

**Location:** Maryland (a border state)

**Time:** 1860

**Characters:** 2 fishermen

# Slavery

A: So did you year about South Carolina seceding?

B: I always had a feeling they'd be a success!

A: No, not *succeeding*. *SECEDING*. You know, when a state leaves the Union.

B: Oh, heheh. I knew that. Well, why would they go and do a thing like that?

A: Well, one major reason is slavery. They want to keep their way of life and protect their economy, and to them, that means owning slaves.

B: But Maryland has slaves. Are we going to succeed too?

A: It's SECEDE! And no, we'll remain a border state.

B: Well, duh! We're not an island. Of course we border other states.

A: No, I don't mean it like that. We'll be allowed to own slaves, but we'll stay in the Union.

B: So wait, let me get this straight. We'll technically be part of the North, but we'll be allowed to have slaves? I thought the North was against slavery. Don't they think it's morally wrong and all should be free? Isn't that what the abdominals have been fighting for?

A: Do you mean ABOLITIONISTS?

B: That's what I said! Abdominals.

A: Sigh. Well, Lincoln wants to keep the Union together. He'll allow us to have slaves as long as we don't secede.

B: Do other states know about this?

A: Oh yea, Delaware, Kentucky, and Missouri are all going to be border states too.

B: Well, I hope they're more successful than South Carolina.

A: For the last time, it's SUCCESSION!

B: Oh, heh heh. I knew that.

**Location:** Pennsylvania

**Time:** 1861

**Characters:** Two cousins, one a factory worker (A), one a farm worker (B)

# Cultural Issues

A: It's so great to see you, cousin!

B: I agree! We need to get together more often.

A: How was your harvest this year?

B: I can't complain. Well, actually, I can complain. It's getting harder and harder to compete with the huge plantations of the south.

A: That's what I hear. Just another reason you should come work for me. You know the Union is growing more and more urgent.

B: Urgent?

A: Yup. There are more and more factories growing, which is creating more cities. You know. Urgent.

B: Oh, cousin. I think the word you are looking for is URBAN.

A: That's what I said.

B: Oh, of course. Yes, I did hear about this shift. I think it's going to cause an even greater divide between us and the south.

A: Why? Because they are mainly aggravated?

B: Aggravated?

A: You know. They have lots of farms and their main source of income is their crops.

B: Oh, you mean AGRICULTURAL!

A: Um, that's what I said. You should really have your ears checked, cousin. I think you've spent too much time out on that farm.

B: Sigh. Yes, well I do agree. I think having a mainly URBAN north and an AGRICULTURAL south will just add to the growing list of differences between us.

A: Yes, it is quite the dill pickle.

B: Do you mean dilemma?

A: THAT'S WHAT I SAID!

**Location:** Georgia

**Time:** 1861

**Characters:** Two plantation owners (A&B) and a Sheriff (C)

# Economic Issues

A: Can you believe all this talk about tariffs?

B: I can! I have not been happy with our Sheriff for years now.

A: No, TARIFFS. They are taxes on imported goods, in this particular case, goods from England.

B: English goods? Who needs English goods? I thought we broke away from England years ago!

A: Well yes, but still trade with them. We export cotton, tobacco and lumber to England, and in return, we import their manufactured goods.

B: So what's all that got to do with the Sheriff?

A: Sigh. You mean TARIFF. A tariff will tax the goods we get from England. That means they'll be more expensive and hurt our economy. The North wants tariffs because it will protect their industries and make their manufactured goods cheaper.

B: Then I say DOWN WITH THE SHERIFF. Like I said, I never liked that guy.

A: I wouldn't say that too loud. He could be around here somewhere.

C: Why hello there. I heard some shouting from clear on the other side of the plantation.

B: Yes, I was shouting! How dare you tax imported goods from England! This will hurt our ecosystem and help the North grow stronger!

C: What in the world is he talking about?

A: I've been trying to explain TARIFFS to him. He thought I was talking about you, Sheriff. Just a kind of funny misunderstanding. [nervous laughter]

B: I see nothing funny about it! It will destroy our ecosystem!

C: Listen here. I think you mean ECONOMY and you're talking about tariffs. But it is a serious deal. In fact, it's one of the many reasons South Carolina decided to secede.

B: Well, they'll never succeed in this ecosystem if you keep raising the taxes, Sheriff.

A: I give up. It's no use talking about the economy with you.

B: Is that what we've been talking about?

**Location:** Virginia

**Time:** 1861

**Characters:** Two siblings talking. One is pro state (A), the other pro federal rights (B)

# Constitutional Issues: States' Rights vs. Federal Rights

A: Can you believe this debate about states' rights versus federal rights?

B: I know. It's ridiculous! I mean we all know who's right.

A: Of course.

A & B: States's Rights/Federal Rights

A: Did you just say federal rights?

B: And did you just say states?

A: Well isn't that interesting.

B: Yes. Interesting that you could be so wrong.

A: Whoa, whoa, whoa. If by wrong you mean right, then I agree.

B: No, wrong as in wrong. States have rights to a certain extent, but it's the federal government that should have ultimate power and decision making responsibilities.

A: But the states agreed to be a part of the federal government. We should be able to disagree or make laws that we see fit.

B: Oh, you mean laws about slavery? That Virginia should be allowed to be a slave state, even if the federal government deems slavery unconstitutional someday?

A: Well, actually, yes. The states are the ones that give the federal government its power, not the other way around.

B: I disagree.

A: So what, if everyone were to jump off a cliff, you would too? Just because the federal government told you to?

B: I know you are but what am I? Anyways, I think the federal government does have the ultimate power that we should abide by.

A: Well, when Virginia agrees with me and wants to secede, where will you be running to?

B: I don't know. Maybe West Virginia. Maybe they'll stick with the Union.

A: Oh you are so naive. Who ever heard of a state breaking in two because it couldn't agree?

B: Well, there's a first time for everything.

**Location:** Missouri

**Time:** 1820

**Characters:** Plantation owner (A),  
an undercover abolitionist (B)

# Missouri Compromise

A: Did you hear the big news! Missouri is to become the next state in the Union!

B: What's that you say? Missouri's becoming a state? What kind of state exactly? Free or slave?

A: A slave state.

B: Bleh, disgusting. I mean...woo hoo! But doesn't that upset the balance?

A: What balance?

B: Well as long as there's an equal number of slave states and free states, then there is equal representation in our government. But now the balance is upset. NOW THERE ARE MORE SLAVE STATES. THIS IS HORRIBLE NEWS. I mean, good news. Did I say horrible? I meant good.

A: You must not have heard about Maine then.

B: What about Maine?

A: They're admitting Maine as a free state.

B: Oh, phew. I mean, P-U. That disgusts me.

A: Yea, it wasn't easy. I hear there's been a lot of debate in our government about what to do with all of that western territory.

B: Well the answer is easy. You just admit those states as free. It's morally wrong to enslave others.

A: What?!?

B: Did I say free states? I meant slave states.

A: Oh, you scared me for a second. I thought you might be one of those northern abolitionists who want to get rid of slavery.

B: Oh, heh heh. Of course not. Well, better go catch my train to Maine.

A: Wait a minute...

**Location:** California

**Time:** 1850

**Characters:** Two abolitionists

# Compromise of 1850

A: I heard Henry Clay is at it again.

B: Henry who?

A: Clay. You know, the Kentucky Congressman. The Great Compromiser.

B: Never heard of him.

A: You really need to get out more.

B: Well why don't you tell me smarty-pants, what did he do?

A: Well he reached a deal in Congress. It's called the Compromise of 1850. California will now be admitted to the Union as a free state!

B: California? Never heard of it.

A: Um, it's the state you live in.

B: Oh, that California.

A: Anyways, with California admitted as free, new states will now be able to decide by popular sovereignty if they'll be free or slave.

B: Popular what-en-ty?

A: POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY. It will allow territories to decide on their own if they want slavery or not.

B: What if they can't decide? What if they are split?

A: Huh, that's a good question. You know, sometimes you're smarter than you look.

B: Oh, why thanks!

A: Sigh. Another part of the Compromise of 1850 is tougher rules for runaway slaves. As abolitionists, we are against that.

B: As whosy-whats-its?

A: Um, abolitionists. We are morally against slavery, remember?

B: Oh, that type of abolitionist!

A: But the good news is, the slave trade in DC is now prohibited.

B: And how do us abolitionists feel about that?

A: Um, fantastic! We're against slavery. We want it to stop.

B: Oh, I knew that. I just wanted to see if *you* knew that.

A: I really need to make some new friends.

**Location:** Delaware

**Time:** 1851

**Characters:** Two commissioners appointed to hear the case of a runaway slave

# Fugitive Slave Act

A: This case has really been a heavy burden on me.

B: I feel the same way. It's so heavy carrying all of my coins to the bank.

A: No, that's not what I mean. I mean that it's so hard for me to decide. Ever since the Compromise of 1850 was passed, which included this Fugitive Slave Act, I've been torn.

B: Torn? Are you kidding me? This is easy money. If we release the captured slaves, we make \$5. If we send them back to their owners, we make \$10. Seems like a no brainer to me.

A: But doesn't it bother you that through this act, black men and women no longer have the right to a trial by jury?

B: Um, well....

A: And there are now even more "slave catchers" being hired to track down fleeing slaves.

B: Well, true but....

A: And that these "slave catchers" are even capturing free men and women?

B: When you put it that way....

A: And that it's causing an even further divide throughout the country. People who were on the fence about slavery before are not staunchly against it.

B: I hadn't really considered...

A: And you are enforcing this bill just so that you can make an extra \$5?

B: You make me sound so cheap.

A: Well, if the shoe fits...

B: Oh, so you noticed my new shoes? Yea, I just bought those yesterday.

A: Sigh.

**Location:** Kansas

**Time:** 1854

**Characters:** Someone who was antislavery (A), someone proslavery (B)

# Kansas-Nebraska Act

A: Whew! I'm so glad I made it.

B: Ah me too!

A: This is quite an exciting time!

B: Oh, I know it! The Kansas-Nebraska Act will be great for us!

A: You can say that again!

B: The Kansas-Nebraska Act will be great for us!

A: I didn't mean literally, I meant...oh, never mind. You're right, this idea of popular sovereignty is great!

B: I know! I've always believed that states should have the right to make all of their own decisions.

A: Well, I mean, that's a little extreme, don't you think? The federal government is important too. I mean, look, it created popular sovereignty.

B: You do have a point there. I just can't wait for the vote. It's going to be big! So many of my friends ran down here right after they heard about the Kansas-Nebraska Act.

A: Same with my friends. Once they heard these territories could vote to be slave or free, it became so important for them to have their voices heard.

B: Exactly. If we could tip the scales in our favor, well it would be amazing.

A: True, but at the very least, we should try to keep things equal. Slave states equal to free states.

B: True, although, don't you sort of hope it swings our way?

A: Well, secretly I do, and then finally the right changes would happen in this country. Finally we would all be

A & B: Free/Slave

A: Wait, I thought you were....

B: And I thought you were...

A: Uh-oh. This could get ugly.



**Location:** Territory of Nebraska

**Time:** 1855

**Characters:** A newspaper boy (A),  
two passerbys (B & C)

# Bleeding Kansas

A: Read all about it! Bleeding Kansas Begins! Get your paper here!

B: Bleeding Kansas?

C: What in the world are you talking about?

A: Haven't you heard? Since the Kansas-Nebraska Act was passed, proslavery and antislavery people alike have been flocking to Kansas to have their voice heard.

B: Does this have something to do with popular sovereignty?

C: It's always a popularity contest with you? Isn't it?

A: I think he means the idea that territories could vote to become slave states or free states?

C: Oh, I knew that.

A: Well now there's fighting in Kansas over it. People are being killed.

B: Wait, but aren't we a popular sovereignty territory too? I've seen no fighting.

C: Well I was mad at you after breakfast this morning because you never got me my orange juice, and...

A: I don't think he means that kind of fighting. This is serious. Kansas is so close to free and slave states alike that it's become a perfect fighting ground.

B: And we're too far north? Is that it?

A: Exactly. More than likely, we'll be a free state, but they're not even concerned with our statehood right now.

B: Wow. This could be the beginning of something big.

C: Yea, like that big orange I had for breakfast. You should have seen that thing. It was so delicious and...

A: I think he means big in the sense that war is on the horizon.

C: Oh, I knew that. Heh heh.

A & B: Sigh.

**Location:** Washington DC

**Time:** March 4, 1861

**Characters:** Three people celebrating at Lincoln's inauguration

# Lincoln is Elected

A: It's so good to be here at Lincoln's inauguration!

B: I agree! I am overjoyed that he was elected.

C: Well I know some people who would not agree with you.

A: Oh, really? And who is that?

C: Oh, just the seven states that have already seceded from the Union and formed the Confederacy.

B: Confetti? Yes this is quite the party.

C: No, not confetti you nincompoop. The CONFEDERACY.

A: Oh, I think I have heard of that. It's headed by some guy, David Jefferson.

C: Really?

B: No, I think it's Dave Jeffries.

C: You're both wrong (surprise, surprise). It's Jefferson Davis. Jefferson Davis is the president of the Confederacy.

A & B: Oh, yea, we knew that! Heh, heh.

C: And did you realize that Lincoln carried all of the free states but none of the slave states during the election.

A: Really?

B: I'm shocked.

C: Wait, why are you two so surprised?

A: Well, I mean, states are probably heavy. I doubt he could carry all of the free and slave states.

B: I mean, I'm surprised he carried as many as he did.

C: Oh, why do I bother. When I say he carried a state, I mean that the majority of people voted for him in that state.

A: Oh, well that makes much more sense.

B: Agreed. Why didn't you just say that in the first place.

C: Maybe I should secede from you two? I can't take it anymore.

A: Ok, Mr. Know-It-All. Which state seceded first?

C: That would be South Carolina.

B: And why did they?

C: Well they think that Lincoln will abolish slavery and that he won't protect their state's rights.

A: Well I disagree. The state is not right for leaving the Union.

B: Yes. The state is definitely wrong.

C: No, I said "state's rights." You know. Like "certain unalienable rights." Geez, maybe I should secede from you two. I can't take it anymore.