Brilliant Solution

Chapter 9

p. 191, ¶ 1, line 6—“Yet the presence of so many distinguished political leaders could not hide the fact that the new government was just that, new, and this was its weakness. The loyalty of its citizens was untested, and thus its survival was uncertain. Its legitimacy rested, for the moment, solely upon the ratification process. If public support waned or protest against its policies and programs grew vocal, that legitimacy could be challenged.”

p. 191, ¶ 2, line 1—“For the moment what the new government needed was a charismatic figure who held the people’s affection and loyalty by the force of personality and character alone – and who was willing to spread the protective blanket of that widespread devotion over the newly established government. Fortunately, it had such a man in George Washington.”

p. 192, ¶ 2, line 1—“On February 4, 1789, electors in eleven states had met to cast their votes for the first president of the United States.”

p. 192, ¶ 3, line 1—“The election was unique in American history, not simply because a unanimous vote had swept someone into office. No one had campaigned for election.”

p. 193, ¶ 1, line 2—“The leading candidate was well-known to be the most reluctant candidate; indeed, he had repeatedly expressed his desire to retire from public life and spend the remaining years as a farmer.”

p. 193, ¶ 2, line 1—“Weeks before official word of his election reached Mount Vernon, the general had begun to pack his bags and set his Virginia affairs in order.”

p. 193, ¶ 3, line 1—“Debt was not the only thing troubling Washington that fateful spring. He was in poor health, suffering once again from debilitating bouts of rheumatism and the nagging pain produced by dentures made of everything from hippopotamus teeth to ivory and lead. At fifty-seven, he felt old, and his longing to spend his days riding the fields and enjoying the quiet comforts of his fireside was guise to hid ambition.”

p. 194, ¶ 2, line 1—“Washington had spent a lifetime in pursuit of the respect of his countrymen.”
p. 194, ¶ 3, line 6 — “Here (Alexandria, Virginia), as everywhere along the route to New York, crowds gathered to greet Washington. At every town welcoming speeches were made; in every city Washington was asked to lead a parade of dignitaries.”

p. 195, ¶ 3, line 1 — “Meanwhile, Congress busied itself with finding appropriate housing for the president-elect and planning for his inauguration. A letter went out to Washington, asking when and where he would like to take the oath.”

p. 195, ¶ 3, line 10 — “Expecting huge crowds of citizens to fill the streets outside Federal Hall, they decided that the oath should be taken on the balcony, or ‘outer gallery,’ so that the public could view the historic event.”

p. 196, ¶ 1, line 4 — “A chair for the president was to be placed in the Senate chamber and, to the right of his seat, a second chair for the vice president, Massachusetts revolutionary John Adams, who had received the second largest number of votes in the electoral college.”

p. 197, ¶ 1, line 1 — “Washington would not be among strangers on that crowded balcony, for many of the delegates to the Constitutional Convention had sought and won office in the new government.”

p. 197, ¶ 1, line 18 — “Close friends and colleagues, missing from Congress, would appear in other capacities around Washington.”

p. 197, ¶ 1, line 28 — “Some men Washington might have hoped to see were missing. Gouverneur Morris was abroad, viewing first hand the French Revolution.”

p. 198, ¶ 1, line 2 — “That so many of the men who had framed the Constitution would be there to see it through its first years must have been heartening to the new president.”

p. 198, ¶ 2, line 1 — “On April 30 – inauguration day – the city was awakened to the sound of church bells and the roar of cannon from Bowling Green.”

p. 198, ¶ 2, line 9 — “Scores of New Yorkers assembled in churches, where they heard their ministers ‘implore the blessings of Heaven on the nation.’”

p. 199, ¶ 1, line 1 — “At precisely twelve noon, the senators and representatives chosen to escort the president assembled at his home. They found Washington waiting. Always sensitive to the symbolic
possibilities of dress, Washington had chosen to wear a dark brown coat, waistcoat, and breeches, and white silk stockings, all made from American cloth.”

p. 199, ¶ 1, line 15—“With little or no attachment to any church, Washington had two intense organizational commitments: Freemasonry and the Society of Cincinnati.”

p. 200, ¶ 2, line 2—“Unlike the president-elect, the short, chunky Adams had shown a preference for splendor over simplicity in selecting his inauguration-day suit. Washington acknowledged the elaborately dressed Adams politely but not warmly, for the two men were far from friends. Adams burned with a jealousy of Washington’s fame and popularity that he was unable to hide. For his part, Washington found Adams too ‘Yankee’ in his unpolished manners, blunt speech, and open ambition.”

p. 201, ¶ 1, line 1—“The Bible was raised and George Washington leaned low to kiss its open pages. As he did, he said, ‘I swear’ – and then, visibly moved by the moment, he closed his eyes and added, ‘So help me God.’”

p. 201, ¶ 2, line 11—“Washington’s concern for the task before him was evident in the short, but moving inaugural speech that followed his oath taking. His hands trembling and his voice unsteady, Washington described his election as a ‘vicissitude,’ rather than a delight and spoke frankly of his anxiety in the face of ‘the magnitude and difficulty of the trust to which the voice of my country called me.’”

Definition: vicissitude \vih-SIS-ih-tood; noun: 1. Regular change or succession from one thing to another; alternation; mutual succession; interchange. 2. Irregular change; revolution; mutation. 3. A change in condition or fortune; an instance of mutability in life or nature (especially successive alternation from one condition to another).

p. 202, ¶ 1, line 3—“With a Deist’s sensibility and vocabulary, he (Washington) spoke of America’s dependence upon ‘the Great Author of every public and private good,’ whose ‘Invisible Hand’ in the political affairs of men ought to be acknowledged by the American people. He invited Congress, and the citizens they represented, to join him in recognizing the influence of the Almighty Being in the ‘proceedings of a new and free government.’”

p. 202, ¶ 2, line 1—“Acknowledging that one of his duties was to make recommendations to Congress, Washington nevertheless carefully avoided proposing any specific measures in his inaugural address.”
“Chief among their (Congress’s) virtues, he (Washington) continued, was the pledge that they would not succumb to ‘local prejudices or attachments… [nor] separate views nor party animosities.’ In this, Washington would be sorely disappointed, for by his second term in office, a growing division between champions of agriculture and the champions of commerce, between Francophiles and Anglophiles, and between the followers of Jefferson and the advocates of Hamiltonian economics would create the very political parties Washington so abhorred.”

**Definition:** Francophile; *noun:* someone who favors France or things French.

**Definition:** Anglophile *noun:* someone who favors England or things English.

“Having expressed his confidence in the patriotism and wisdom of Congress, Washington ended with a personal observation and request. He served, he said, because it was his duty and, therefore, he could not accept any payment for his services.”

“His inaugural speech ended, President Washington joined Congress at a prayer at St. Paul’s Chapel.”

“In their reports the following day, newspapers praised the ‘enchanting spectacle’ provided these foreign dignitaries. In the midst of all the celebration, only a few had been keen enough to observe that George Washington was no longer the dashing young military officer, the tall and proudly handsome gentleman of Virginia; instead, ‘time had made havoc’ on the face of the first president of the United States.”