

Audition Monologues
for the Farmington Players production of
The Outsider
by Paul Slade Smith

PAIGE:

“There’s a reason you hired me. You know I know politics. You knew I could tell you what happens next, which is this: there’s two political parties, right? And the *other* guys – the guys who *don’t* want Ned to be Governor – they now have a video of him mumbling and trembling for five minutes straight. And they’re gonna *use* that video to get him kicked out of office. They’re gonna call for a Special Election to replace the Governor in six weeks. And I’m not telling you Ned won’t *win* a Special Election; I’m telling you he won’t even get to *run*. ‘Cause not even his own party will want Governor Mumbles as their candidate. So if you want him to keep his job, you have to undo this. You have to get him on TV today, talking. Not a *speech*, just five minutes of him, on camera, speaking words. He can do that, right?”

RACHEL

“The rules – clearly laid out to me about this interview – are that it’s actually not an interview, and that I’m not here as a reporter. I’m just here because my boss, the head of our news division, is pals with Arthur Vance. ... I’m not a big fan of people in the news business being pals with the people we’re supposed to *cover*, okay? Or these arrangements, where you do *us* a favor, like offering an exclusive interview with the Governor, and we do *you* a favor, like promising the reporter won’t ask any tough questions. Just “how does it *feel*?” kinda stuff. Since, apparently, our new Governor is not very bright. Is that *true*, by the way – is Ned Newley not very bright? Shit, I did it again. Honestly, it’s involuntary – it just comes out – but I really don’t want to get *fired* today, so ... No more questions. Eight years I’ve been covering politics in this state, this is my first time setting foot in a Governor’s office, but I will just sit here and ... smile pretty for the camera.”

LOUISE

“Pleasure to meet you, Steve. ... Oh, it’s *Dave*, right, sorry. I’m not always great with names, right off the bat, but I’ve got it now – Dave. So, what can I do for you? What’s the job? I think they told me I’m the Assistant Executive Governor? That can’t be right. What is it? Executive Assistant Governor? ... Look, let’s not worry about my job title, okay? I’m just a temp; you just tell me what you need me to do, and I’ll get to work. ... But just to let you know, phones are not my strongest area. But I will figure it out, no worries. That’s what I’ve learned, being a temp: you’re always finding yourself in a new situation, in a job you’ve never done before, that you don’t know how to do. But then you realize, hey, that’s okay, you know? ... Every day I’m in a new office. And they say, okay, here’s the job, and I say, okay, first time doing this, and by the end of the day, they’re like, okay, good news, we don’t need you here tomorrow – and I’m off to the next place. I have more experience than *anyone* at working somewhere I have no experience. So don’t you worry about me, I’m gonna be at my desk, figuring out that phone. And let me know if you need anything else, okay?”

NED:

“In a democracy, government is just the word we use to describe the things that all of us, collectively, have made a decision to do together. The kinds of things that none of us can do on our own. The people of this state are, we’re very independent, you know. Americans take pride in saying, I can take care of myself just fine. And we can. But what we can’t do – what none of us, individually, can do – is make sure there’s a road that can get us from Bristol to Burlington, right? Or make sure that road is paved and properly lit. That’s not something that any one person can do. But we can decide, collectively, to make that happen – to build the road, hire the pavers, and put in the light bulbs. And to pay for all of it. So that I can drive out to see my sister in Columbus, and an ambulance can get somebody to the hospital, and a family lumber company can haul its lumber to anywhere in the country. Doing things together, that we can’t do on our own, in order to benefit all of us. That’s government. Does that make sense?”

DAVE:

“Look, I’m gonna be honest with you. This was never supposed to happen. Ned Newley was never supposed to be Governor. I’m not supposed to be a Governor’s Chief of Staff. I’ve been working in politics since I was in college, but ... I always work for the guy who *loses*. I always work for the *good* guy – the honest, stand-up guy, who has absolutely zero chance of ever getting elected. I’m not experienced at, you know, *success*. ... But I realized, if we’re gonna fix this, we’ve gotta get on it quick, so I’ve been writing out some different options for the Governor’s retraction: There’s “I misunderstood the question,” which makes him sound stupid, but you’ll like that. There’s “My words were misconstrued,” which is completely illogical, but I’m proud of that one. There’s “The announcement was premature,” where Miss Peakes is one of several candidates being interviewed, the rest of whom can actually do the job. And then there’s, “No, no, I didn’t say Lieutenant Governor, I said ...”. But I haven’t gotten far with that one, ‘cause I can’t think of anything that rhymes with Lieutenant Governor.”

ARTHUR:

“Wait, no, *we* know better than the *people* who the people should be voting for?

I don’t want to alarm you, but I think you just made an argument against democracy. ... You want me to *not* run someone for office, because you’re afraid people will *like* her, and actually *vote* for her, and you don’t trust people to act in their own self-interest. You’re telling me I’ve got a responsibility to only put certain candidates in front of the voters, in case the voters don’t know any better, and mistakenly pick the person who *speaks* to them, instead of the person you’ve decided they *oughta* pick. It’s an election, and I say this in every campaign: if you don’t like my candidate, then you find somebody else. And I’ll put my guy out there and you put your guy out there, but when election day arrives, it’s not up to us; it’s up to the people. We let the people decide. ... Lulu Peakes is running for Lieutenant Governor. If you take my advice, the Governor will be sitting right next to her when she announces her candidacy. But if you’ve got a better plan to keep Ned from being thrown out of office, then ... you go with that.”

A.C.

“What is government? What does it do? What good, honest purpose does it serve?

I suppose it *has* to exist, and always *will* exist, but government, politics, what does that have to do with – I’m sorry, but – real life? It has nothing to do with *my* life.

I pay my taxes. I bitch about it, but I pay, and then all that money gets spent on ...

whatever – whatever politicians *spend* money on, when they’re not busy trashing other politicians, or looking into my TV camera and lying every time they open their mouths. Right? ... Why should I pay attention to that? Why should I care?

Life is crowded enough as it is. My wife and I just want to make it to the weekend so we can spend time with our two boys, who are awesome, and important. That’s real life. Government is over there. Making a lot of noise. If you listen to it. But why listen to it?”