

U.S. Grant & Lincoln Log

by
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U.S. GRANT & LINCOLN LOG. (*short. 3 actors.*) Abraham Lincoln and Ulysses S. Grant walk through Central Park and grapple with history, legacy and friendship.

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CHARACTERS

ABRAHAM LINCOLN: 16th President of the United States (1861-1865). Guided the country through the Civil War. Any gender. Any race/ethnicity. Any age.

ULYSSES S. GRANT: 18th President of the United States (1869-1877). More successful as commander of the U.S. Army at the end of the Civil War. Any gender. Any race/ethnicity. Any age.

OFFICER: An NYPD police officer who doesn't have time for nonsense. Any gender. Any race/ethnicity. 20+

SETTING & TIME

Central Park, New York City. Now.

NOTES

A slash ("/") in the dialogue indicates overlapping.

U.S. GRANT & LINCOLN LOG

LINCOLN and GRANT walk in Central Park. They are dressed in dirty, shabby versions of their familiar wear. They carry lunch boxes. GRANT seems annoyed with something.

LINCOLN

So I got these shoes for Christmas. They're pretty nice, you see? 'Course I still need a good pair of boots for winter. Mary meant well, but these are entirely useless (*he laughs kindly*). Ulysses, quite the afternoon/ for a stroll.

GRANT

Indeed.

LINCOLN

How 'bout them Knicks?

GRANT

What are you doing, Abe?

LINCOLN

You seem troubled.

GRANT

Nope.

LINCOLN

Just don't feel much like talking?

GRANT

Correct-a-mundo.

LINCOLN stops to have his lunch.

Must we?

LINCOLN

I'm hungry and I'd like to have my lunch here.

GRANT

Of all the places. Here?

LINCOLN

Yes, here.

GRANT

Why here?

LINCOLN

It's pretty.

GRANT

We can't though.

LINCOLN

Go on if you want, but my ice pack is all sweaty and my sandwich might get wet.

GRANT

What is it, ham again? I would have lent you one of my ice packs.

LINCOLN

I didn't know. You should have mentioned it.

GRANT

Well what the hell are you packing ham again for??

LINCOLN

I like haaaaaaam! (*beat*) Tell me what's wrong with this spot?

GRANT

Natives.

LINCOLN

I thought... didn't Andrew...?

GRANT

He put them all here.

LINCOLN

Whaaaa? Here?

GRANT

Right this very spot.

LINCOLN

Well... did they have a say in the matter?

GRANT

No.

LINCOLN

Well that's not very nice.

GRANT

We should move.

LINCOLN

Should have just let 'em live their lives.

They start moving again. Light shift.

Getting dark.

GRANT

We're making good time.

LINCOLN stops to eat his sandwich. GRANT slaps it out of his hands.

No time for supper!

LINCOLN

The hell was that for?? Aw, you got dirt in it...

GRANT

Let's go!

LINCOLN

Wait a minute!

GRANT

Now!

LINCOLN

Will you give me a second!

GRANT

If there are hostiles in the area then we can't stand still for long.

LINCOLN

"Hostiles"? Really? Sounds to me they've a reason to be tiffed.

GRANT

It's worse than that!

LINCOLN

Oh no. No, no, no. Don't say it.

GRANT

Bureaucrats.

LINCOLN

I'm scared.

GRANT

Stay close.

LINCOLN starts walking again. GRANT follows.

LINCOLN

Sorry, if I seem cranky. I haven't had a bite all day.

GRANT

We should keep moving.

LINCOLN

But I'm exhausted!

GRANT

Here's not the place!

LINCOLN

I can't keep on like this... I gotta eat!

You gotta walk!

GRANT

You gotta shut up!

LINCOLN

Let's go.

GRANT

No.

LINCOLN

Really?

GRANT

LINCOLN pulls out an apple sauce.

Is that... apple sauce?

You want some? I brought an extra spoon.

LINCOLN

Yeah, I'll have some.

GRANT

GRANT takes it and throws it into the night.

HEY! That was my last bit of food!

LINCOLN

You'll get over it.

GRANT

Now I'm gonna starve!

LINCOLN

You gonna cry about it?

GRANT

LINCOLN

You're being a butthead!

LINCOLN tackles GRANT. They wrestle. A flashlight cuts through the dark; an NYPD OFFICER walks up.

OFFICER

Whoa there! Hey now, cut it out!

They men do not notice her.

Hey! Enough I said! Will the Presidents of the United States please grow up!

LINCOLN and GRANT slowly pull apart.

Come here! You know you're trespassing in this section? I should lock you bums up for the night!

LINCOLN

A bureaucrat!

OFFICER

Hey! Respect the badge. See that? NYPD. And there shouldn't be anyone here right now except myself and those sightseers you scared half to death.

LINCOLN

Sightseers?

OFFICER

See that kid over there? Looking at you with weepy eyes and sorrow in his heart? Do ya?

LINCOLN & GRANT

Yes.

OFFICER

That's because he just got hit in the head with apple sauce. He and his family come to our city expecting nothing but peace-of-mind but what do they get instead? Free tickets to the clown show! You make us look bad! Get it!? Now say you're sorry!

LINCOLN

I'm sorry/ young man...

GRANT

I'm sorry for ruining your trip...

OFFICER

Good.

The OFFICER turns to leave, but stops.

Which ones are you two supposed to be anyways?

GRANT and LINCOLN stand silent. Isn't it obvious? The OFFICER doesn't get it.

Ah, never mind... coupla nobodies.

OFFICER exits.

LINCOLN

ULYSSES!

GRANT

What's up?

LINCOLN

There never was any danger, was there?

GRANT

Well... I dunno, ask the apple sauce kid what danger looks like.

LINCOLN

How could you lie to me?

GRANT

I didn't/ mean...

LINCOLN

All day?

GRANT
...to lie/ to you...

LINCOLN
I WAS SO HUNGRY!

GRANT
I was embarrassed!

LINCOLN
Of what!

GRANT
This!

GRANT pulls out a travel brochure with a picture of Mount Rushmore on it.

LINCOLN
I've never seen this before.

GRANT
It's new.

LINCOLN
It's beautiful.

GRANT
Yeah, well, must be nice.

LINCOLN
George, Thomas, Theodore, and I.

GRANT
And you.

LINCOLN
You must be around the back.

GRANT
No back.

LINCOLN

Another mountain?

GRANT

No other mountain.

LINCOLN

Sorry...

GRANT

I bet you are.

LINCOLN

Now wait, of course I am!

GRANT

Yeah, right.

LINCOLN

Is this what all this is about? Man, you're my General. My Top Dawg. My Best Friend. Who else could have won the War for me?

GRANT

Sherman?

LINCOLN

Sherman!? This is about more than military genius. You listened to me when I was down. Face it, man, you were my Goose.

GRANT

Don't, don't say it! You're always pulling that Goose line with me and I get it and appreciate it, but I was more than your sidekick! I was President too and I should be on that mountain.

LINCOLN

You were President. But you are a FOUR STAR GENERAL OF THE ARMIES AND SAVIOR OF THE UNION and they can't take that away from you. And I didn't even know about this, so get off my back about it!

GRANT