND REPORTER:** Cotton harvested by slave labor, isn't that right?

**MS. SOUTH:** Well, yes, shuga...y'all.

**SECOND REPORTER:** And what about you, Mr. North?

**MR. NORTH:** We in the North believe in equal rights for every man.

*FACTORY WORKER* walks through.

A worker should be paid for a day's labor.

*MR. NORTH* hands *FACTORY WORKER* a bill.

Here you go, Factory Worker.

**FACTORY WORKER:** *(Without stopping, he takes the bill.)* Thanks.  
*(Exits.)*

**MS. SOUTH:** *(Fanning herself with a hand fan.)* Mr. North, you're just jealous because you don't have the kind of life I have, honey child.

**MR. NORTH:** That's not true at all.

**MS. SOUTH:** It IS true, shuga.

**MR. NORTH:** It isn't true, *(Mocking.)* shuga.

**MS. SOUTH:** *(Hands on hips.)* Are you mockin' me? *(Turns to BARDS.)* I do believe this carpetbagger was mockin' me, y'all. I'll show you!

*MS. SOUTH* begins choking *MR. NORTH*.

**SECOND REPORTER:** You heard it here first, folks. North and South are at each other's throats. And now we take you over to Bull Run where our third reporter, Noah Lott is standing by. Noah?

*MS. SOUTH* and *MR. NORTH* exits as she continues to choke him.

**THIRD REPORTER:** *(Entering also wearing a fedora.)* Well, Anita, the battle here at Bull Run is the first major battle of the Civil War.

**FIRST REPORTER:** Noah, where exactly IS Bull Run?

*THE COMPLETE TALE OF THE  
AMERICAN CIVIL WAR (ABRIDGED)*

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