**AUDITION SIDE #7: ARTHUR, PAIGE & NED**

PAIGE Governor, I’m just gonna ask you a question, and you just respond, okay? Don’t think about the camera, or anyone else in the room, just listen to my question and respond.

NED Okay.

PAIGE Governor Newley. This is your first day on the job. What would you say is your top priority, coming into office?

NED Uh… I guess addressing the issue of decreased Medicare reimbursements.

PAIGE Oh! Okay…

NED Which is… resulting in doctors leaving the program. The estimate is, in our state alone, more than 36% of physicians will stop accepting Medicare…

PAIGE Oh, wow…

NED While the number of Medicare patients is increasing to ninety…

ARTHUR Okay, nope, nope, nope, nope….

NED Oh, oh, oh, oh, sorry, was I… was I too mumbly?

ARTHUR No, not too mumbly… Okay that was – and I don’t mean this as a compliment… eloquent. And smart and detailed and, you know…

NED I’m sorry…

ARTHUR None of the things we’re looking for here.

NED Right, right…

ARTHUR The Ned we want to see… is the Ned America fell in love with this morning.

NED Right, sorry…

ARTHUR Don’t feel bad, it happens to everybody; you get comfortable, you let your guard down. Here’s the thing, Governor. And I’ve been teaching this lesson for 35 years. When a reporter asks you a question: giving the right answer?; that’s hard. Giving the wrong answer?; that’s worse. So the safest path is to not give an answer at all.

NED You mean don’t speak?

ARTHUR No, you speak, but you don’t answer. Here allow me to demonstrate. What I have here are four index cards – numbered one through four. And on each of these cards I’ve written a simple phrase. And all I want you to do is: take card number 1, and read it out loud.

NED Okay. “It needs fixing.”

ARTHUR Great. Now let’s go back to what you were just talking about: Medicare. But this time when Paige asks you the question, don’t answer it, just read that card, alright? Paige?

PAIGE Governor Newley, what is your position on Medicare?

NED It… needs fixing.

ARTHUR Great start Governor; let’s try another question, okay? Using the same card. Paige?

PAIGE Governor. What are your thoughts on the deficit?

NED It needs… fixing.

ARTHUR See? Simple! This is a simple man. And for him, every question has a simple answer. And that answer is written on these cards. *Any* question. Read card number two.

NED “We have to find an outsider.”

ARTHUR Perfect. Now: let’s try those two cards together. First card one, okay? Then card two.

PAIGE Governor, what do you think of the public school system?

NED It needs fixing.

PAIGE Fixing? And how do we fix it?

NED We need an outsider.

ARTHUR See? Amazing!

NED Oh, okay. That’s easy.

ARTHUR Isn’t it? Let’s look at card three.

NED “It just takes common sense.”

ARTHUR Great. So:

PAIGE Governor, how do we solve the budget deficit?

NED We have to find an outsider.

ARTHUR Or…?... Or instead of the “outsider” card, you could use this card.

NED Right. Ask me again.

PAIGE Governor, how do we solve the deficit.

NED It just takes common sense.

ARTHUR Right. Why don’t you just read the last card?

NED “I’m just an average guy.”

ARTHUR Do you see how these four cards tell a story? … Thank god!