

## Democratic Republicans

"Hello everybody!" Thompson shouted into her mic. "We're ready to get back into things with a match featuring two extraordinary Presidents from the legendary Democratic Republican Party!"

She gestured to the arena.

"First up, we have the calm, no-nonsense, second in command of the Democratic Republicans! Despite looking frail on the outside, this fighter boast one of the strongest constitutions the world has ever seen! Give it up for [The Sage of Montpelier], Jamie Madison!"

Madison entered the arena with a black pinstripe blazar, a trident in her hands, and a sharp gaze spread over her face.

"Her opponent," Thompson continued, "is a tall sharpshooter known for her friendly disposition! A diligent patriot; she'll take on any role and travel any distance for the sake of her country! She's [The Heir of Good Feelings], Jane Monroe!"

Monroe swaggered into the stadium wearing a tie dye shirt, baggy pants, and a tri-pointed hat. She shot out a peace sign with one hand, carrying an old-fashioned rifle in the other.

"So, Truman," Thompson spoke up, "what do you think about this upcoming match?"

"Given that Monroe specializes in long-range combat," he remarked, "it's pretty clear that Madison holds a significant advantage fighting in our enclosed arena here," he shook his head, "or at least, that would be the case, if the fight actually took place."

"But it might not!" Thompson added, "Because Madison and Monroe both come from the same Party!"

"Exactly," Truman replied, giving off a shrug. "It's pretty boring, but one of them will likely just give up as soon as the match begins. The only question left..." he said, looking over the two fighters, "...is who's backing down?"

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Half an hour earlier, Madison and Monroe stood in front of a tall, slender woman.

"I had the most incredible idea last night!" Tanya Jefferson spoke with genuine excitement. "I've decided that we shall determine the outcome of your match by taking a vote of the people!"

Madison and Monroe exchanged worried glances with each other.

"...do you mean to say," Monroe asked, "that you want us to poll the audience as to who they want going forward in the tournament?"

"Exactly! After all, it is only fitting that we, the Party of the people, leave this critical choice up to the wisdom of the masses."

Madison bit her lip.

"That is certainly an...admirable idea," she spoke carefully. "But I believe there are some practical considerations which need addressing. For example, how should we conduct such a vote? Orally? This certainly wouldn't work if the voting is too close, or if one side happened to have louder voices than the

other. Would we instead use paper ballots? The issue here is that such a process could take hours, if not days, to go through with care.”

Jefferson brought a hand to her chin.

“Yes...perhaps this plan is a tad too ambitious to be implemented with such little notice.” She silently shook her head. “Well then, why don’t you two simply decide for yourselves who shall be going forward?”

“We can’t,” Monroe interjected. “Both of us are convinced that we ought to be the one winning this match. You’re the only one who can make the decision for us, ma’am.”

Jefferson lowered her head.

“I was afraid it would come down to this...”

Jefferson looked over the faces of her two best friends standing before her.

“...given the nature of Grant’s Executive Power,” she finally spoke, “it seems to me that Monroe has the greatest chance of defeating him in the second round...”

Monroe gave a small smirk.

“...that being said,” Jefferson continued, “I have ultimately decided that Madison shall be the one going forward.”

Monroe blinked, looking out at Jefferson with quivering lips.

“But...but ma’am!” she stammered, “You just said I was the more suitable fighter!”

“You are against Grant,” Jefferson corrected. “But Grant is not our primary concern here: it is Roosevelt and Lincoln in the latter rounds for whom we must plan for...and for opponents of that caliber, only Madison stands a chance at winning.”

Monroe dropped her head, fighting back the tears forming in her eyes.

“So...” she muttered, “when you told us you’d be making your decision after watching how things went...” she clenched up her fists, “...that was just an outright lie, wasn’t it! You were always going to pick Madison, regardless of the outcome of the first match!”

“No!” Jefferson insisted, “That’s not true at all! The winner of the first fight might have possessed an EP which Madison stood no chance against. In such circumstances, I would have gladly declared you to be our Party’s champion!”

“But outside of that one in a million chance,” Monroe grumbled, “it was always going to be her!”

“...I’m sorry, Monroe,” Jefferson said shaking out her head. “It pains me to do this, it really does...but it’s what’s best for the Party.”

Monroe snarled, silently huffing and puffing until she regained her previous sense of composure.

“...don’t worry,” Monroe said, putting up a modest smile. “I completely understand your decision...now, if you’ll excuse me,” she said, walking off before the others could respond, “I’ve got a little defeat to prepare for...”

Jefferson watched Monroe leave, then gave a shallow moan.

“You know,” Jefferson spoke to Madison, “I was initially elated when you secured a match between two of our Party members in the first round. But with things as they are now...I feel like I would rather face all of Rushmore on my own if it meant restoring our Party’s former sense of unity to what it once was.”

“It’s okay, ma’am,” Madison said patting her back. “Monroe may be a hothead, but she’s no fool. She’ll come to her senses eventually.”

“Eventually, yes; but there’s no telling when that time shall come.” Jefferson muttered, looking Madison in the eyes. “You know that I have complete and utter faith in Monroe’s loyalty...but she can be impulsive at times, especially if she feels she’s been slighted.” Jefferson gently rested a hand on Madison’s arm. “Please, be careful out there, old friend...”

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In the arena, Taft eyed the two combatants. There was a genuine tension between them; far more than he had expected from members of the same Party. Taft shook out his head, raising his gavel to the sky.

“Let the match...begin!”

The gavel crashed into the ground, but neither fighter moved an inch. Madison waited a moment longer, then furrowed up her brow.

“Well?” she asked. “Isn’t there something you’d like to say to everyone?”

“Hmmm?” Monroe replied. “Oh, yes, I suppose there is.”

Monroe nonchalantly raised her arms into the air.

“I, Jane Monroe of the Democratic Republicans, have decided that I shall yield this match...”

Monroe lowered her arms, aiming her rifle directly at Madison’s head.

“...to no one!”

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**Democratic Republicans.** The first major political party of the United States was Jefferson’s “Republican Party”, which confusingly is the precursor to the modern day Democratic Party. To avoid confusion, this party of Jefferson’s is now typically referred to as the “Democratic Republican Party” to distinguish it from the modern day Republican Party which is largely unrelated.

**Monroe’s Epitaph.** Jane Monroe’s epitaph, [The Heir of Good Feelings], is a slight mutation of James Monroe’s most common nickname “The Era of Good Feelings President” due to him being President when there was (at least on the surface) little political disagreement in the States due to a temporary

one party system. It is because of this epitaph that Jane Monroe was given her **hippie aesthetic in the novel (which is historically inaccurate** to say the least!).

**Monroe's Shooting.** James Monroe genuinely was a capable frontier marksman who would often shoot at squirrels and pigeons for family meals when he was a teen.

**Jefferson and Madison.** James Madison was constantly tempering Thomas Jefferson's more radical ideas (which admittedly were sometimes made hyperbolically). For example, Thomas once declared that "every law naturally expires at the end of 19 years," which James eventually convinced him was not a good foundation for forming a stable government.

## Monroe's Doctrine

During the War of Independence, a young Jordan Washington looked across the river at the enemy's encampment.

"They've got two cannons aimed right for us," he remarked. "Our only option now is to row a small crew across the Delaware and seize their artillery before our main forces can move in to attack."

His soldiers exchanged a series of worried glances.

"Sir," someone spoke up, "you're asking us to paddle in the dead of night through a raging snowstorm for over eight hours straight."

"Correct," Washington replied curtly. "Now, who here is coming with me?"

No one moved. Then, a small hand rose from the back. Washington maintained a blank expression as he made his way over to the young volunteer.

"Name and age?" he asked.

"Jane Monroe," the volunteer spoke up, "18 years young, baby."

"Good," Washington said, turning back to his army. "Now then, will anyone else here be joining me? Or is this young'un the only one in this army with some real backbone?"

A few of the older soldiers raised up their hands, followed by a couple dozen more. Washington gave a solemn nod.

"Ready your boats; we row out in five."

Monroe started walking towards the shore, but Washington stepped in front of her path.

"You're coming with me," he said, lifting up a nearby flag, "and you'll be in charge of carrying our banner."

On the boat, Monroe watched with agitation as the crewmates around her rowed through the frigid evening waves.

"Sir," she spoke up, "I really feel I ought to be doing some of the rowing here."

"Keep holding the flag," he replied without shifting his gaze from the horizon.

"Why are we even bringing this hunk of cloth with us anyways? It's just going to slow us down!"

Washington gave a quick glare to Monroe, then turned his attention over to the flag.

"This flag," he spoke quietly, running his hand across its stripes, "is a symbol of freedom. A symbol, which possesses far greater strength than any weapon we possess." He pointed out to the boats around them. "As these soldiers row through the night; as they put their very lives on the line," he pointed back to the flag, "they can look to this banner and remember exactly what it is they're fighting for."

Monroe gave a soft nod. She didn't fully comprehend his words, but she could tell it was fruitless to press on any further.

After some more rowing, the boats arrived at the banks of the river.

"A few of us will be heading back to pick up the rest of our crew," Washington shouted as the soldiers disembarked, "In the meantime, you all are to guard these roads with your lives. Do not leave your posts for an instant; understood?"

"Yes sir!"

Monroe walked over to her post guarding an empty road. She stood alone, waiting for hours as the raging weather shifted from snow, to rain, to hail. She gave a quick yawn as she stretched out her arms, only to snap back to attention at the sound of footsteps came from behind. She whirled herself around, pointing her rifle into the winter mist.

"Who's there!" she shouted.

Through the fog, Monroe could make out the hazy image of a pistol aimed towards her.

"Leave this place!" a voice screamed.

"Not happening, baby," Monroe replied, tightening the grip around her gun, "I'm under direct orders from General Washington himself to stay put."

"...did you say Washington, now?"

The man stepped forward, dropping his gun as he looked out at the American flag planted behind her.

"Ah, shucks!" the man chuckled, "I didn't realize you were a fellow American!" he pointed to a house just off the road. "Please, come inside for some food and warmth. It's the least I can do after startling you like that."

Monroe looked over to the house, wetting her frozen lips before shaking out her head.

"I appreciate the hospitality, but I'm afraid I can't accept your offer...I was given very strict orders not to leave this post."

The man scratched his chin.

"I see..." He thought on for a moment, then put up a smile. "Give me a second."

The man ran into his house, coming out a minute later carrying a large leather bag together with a toasty sandwich.

"I'm guessing your 'strict orders' didn't say you anything about your not being allowed to eat on the job?"

"They most certainly did not!" a gleeful Monroe exclaimed before devouring the sandwich whole. As she finished up her meal, Monroe took a closer look at the man's bag. "What's that you got there?"

"A medical bag! I'm a doctor, you see, and I thought I may be able to help some poor fellow in your troupe." The man bashfully scratched his ear. "Assuming General Washington wants me, of course."

Monroe gave a tip of her hat.

"I'm certain he'd be delighted to have a patriot like you joining with our ranks."

"Indeed, I would."

The two turned to see Washington marching towards them, the rest of the battalion trailing shortly behind him. Monroe gave a salute, then joined with Washington as he brought the doctor up to speed on the mission.

"The Hessians are an elite band of warriors," Washington explained. "We'd stand no chance against them in a direct fight. But they shouldn't be expecting an attack from behind like this, and moreover, most of their troops are out cold tonight after a day of heavy drinking. All in all, things should go pretty smoothly for us, unless of course..."

Washington froze as he locked eyes with a Hessian soldier coming out of the nearby woods.

"We're spotted!"

Washington lunged ahead, striking the scout down with his blade, but not before the soldier lifted up his arm, launching a flare into the sky.

"Oh God!" an American exclaimed as the enemy camp started to stir. "They all know we're coming now...we need to turn back!"

"No!" Washington shouted. "We press on!"

Washington charged straight into the camp, cutting twenty Hessians before anyone had the chance to draw their weapons. He turned to face yet another wave of soldiers, only for a cannonball to explode just in front of him, knocking him down. The Americans stood still, watching in silence as their General started to rise, only to fall back to the ground.

"What...what do we do?" a soldier mumbled as he bit into his nails, "What do we do!"

"Isn't it obvious?"

Monroe ran past the line of soldiers, planting her flag next to Washington's side.

"We press on, baby!"

Monroe raised her rifle, firing at a dozen soldiers as they ran to Washington.

"The kid's right!" an American shouted, "Let's show these Hessians what we're made of!"

The Americans gave a valiant yell, charging full-force into the enemy camp.

"Go for the general!" a Hessian screamed, "They'll lose all morale once we cut off his head!"

"Go ahead and try!" Monroe shouted as she shot down another squadron of soldiers.

Washington twisted his body on the ground.

"Be..." he mumbled.

"Sir?" Monroe asked.

“Behind you!”

Monroe turned herself around just as a bullet pierced straight through her chest and into her left shoulder. She stumbled back, looking out as a Hessian marksman snickered in front of her.

“That’s what you get,” the Hessian spat, “for waving around such a gaudy piece of cloth like that!”

Monroe clenched up her teeth.

“This piece of cloth...” She said, grabbing the flagpole and stopping her fall. “...is a symbol of freedom!”

She quickly raised her rifle and fired, striking the Hessian down. Monroe smirked, then collapsed to the ground, the snow around her turning a scarlet red with her blood.

“Hang on, kid!” the doctor exclaimed as he rushed over to her side. “You’re going to be alright!” He took a closer look at her wound, then gave a small gulp. “...but just barely.”

“...Washington...” Monroe spoke wearily, “...save...him...”

“I’m fine, lad,” Washington spoke besides her, “just got the wind knocked out of me, that’s all. You just focus on getting better now, alright? Do that, and I promise, the next time you step onto the battlefield, you’ll be a captain!”

“...a...captain...huh?”

Monroe smiled to herself as she drifted off to sleep, her head filled with thoughts of the gallant warriors she’d command in battle someday.

But that day would never come; at least, not in this war. Time after time, Monroe would try to get herself back onto the battlefield, only to be turned away each time. At each setback, Monroe did her best to put up a cheerful disposition on the outside, but on the inside, she raged.

With fight after fight taking part without her, Monroe swore to herself: never again would she let someone take her out of combat without putting up a fight. This, above all else, would be her sacred doctrine.

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Back in the present, Monroe fired her gun, her bullet grazing the side of Madison’s face.

“Holy cow!” Thompson exclaimed, “Monroe has actually launched an attack against fellow Party member Jamie Madison! Against all odds, it looks like we might really have a fight on our hands here, folks!”

Madison rubbed her cheek, feeling the blood trickling down her face.

“So that’s how it’s going to be, huh?”

Madison shifted her gaze, darting her eyes between Monroe, Jefferson, and Grant. She paused, nodded her head, then pointed her trident towards Monroe from across the arena. The trident’s tips waved around, as if they were leaves rustling in the wind.

“Executive Power,” Madison spoke, “Ratification; Three Branches.”



The trident suddenly extended its length, its prongs shooting out straight towards Monroe.

“Don’t play with fire, baby!” Monroe shouted, twisting her body around the incoming prongs, “Not unless you wanna get burned!”

The crowd gasped, looking out in shock as blood splattered to the ground. Madison looked down, noticing three fresh cuts along her own arm.

“What the heck?” Thompson shouted, “Madison has taken some serious damage just now despite being the one dishing out all the attacks here! How in the world did that happen?”

“It’s clearly got something to do with Monroe’s EP,” Truman remarked, rubbing his chin, “but I’ve got no idea how it works.”

Monroe smiled across the arena as she shot up a peace sign.

“Executive Power: Monroe Doctrine, baby!”

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**Monroe’s Flashback.** James Monroe did volunteer to cross the Delaware, but it’s not true that he was the first to do so, nor did George Washington give him any particular praise for this. James Monroe also didn’t ride in the same boat as George Washington, nor did he carry the flag (and in particular, he didn’t have a gallant last stand while clinging to the flag before going down). These last two points were done solely to reference the famous painting “Washington Crossing the Delaware” where James Monroe is depicted (ahistorically) doing both of these things.



Somewhat miraculously, Monroe’s interaction with the doctor is almost entirely true! Although he didn’t have a gun pointed at his head, James Monroe was indeed harassed by a passing doctor who mistook him to be a British soldier, after which James Monroe denied the doctor’s offer to go into his house. The doctor then joined Washington’s march, and during the battle this doctor narrowly saved James Monroe’s life after receiving a near fatal wound.

The incident with Washington going down in the attack is half true: it really is the case that during this battle, James Monroe’s commander took an injury and went down, after which James Monroe

heroically stepped in to lead the troops before chaos erupted, only to go down himself shortly afterwards. However, **this commander was not George Washington** (as depicted in the novel), but rather William Washington (a distant cousin of George).

**Three Branches.** Jamie Madison's trident "Three Branches" is inspired by the three branches of government provided by the United States constitution: the legislative branch, the executive branch, and the judiciary branch.

## Madison's Constitution

"Executive Power," Madison shouted as her trident lengthened out, its prongs thrashing wildly across the battlefield, "Ratification; Three Branches!"

"Easy there, baby!" Monroe chuckled as she jumped over one prong and leaned back to dodge another. She landed on one hand, pushing off and leaping away from a third attack. With each dodge she made, a new wound appeared across Madison's body.

"This can't be happening..." Jefferson moaned from the stands.

"Things not going as planned?" asked the young man standing beside her.

"No, Quincy," she replied, shaking out her head, "they most certainly are not."

"I'm surprised how optimistic you were in the first place; you know how free and independent Monroe can be."

"That's true," Jefferson replied, raising up a small, somber smile. "And perhaps she would have been a bit more docile if you hadn't helped her acquire that tremendous EP of hers."

Quincy gave a smirk.

"Executive Power: Monroe Doctrine," he remarked, "the ability to instantly counter any hostile action taken against her...it's a devastating EP, especially when combined with her artful dodges."

"It would be a difficult EP for Madison to overcome..." Jefferson added, "...if she weren't already well experienced in fighting against Monroe..."

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Shortly after the War of Independence, a group of Virginians gathered around a single, dominating figure.

"Well?" Pat Henry asked, "Are we doing this or what?"

"Give us a second," Eddy Randolph replied, turning his attention back over to Madison. "Are you sure about this? You really aren't looking very good."

"I have to," Madison replied while suppressing a cough, "nobody else can defeat Henry in my place."

Randolph lowered his head, clenching up his fists in frustration.

"Don't worry about it," Madison assured him as she made her way to the center, "I will not let this land fall to ruin."

"You most certainly will not!" Henry agreed, raising his arms, "Because I'm going to stop you before you can destroy it!"

Henry charged up ahead, not waiting for the referee to start the fight. He stopped in front of Madison, throwing out a masterful punch.

"You're too focused on perfection," Madison remarked as she dodged his overly prepared attack, "you need to be practical!"

Henry raised his guard as Madison unleashed a series of thrusts, perfectly absorbing each of her blows at the cost of blocking off his vision. Madison swung her leg below, striking Henry's left shin and knocking him to the ground. Henry started to rise, but stopped as he felt Madison's trident pricking at his neck.

"...I surrender," he muttered with a click of his tongue.

Madison's supporters released a chorus of cheers as the referee announced the victor, only to be drowned out by the howls from the Anti-Federalists.

"Screw this!" Joe Mason screamed, "I don't care what all we agreed to! I'm going to put a stop to this ridiculous ploy right now!"

The Anti-Federalists rallied up behind Mason, raising their weapons into the air.

"All of you!" Henry barked, silencing his allies. "Stand down!" He turned over to Madison. "I swear on my honor as a gentleman: Virginia shall not oppose your plan to unite the States into a single nation."

The Anti-Federalists grumbled to themselves, but stayed quiet as they obediently followed Henry out of the arena.

"What in the world are you doing!" Mason hissed behind him, "You're giving in way too easily here!"

Henry looked to him, then gave an evil grin.

"Who ever said I'm giving in?"

The next day, Randolph slammed a pile of papers onto Madison's desk.

"We've been had!" he exclaimed. "While we were busy focusing on getting Virginia's approval, Henry's been sneaking clause after clause into our deal!"

Madison skimmed over the papers in front of her.

"And it looks like all of these new amendments are centered around blocking me from attending the national convention."

"Exactly! And without you there, the whole project is doomed to fail!"

"Very troublesome indeed..."

"You know what I think!" Randolph exclaimed, grabbing hold of the papers. "I think we should take this garbage back to Henry and tell him right where he can shove it!"

"We can't," Madison replied, calmly lifting the papers out of Randolph's hands. "He beat us fair and square with this deal; challenging him on his amendments would only undermine our own movement. With things as they are, our only choice now is to fight on his terms."

Madison flipped through the papers and pointed down to a line of text.

"...I don't like our odds here," Randolph grumbled as he read the words to himself.

"Neither do I," Madison replied, "but it's the only option we have."

The next week, Henry greeted Madison and Randolph with a warm smile.

"Greetings, friends!"

"Shut it," Randolph replied.

"Anyways," Henry continued on, ignoring Randolph's quip, "I'm sure the two of you are dying to know the full details for this match to decide Virginia's final delegate." He gestured behind them. "Well, the battlefield is before you."

Madison and Randolph looked out to see an abandoned city with towering buildings separated by wide open spaces.

"Seriously?" Randolph asked as she examined the battlefield in front of them. "I'm surprised you'd ever want to fight in a dump like this."

"Oh my," Henry replied, putting on a feigned look of confusion, "I think there might be a slight misunderstanding here. I never said I would be the one fighting in this match, only that I would be the one choosing Madison's opponent."

Randolph and Madison looked to each other.

"But if you aren't representing the Anti-Federalists..." Randolph began.

"...then who is?" Madison finished.

"I am," a voice called from behind.

Madison turned around in shock.

"Monroe!" she exclaimed.

"That's right, baby!" her former ally, Jane Monroe replied.

"Why..." Madison blinked, "what are you doing here!"

"You see," Monroe explained, "I found myself feeling pretty miffed after finding out that you had stolen my seat at the Virginia conference. So," she said, twirling her rifle and pointing it to Madison, "I decided it would only be fair for me to take your convention seat in return."

"Stole your seat?" Madison furrowed her brow. "I did no such thing!" She looked over to Henry, then leaned closer to Monroe. "Listen, Henry is obviously just using you to get what he wants!"

"Oh please, baby," Monroe said, shrugging her off, "I'm the one using him."

Randolph bit into his nail.

"We're in a tight spot here," he mumbled to Madison, "this battlefield is a sniper's paradise...it'd be tricky to beat Monroe even if you were in peak condition, but with your illness on top of everything..."

"It'll be alright," Madison said, gathering up her composure and walking down into the ruined city, "I will not fail."

Randolph and Henry stayed back, listening on as the fighting raged below.

“Oh my,” Henry spoke as the gunfire came to a close, “it sounds like your fruitless little struggle is finally over now.”

Randolph slumped down, looking out into the horizon with a glum expression. He continued staring out, then suddenly raised himself back up.

“Oh, it’s over alright!” Randolph exclaimed with triumph, “Cause we’re finally done dealing with you and all your nonsense!”

“What are you...?”

Henry stopped himself as he spotted Madison walking towards them. She was covered in injuries and the tip of her nose was partially shot off, but she strode onwards, a look of rigid determination covering her face.

“I win,” she declared nonchalantly.

Henry dropped his jaw, then tightened up his fists.

“You’re making a mistake here,” he spoke softly, “uniting the country...giving greater powers to our Executives...it will bring nothing but disaster to our land!”

Madison paused for a moment.

“It’s entirely possible that our experiment will end in failure,” she admitted, staring Henry in the eyes. “But if we do nothing, we are certain to perish.”

Henry gave a snort.

“I swear, I’ll never stop fighting against you! Not until you either give me liberty...or give me death!”

“And I swear in turn,” Madison responded, raising her hand with its new Presidential Seal, “I’ll stop anyone who tries to destroy my country.”

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Back in the present, Madison retracted the prongs of her trident and charged up ahead. Monroe smirked in response.

“Trying to get closer to me?” she said readying her rifle, “How sweet of you!”

She fired, but Madison easily deflected her bullets.

“No funnnn,” Monroe moaned. “But even if I can’t hit you...” Madison thrust her trident at Monroe’s feet as she stepped away, smiling to herself as she waited for her EP to take effect. “...I can still finish you off with Monroe Doctrine!”

“The thing about your EP,” Madison spoke while taking no damage from her attack, “is that it only works if I’m actually aiming to hurt you!”

Monroe’s eyes widened as Madison vaulted off her trident and wrapped her legs around Monroe’s torso, her body unharmed by Monroe’s EP.

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**Monroe Doctrine.** This EP is based off of the doctrine introduced by James Monroe, which essentially declares that the United States will fight back against any interference from the Old World taking place in the New World.

**Madison's Flashback.** Few of the events in this flashback literally happened, though most of the events are based around James Madison's very real struggle to ratify the Constitution despite the many roadblocks Patrick Henry put in front of him.

Notably, it is **not** true that Patrick Henry literally added secret clauses to their agreements, but he did genuinely do a lot of maneuvering to make it so that James Madison didn't appear at the national convention for ratifying the constitution. In particular, he forced James Madison to run in an election in a heavily gerrymandered district against James Monroe (with this gerrymandering being represented in the novel through the abandoned city favorable to Jane Monroe). Nevertheless, James Madison narrowly defeated his old friend James Monroe and succeeded in ratifying the constitution.

Also: James Madison really did have his nose damaged when fighting James Monroe in this election, namely by getting frostbite while campaigning out in the cold.

## Under the Surface

“Did you actually think,” Madison remarked, tightening her legs around Monroe’s waist, “I wouldn’t exploit your EP’s major weakness of only activating against direct attacks?”

“And did you actually think,” Monroe replied with a grin, “that you could stop me with such stubby little legs?”

Monroe twisted her body and ducked straight down, slipping out of Madison’s hold. Madison hit the floor and lunged forward, leaving her trident behind as she grabbed at Monroe. Monroe stepped back, her long strides easily outpacing Madison’s shorter reach. In the stands, Quincy rested a hand on his chin.

“So,” he spoke up, “who do you think is going to win in the end?”

Jefferson gazed across the arena.

“Naively, it would appear that Madison holds the better position here. After all, she’s forced Monroe into a close-combat fight while simultaneously neutralizing her EP.” Jefferson shook her head. “But in terms of experience, Monroe actually holds a significant advantage in this situation.”

“Fair point,” Quincy acknowledged. “After all, Monroe is plenty used to fighting opponents in close-range. On the other hand, Madison almost never goes into battle without her trident in hand.”

“Precisely,” Jefferson remarked. “And if this were the whole story, I would have to pick Monroe as the most likely winner. However...” Jefferson crossed her arms, “...there’s something more lurking under the surface of this match...”

Monroe gave a smirk as she dodged yet another grab from Madison.

“Stay still...” Madison grumbled as she lunged at Monroe.

“Sorry, baby, but you’re never going to catch me...” Monroe suddenly stepped forward, sweeping Madison’s legs off the floor. “Especially not with your face planted in the ground!”

Monroe extended her arms forward, aiming her rifle point-blank at Madison’s falling body.

Madison remained non-plussed.

“Executive Power,” she spoke, “Ratification; Three Branches!”

“Wha—?” Monroe stopped as three prongs shot out the ground, tearing across her legs. “Gahhh!” She screamed, stumbling back and tripping over herself as she dropped her rifle to the ground. As she fell, Monroe stared out at Madison’s trident planted in the ground.

“I see,” Monroe hissed, “you left your weapon behind on purpose, all so you could extend its tips underneath my feet!”

Monroe hit the ground with a wince. She reached for her rifle, but Madison leapt onto her arm, stopping it as she brought back her fist behind her.

“I’ve been waiting to do this,” Madison spoke while readying her punch, “for a very...very long time.”



"Wait, wait, wait!" Monroe spoke frantically, "I surrender! I surrender! For reals this time!"

Taft quickly slammed his gavel.

"The match is over!" he declared, "The winner, is [The Sage of Montpelier], Jamie Madison!"

Madison stoically put down her fist and dismounted off Monroe. Monroe started to rise up after her, only to fall back on her injured legs. Madison reached out, grabbing Monroe's arm before she hit the ground.

"...thanks," Monroe mumbled.

Madison gave a nod, then lifted Monroe to her side, the crowd cheering them on as the two walked out arm in arm.

"Well," Eisenhower remarked from her bed, "what did you end up thinking about the match?"

"Oh it was utterly dreadful," Wilson replied with a snide. "There was no point in Madison attacking with her trident at the start if she knew what Monroe's EP was capable of, nor was there any reason for Monroe to fall for such an obvious trap at the end."

"Agreed," Eisenhower said with a nod. "There really is no benefit in watching a fixed fight..."

On the ground, Monroe slipped Madison a subtle glance.

"When did you figure it all out?"

"I had my suspicions after very first shot," Madison explained, rubbing the wound on her cheek, "it was a weak attack," she pointed to her chipped nose, "and I know you can shoot better than that." She looked down to the scars running along her arm. "But I only became completely certain after you activated Monroe Doctrine...each of your slashes were designed to look painful, but they actually inflicted almost no real damage."

"And I appreciate you doing the same," Monroe replied, wiggling her supposedly injured leg. "Though of course," she said with a smirk, "I let you hit me."

"Anyways," Madison continued, "why in the world did you make us go through this ridiculous farce?"

"Can't you hear it?" Monroe said, gesturing to the crowd, "You put up a valiant fight against a disrespectful ally, then accepted her back with open arms! The audience is completely on your side now!"

"I hardly see the relevance."

Monroe shook her head.

"The people would never accept our Party winning the tournament if you got through this match on a bye. Sure, the Presidents would still be forced to swear their allegiances to us in the end, but their soldiers would never join us."

"...I suppose that's fair," Madison remarked, "but why didn't you tell me all this beforehand?"

"Because you're a terrible actor!" Monroe said with a grin, then lowered her smile. "That...and, I thought there was a small chance you might end up blundering badly enough to give me the win."

Madison stepped on Monroe's injured foot, inciting a quiet yelp.

"Honestly," Madison said, shaking her head with the faintest of smiles, "you never cease to amaze me."

Monroe grinned back.

"You too pal!"

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Across the stadium, a giant cowboy paced up and down the halls muttering to himself.

"You got this," LBJ spoke softly, "you got this!"

"Nervous there, big guy?"

LBJ looked to see JFK wearing a baggy tweed jacket, wrinkled cackles, and mismatched socks.

"N-nervous?" LBJ replied, puffing out his chest. "Why...why I'm calmer than a turkey the day after Thanksgiving!"

"It's okay," JFK continued, resting a hand on his shoulder. "These are extraordinary times we're living in, and you face an extraordinary challenge. That being said," he tightened up his grip, "if you reduce your sights in the face of difficulty...well...perhaps it would be better for you not to go at all."

"Not go...?" LBJ spoke weakly, then let out a heavy snort. "Not go!" He threw JFK's hand off his back and marched on by himself. "Like hell I won't!"

LBJ continued onwards, stopping as he reached the final gateway to the arena. He stared at the iron door; the sole barrier separating him from the match that would make or break his entire career. He swallowed, licked his lips, then turned back around.

"I should eat something," he muttered before shuffling down the hall. He started rounding a corner, then stopped as he heard a voice coming from the other side.

"I just can't stand Johnson's long face!" JFK shouted, "He's always standing around looking sad, waiting for someone to stroke his damn ego!" He shook out his head. "Honestly, I think it's high time we reconsider whether he's worth keeping in our Party."

A woman in a wheelchair placed her hands together.

"I understand what you're saying," FDR spoke, "but we ought to at the very least see the outcome of his match before making rash decisions like this."

"Oh please," JFK said with a roll of his eyes, "McKinley's a veteran fighter! LBJ on the other hand is known only for his signature move, the 'Johnson City Windmill'..."

JFK got on his back and started kicking up in a windmill motion.

"If you hit me I'll kick you!" he squealed in a mock imitation of LBJ's voice, "If you hit me I'll kick you!"

“Oh stop that now,” FDR spoke, suppressing a chuckle. “Yes, you are of course correct that Johnson can turn into a complete coward when coming to face with even the mildest of dangers...”

From around the corner, LBJ tightened his breathing, then tightened up his fists.

“You damn Harvards...” he whispered, “I’ll show you yet!”

LBJ raced down the hall, not bothering to listen in to the rest of their conversation.

“...but,” FDR continued, “when his back is up against the wall...that is when LBJ shines best!”

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**JFK and LBJ.** Lyndon B. Johnson and Jack F. Kennedy have a somewhat complex relationship. They competed against each other for the 1960 democratic nomination, after which Jack invited Lyndon to be his Vice President, largely to help him win states in the south. It was theorized then that Jack would later drop Lyndon from the ticket in 1964 since at that point it seemed they were unlikely to win states in the south, and since Jack had also been known to complain about Lyndon’s “damn long face.” Ultimately though, Jack would die in office before he ever had the chance to officially declare whether or not he would keep Lyndon come 1964.

**Johnson City Windmill.** Lyndon Johnson attracted crowds during his campaigns by flying around in a helicopter (nicknamed the Johnson City Windmill), which was a piece of technology that was practically unheard of in many parts of rural Texas.

As a kid, Lyndon was known to be quite the coward. In particular, whenever someone threatened to fight him, Lyndon would get on his back and start kicking his legs out while chanting “if you hit me I’ll kick you!”