

Fred Allen Show

BACKGROUND: Fred Allen and The Fred Allen Show

Fred Allen invented an entirely new form of radio comedy that consisted of lampooning current events, making fun of his sponsors, and presenting skits that featured a cast of memorable recurring characters. Born John Florence Sullivan on May 31, 1894 in Cambridge, Massachusetts, he was appearing in vaudeville by age eighteen as a juggler and comedian. He moved to Broadway shows in 1919, and met his future wife and radio co-star, Portland Hoffa, while appearing in The Passing Show of 1922.

Allen premiered on radio with the Linit Show on October 23, 1932. Allen wrote much of the material for his shows himself; his perfectionism forced him to move from sponsor to sponsor. The Fred Allen Show, his last series, ran from 1942 to 1949 on NBC.

Allen's funniest and most popular sketch, "Allen's Alley," debuted on December 13, 1932. Various characters came and went, with four characters eventually becoming regulars: Senator Claghorn, Mrs. Nussbaum, Titus Moody and Ajax Cassidy (sorry, Falstaff). Interestingly enough, these four stereotype characters (Southern blowhard, Jewish housewife, taciturn New Englander and garrulous Irishman) were never criticized as being anti-Southern, anti-Semitic, anti-New England or anti-Irish. The warmth and good humor with which they were presented made them acceptable to even the most sensitive listeners.

Another famous continuing sequence was the "feud" between Allen and Jack Benny that began on December 30, 1936, when Allen made a crack about Benny's violin playing. Benny picked up on Allen's joke in the next broadcast, and the feud quickly gained momentum, culminating in the broadcast of a fight between the two from the Hotel Pierre in New York on March 14, 1937. The fight, of course, never came off, but the "feud" continued for years.

Fred Allen was one of the all-time great American writers. Among his best-remembered lines were his two definitions of Hollywood: "Hollywood is a nice place--if you're an orange," and "You can take all the sincerity in Hollywood, put it in a flea's navel, and still have room left over for three caraway seeds and an agent's heart." He always answered all of his fan mail himself. He typed his responses, yet neglected to include capital letters, punctuation marks, spaces or paragraphs. Allen was also an undisputed master of the ad-lib, often throwing out his scripts during a show. "We're a little late, folks," was often heard on Allen's show.

In the later years of The Fred Allen Show, some unexpected competition arrived in the form of ABC's Stop the Music, a big-money quiz show with home participation. There was much scrambling to woo back his audience, including Allen's guarantee to award five thousand dollars to anyone who was called by Stop the Music while listening to Allen, but to no avail. The last Fred Allen broadcast took place on June 26, 1949. Appropriately enough, Jack Benny was the guest. Their "on-air" feud was just that, on-air. Privately they were good friends.

Despite his failing health, Allen made the transition to television, serving as a panelist on What's My Line until his death. Fred Allen died on March 17, 1955, collapsing on the street outside his Manhattan apartment on the way to pick up a newspaper.

THE FRED ALLEN SHOW

Originally broadcast Sunday, May 26, 1946

CAST De Marco Sisters

Fred Allen

Kenny Delmar

Portland Hoffa

Senator Claghorn

Titus Moody

Mrs. Nussbaum

Falstaff Openshaw

Jack Benny

Al Goodman

Abner Plog

THEME MUSIC for about 5 seconds

De Marco Sisters: (SINGING OVER MUSIC) Mr. Allen...Mr. Allen...

MUSIC STOPS

Fred: It isn't one of the Old Hickory Singers, kiddies.

THEME MUSIC back up, play for another 8 seconds

Kenny: (OVER MUSIC) The makers of Blue Bonnet Margarine and Tenderleaf Tea present the Fred Allen show. With Fred's guests Mary Livingstone's husband, Portland Hoffa, Minerva Pious as Mrs. Nussbaum, Alan Reed as Falstaff Openshaw, Parker Findlay as Titus Moody, the De Marco Sisters, and Al Goodman and his orchestra. And until I start tooting the Claghorn, my name is Kenny Delmar.

MUSIC PLAYS additional 5 seconds, STOPS.

Kenny: Ladies and gentlemen, Shakespeare said "To be or not to be." Benjamin Franklin said "Remember: time is money." But for the last eight months all I've said is, Here he is again: Fred Allen!

APPLAUSE

Fred: Thank you and good evening, ladies and gentlemen. And Kenny: I happened to overhear your opening remarks. Lad, if you are unhappy in your work...

Kenny: Well, how can I be happy, Fred? Every Sunday, what do I do? I have one line: Here he is again.

Fred: Kenny, the man who invented the telephone only had one line when he started.

Kenny: Yeah, but Fred, I'm not getting any place in radio; it's the same on my other show.

Fred: Oh, you're on another a...

Kenny: The Lucky Strikes program.

Fred: Oh, the Lucky Strike program. What do you do on that?

Kenny: You know when the man says L-S-M-F-T?

Fred: Yeah...

Kenny: Then the tobacco auctioneer says ya-ta-fa ya-ta-fa sold, American?

Fred: Uh-huh...

Kenny: Then a voice says, "You bet!"

Fred: "You bet"...

Kenny: Another voice says, "Yes sir!"

Fred: "Yes sir"...

Kenny: The voice that says "Yes sir" is mine.

Fred: You're beaten down on that show too, huh? Kenny, why don't you give up that other job and just work on our show?

Kenny: You mean, you'll pay me the extra money?

Fred: No, Kenny, but I tell you what I shall do: I'll let you add the line you have on the Lucky Strike program to the line you have on our show. Put them together, now, and see how they sound.

Kenny: Here he is again, yes sir!

Fred: How is that?

Kenny: Well, that's more like it, Fred. Now I've got something to do!

Fred: As long as you're happy, Kenny, that's...

Portland: Mr. Allen!

Fred: Well, Portland!

APPLAUSE

Fred: Well, Portland, pull up an old rejoinder and sit down. What's new?

Portland: Mama says President Truman has taken over all the coal mines.

Fred: Does your mother need coal?

Portland: Yes. Mama's calling up the White House tomorrow and ordering two tons.

Fred: Oh, that's fine. Do away with the middleman, go right to the top. Well, if she needs any wood the President could sit down at the piano

and give her a couple of chords, I imagine. (AD-LIB TO AUDIENCE) Not good, huh? Can I help it? A man crept in here and did something to the script tonight. I won't mention any names.

Portland: Mama says the world today is a bowling alley.

Fred: The world is a bowling alley?

Portland: Every time you turn around, there's a strike.

Fred: Well, I'm glad--(AD-LIB TO AUDIENCE) anything you don't understand, applaud, it's perfectly all right. That's what they do in Hollywood: people come in, just applaud, and get warm and go home. (ON SCRIPT) Well, I'm glad the trains are running again, Portland.

Portland: Yes, if the railroad strike lasted one more week...

Fred: Yeah?

Portland: The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe would have been off the Hit Parade.

Fred: Oh, that would have been terrible. Well, I think I'll run along, Portland. I have to get my magnifying glass and worm a crabapple.

Portland: Mama says Friday is your birthday.

Fred: That's right.

Portland: How old are you?

Fred: Nobody knows, Portland. I was born before the Decca company started, so there weren't any records in those days.

Portland: (LAUGHING) Mama says last...

Fred: (AD-LIB) Now, don't you laugh, don't you start up. If you're going to establish a precedent in here I want to know about it.

Portland: Mama says last year when the candles on your birthday cake melted down...

Fred: Yeah?

Portland: There was enough grease to wax the floor at Roseland.

Fred: Oh, I'm not that old, Portland.

Portland: Mama says, if you were a piece of furniture, you'd be an antique.

Fred: If I was an antique in radio I'd be Duncan's other fife. Well...Well, that's life I guess, Portland.

Portland: Mama says life is like the Australian Fig Bird.

Fred: The Australian Fig Bird?

Portland: It lives on the seeds in figs.

Fred: But there aren't any figs in Australia. Portland: The Australian Fig Bird dies at birth.

Fred: And the Australian Fig Bird has nothing on our jokes, let me tell you. With that said, I think we better get along to Allen's Alley, Portland.

Portland: What is your question tonight?

Fred: Well, recently a Mister Al Slater, a specialist in mental suggestion, made a phonograph record that he guarantees will put any insomniac to sleep. And so our question is, do you have any trouble sleeping and if you do, what are you doing about it?

Portland: Shall we go?

Fred: As the dollar dinner said when the glutton sat down, I'll be gone in a minute.

MUSIC for 5 seconds.

Fred: Ah, it's so good to get back to Allen's Alley, Portland. It's as quiet as an eel coiling in a bucket of whipped cream. Say, I wonder if the Senator is inÑlet's knock.

KNOCKING. DOOR OPENS

Claghorn: Somebody--I say--somebody knocked.

Fred: Yes, I... Claghorn: Claghorn's the name, Senator Claghorn, that is.

Fred: Well now, look, I know...

Claghorn: Something tells me you don't remember me, son.

Fred: Look, I remember you...

Claghorn: I'm from the South! The pone and possum paradise!

Fred: Now look, Senator...

Claghorn: The only plant life I have around my house is a Virginia Creeper!

Fred: Now wait a minute...

Claghorn: Every time I get chicken pox, they're southern fried!

Fred: Senator...

Claghorn: Remember me now, son?

Fred: No!

Claghorn: Don't say "no" in my presence!

Fred: Why not?

Claghorn: N-O! That's "north" abbreviated!

Fred: Wait a minute, Senator. What about this sleeping problem?

Claghorn: When I--I say--when I first went to the Senate I had plenty of trouble sleeping.

Fred: You...

Claghorn: After the roll was called, I'd put on my seersucker nightshirt and my lindsey-woolsey (STRESSING FIRST SYLLABLE) BAY-ray...

Fred: Yeah?

Claghorn: Yeah, I'd face the south, lean back, close my eyes...

Fred: And go to sleep, eh?

Claghorn: Until some Yankee pigeon-plucker would get up, start flappin' his lips and break up my morpheus filibuster. Filibuster, that is!

Fred: I heard you the first time, Senator. Are you still losing sleep, Senator? Claghorn: No, I've solved my problem, son.

Fred: How?

Claghorn: When I'm ready to sleep in the Senate I sit back and croon myself my southern lullaby.

Fred: What is your southern lullaby?

MUSIC: "ROCK-A-BYE BABY" PLAYS

Claghorn: (OVER MUSIC) Rock-a-bye small fry, On the cotton tree top, When the southern wind blows, Your cradle will rock, When the wind's from the north, I say, baby you'll bawl, For down will come cradle, Tree and you all!

MUSIC STOPS

Fred: Well very good, Senator. So long, Senator.

Claghorn: So long!

DOOR CLOSES. APPLAUSE

Fred: Well, the Senator stopped just in time: I was dozing off myself. Now, I wonder how Titus Moody is doing.

KNOCKING. DOOR OPENS

Titus: Howdy, bub.

Fred: You're starting to sound like Dennis Day, Titus. Tell me, Mr. Moody, do you have any trouble sleeping?

Titus: I only half sleep.

Fred: Half sleep?

Titus: I got short eyelids.

Fred: With short eyelids, you can't close your eyes, huh?

Titus: Only when I frown.

Fred: I see. Well, are you the only one awake on the farm?

Titus: No, daylight saving time has got everything in a swivet.

Fred: The animals are bewildered? Titus: Yeah. My cow had insomny.

Fred: Your cow didn't sleep at all?

Titus: The bags under her eyes were so big, I didn't know which end to milk.

Fred: You were confused, eh?

Titus: Yeah. First time I milked the wrong end, and got two buckets full of homogenized tears.

Fred: Well, have you cured the cow's insomnia?

Titus: I got a book on hypnotizin'.

Fred: Good.

Titus: I stood in front of the cow...

Fred: Yeah?

Titus: I stared right into her eyes...

Fred: Uh-huh...

Titus: I started waving with my hands...

Fred: Uh-huh...

Titus: I said, "alacazam, alacazen, you ain't a cow, you're a hen."

Fred: "You're a hen." Well, was your hypnotism a success?

Titus: Yeah. Today, that cow thinks she's a hen.

Fred: Well, how do you know?

Titus: Well, she's sitting on a nest.

Fred: You mean...

Titus: She's laying egg nogs. So long, bub!

DOOR CLOSES. APPLAUSE

Fred: Let's try this next door, here.

KNOCKING. DOOR OPENS.

Mrs. Nussbaum: Nu?

Fred: Oh, Mrs. Nussbaum!

Mrs. Nussbaum: You were expecting maybe Hoagie Carbuncle?

Fred: Tell me, Mrs. N, do you have trouble sleeping?

Mrs. Nussbaum: Who could sleep? Every night with his dreaming, mine husband Pierre is waking me up.

Fred: He dreams, huh?

Mrs. Nussbaum: Always he's different things.

Fred: Dreams he's different things? How do you mean?

Mrs. Nussbaum: One night, Pierre is dreaming he is the Lone Stranger.

Fred: Yeah?

Mrs. Nussbaum: All night long, he is yelling "Hi-ho Silver!"

Fred: "Hi-ho Silver," huh?

Mrs. Nussbaum: Upstairs is living a Mrs. Silver.

Fred: Yeah?

Mrs. Nussbaum: All night, she is yelling back "Hi-ho Nussbaum!"

Fred: I see.

Mrs. Nussbaum: One night, Pierre is dreaming he is an automobile, a roadster.

Fred: A roadster?

Mrs. Nussbaum: In his pajamas, Pierre is sleeping with the top down.

Fred: Oh, my.

Mrs. Nussbaum: Once, he is dreaming he is an Alka-Seltzer.

Fred: An Alka-Seltzer?

Mrs. Nussbaum: All night, Pierre is fizzing.

Fred: No wonder you can't sleep.

Mrs. Nussbaum: Last night, he should drop dead.

DOOR CLOSES. APPLAUSE

Fred: Well, that brings us to the lavender shanty at the end of the Alley. Let's try here.

KNOCKING. DOOR OPENS

Falstaff: You knocked three times, do you think that's nice? In my last picture, the postman rang twice.

Fred: Ah, Falstaff. You have new poems tonight?

Falstaff: Indubitably. Hast heard:
Said the little bear to the big giraffe,
Let's eat a hyena, just for a laugh?

Fred: No.

Falstaff: Or: When I called her "baby," her face lit up,
'Cause she had a lantern jaw?

Fred: No.

Falstaff: How about this:
Mother's home putting spikes in her shoes,
She's playing first base for Vera Cruz.

Fred: Now, wait a minute, Falstaff! You exponent of the hackney!
Tonight, we are discussing the problem of sleep.

Falstaff: My poem awaits your bidding.

Fred: And what is your shut-eye sonata called?

Falstaff: "My Recipe for Slumber."

Fred: How does it Gide?

Falstaff: If you cannot sleep at night
And you don't know what to do,
My Recipe for Slumber
Is just the thing for you.
Don't waste time taking powders,
Don't bother counting sheep,
Don't dawdle in a hot bath,
Hoping you will sleep.
Don't give up drinking coffee,
Don't send for any gland man,
You can eat and drink all night,
And still you'll meet the sandman.
My Recipe for Slumber is older than the sphinx.
Just cut twenty tiddlies into halves,
And you'll get forty winks.

APPLAUSE. DOOR CLOSES Fred: Well thank you, Falstaff. And as Falstaff
runs for cover, we turn to greet the De Marco Sisters. Accompanied by
maestro Al Goodman and his I-haven't-got-a-joke-for-them-this-week
Philharmonic, the De Marcos sing, "Doin' What Comes Naturally."

MUSIC--"DOIN' WHAT COMES NATURALLY"

MUSIC ENDS. APPLAUSE. MUSIC--"WHO DO YOU LOVE" for 5 seconds

Fred: That was just a short order of "Who Do You Love," I hope, played
by maestro Al Goodman and his forty men who...

DOOR OPENS Guide: This is Studio 6A, folks...

Fred: Say, wait a minute, wait a minute...

Guide: This last booth is the control room.

Fred: Say, just a minute.

Guide: That little man with the mildew on him is a Vice President.

Fred: Say, wait a minute. What is this?

Guide: This is a Radio City sixty-cent tour. OK, folks, let's get going...hey, wait a minute! I got a stowaway, here!

Fred: A stowaway in a tour?

Guide: Only fifteen people paid, now I got sixteen.

Fred: Who would be low enough to sneak into a tour to save sixty cents?

Guide: There's the guy. Hey, you!

Jack: Who me?

Fred: Jack Benny!

APPLAUSE

Fred: Jack...

Guide: Come on! I'm going to get sixty cents out of you if I have to...

Jack: Take your hand off my tie!

Guide: Come on!

Jack: Put me down!

Fred: Yes guide, put Mr. Benny down. I'll give you the sixty cents.

Jack: Wait a minute, Fred. Wait a minute. Put that money away.

Fred: But Jack...

Jack: I've only seen half the tour.

Fred: Well Jack...

Jack: Give him thirty cents.

Fred: Here you are, guide.

Guide: (Moving away from mic) Thanks. Follow me, folks. Now on your right is a water cooler...

DOOR CLOSES

Jack: Well Fred, it was nice of you to pay that thirty cents.

Fred: Oh, it was nothing.

Jack: "Nothing," he says. Thirty cents.

Fred: Jack, how can you be so cheap?

Jack: Oh, all right. Go ahead, be like the other radio comedians. Tell some cheap jokes. Say I'm tighter than the skin on Sydney Greenstreet's hip. I squeeze a nickel so hard the "E Pluribus" laps over the "Unum." Tell Ôem.

Fred: Well Jack, I didn't...

Jack: Oh, start insulting me, after I made a special trip up here just to say goodbye before I leave for Hollywood.

Fred: Well Jack, I...

Jack: All of a sudden I'm cheap. I won't even eat in the sun: my shadow might ask me for a bite.

Fred: Your shadow has teeth? Jack, don't get excited. Look, if you're cheap, you're cheap.

Jack: That's the way I look at it. Some people save asparagus ends, it's a hobby. My hobby is not spending.

Fred: Look, Jack, if there ever was a time that you and I should not argue, this is the time.

Jack: What do you mean, this is the time?

Fred: Well, a lot of--haven't you heard? A lot of the radio programs that have been on for many years have been cancelled. They'll not be back on the air next fall.

Jack: Well that's radio, Fred. It's dog-eat-dog. I always say only the fit survive.

Fred: Oh, how true. By the way, you finished tonight, didn't you?

Jack: Yes sirree. Tonight was my last show of the season.

Fred: Did your sponsor mention anything about your program coming back in October?

Jack: Well no, no, Fred. But we have a mutual understanding. You see, we always sort of take it for granted.

Fred: Oh.

Jack: The season ends, the sponsor shakes hands with me, and then we...yipe!

Fred: Jack! Jack, what's wrong?

Jack: Tonight he didn't shake hands.

Fred: Well, that's what happened to The Street Singer. At the end of the year his sponsor used to wink. One year he didn't wink--The Street Singer was back in the street.

Jack: But Fred, why should my sponsor want to get rid of me? Why, I'm funnier than I was when I started. And I'm getting less money.

Fred: Really?

Jack: Some days when he's short I take tobacco. (AD-LIB) I hate to get these big laughs on your program.

Fred: Let's face it, Jack, radio needs new blood. Who knows? We may be through.

Jack: I've been in radio fourteen years, they can't throw me aside like an old shoe.

Fred: But Jack...

Jack: Fourteen years. And now, like an old shoe.

Fred: But Jack, you with that "hmm" and "yipe." Fourteen years is a long time.

Jack: Fred, what does Ma Perkins got that I haven't got, only longer commercials?

Fred: Well, Jack, you know how it is in radio. Today you're a star, tomorrow Ralph Edwards is hitting you in the face with a pie.

Jack: Like an old shoe.

Fred: Well cheer up, Jack. At least we have our memories. We've known each other for thirty years.

Jack: Yep. The first time I met you, Fred, I was just a kid in school. A diller, a dollar, a ten o'clock scholar.

Fred: You were the only ten o'clock scholar I ever saw with five o'clock shadow.

Jack: How I could use some of that fuzz today. (AD-LIB) Could use a good joke today, too.

Fred: The next time we met, we were in vaudeville, remember? You were doing a musical act.

Jack: Playing the violin. What a finish I had. When I played "Glow Worm" my violin lit up.

Fred: With those neon strings it was beautiful.

Jack: Fred, remember my encore?

Fred: Encore?

Jack: Remember, I'd put the violin bow in my teeth, bend the crab, and play "Listen to the Mockingbird?"

Fred: And as you bent the crab, two mockingbirds flew out of the back of your pants.

Jack: I stopped every show with it.

Fred: (AD-LIB) Except this one. (ON SCRIPT) Remember the closing...

Jack: (AD-LIB) This one stopped five minutes before I got on it!

Fred: (AD-LIB) It stopped with cash daily. (ON SCRIPT) Remember that week in Needles, Arizona--the closing act, Cohen's Camels?

Jack: Cohen's...no, no, I...

Fred: The closing act. Jack, how could you forget Cohen's Camels?

Jack: Cohen I remember. My sponsor told me to forget that other word.

Fred: Ah, those were the happy days. The next time I saw you, you were just going into radio.

Jack: Radio. I remember the morning Marconi called me up.

Fred: Marconi?

Jack: Marconi and Singing Sam--had a little radio station in a doorway down on the East Side. The antenna was a Western Union boy holding a wire.

Fred: Well, I guess...

Jack: (AD-LIB) These kind of jokes don't fit.

Fred: (AD-LIB) No, they don't.

Jack: (AD-LIB) "The antenna"--when did I ever say "antenna" on my own show? But go ahead, Fred.

Fred: Well, it's all over, Jack. We've come to the end of the rainbow.

Jack: Like an old shoe. Fred: Like an...(AD-LIB) there it is again.

Jack: (AD-LIB) Been on ten minutes already; I've only had "it's an old shoe." Oh, I forgot: "antenna."

Fred: (AD-LIB) You ought to get a boot out of that old shoe by now.

Jack: (AD-LIB) Now I'm sorry I brought it back in again. (ON SCRIPT) Seems like only yesterday I ran into the May Company and said, "Mary, stop demonstrating that Brillo." (AD-LIB) That's another word I don't always get.

Fred: (AD-LIB) It goes on top of an antenna...

Jack: (OVER FRED) We're going to work...

Fred: The Brillo fits on an antenna. (ON SCRIPT) Cheer up, Jack. When you're retired you can tune in on my program.

Jack: Your program? You mean, you're not getting thrown out of radio, too?

Fred: Well, why should I?

Jack: Listen, if my program is old stuff, you with that broken down "Allen's Alley"...

Fred: Well now wait, I mean my new show.

Jack: New show?

Fred: People don't want entertainment today. A radio show has to give away things. Nylons, iceboxes, automobiles...

Jack: You mean, to stay on the air you have to give things away? Free?

Fred: Yes!

Jack: I'll die first.

Fred: Well, not me. I'm auditioning my new program tonight.

Jack: And you're...Fred, you're giving things away?

Fred: Tons of stuff!

Jack: To strangers?

Fred: What's the difference who gets it?

Jack: Well Fred, as long as I'm here in the studio...

Fred: Oh no, I'm sorry, Jack. Professional people cannot participate--it's the rule.

Jack: But don't you ever find people on these programs changing their names to get something for nothing?

Fred: Well, occasionally we do catch a phony, but we're on the air--what can we do?

Jack: Nothing. You have to give them the merchandise?

Fred: That's right.

Jack: Hmm...

Al: Mr. Allen, we're ready for your audition.

Jack: Uh, I'll run along, Fred. So long.

Fred: So long, Jack.

Jack: Hmm. Giving away things for nothing.

DOOR CLOSES

Fred: Well all right, Mr. Goodman. Let's try out my new show.

TRUMPET FANFARE

Kenny: How would you like to be King for a Day?

CHEERING and MUSIC--"WE'RE IN THE MONEY"--for five seconds. CHEERING stops, MUSIC fades down.

Kenny: (OVER MUSIC) And here he is: the man who'll change one of you

nobodys (MUSIC FADES OUT) into King for a Day, the old Kingmaker himself, Fred Allen!

CHEERING

Fred: (OVER CHEERING) Thank you, thank you, (CHEERING STOPS) and good evening. Did all you folks in the audience like those thousand-dollar bills you found on your seats when you came in?

CHEERING

Fred: Good. And if you want more, there'll be a big bag of money at the door. On your way out, help yourselves. But the stage is loaded with hundreds of presents for the first man to answer our Jumbo Jackpot Question. He will be King for a Day. And here is our first eager contestant. Good evening, sir, what is your name?

Plog: Abner Plog.

Fred: Mr. Plog, how old are you?

Plog: I'm ninety-eight. Fred: Ninety-eight years old.

Plog: And don't pin no orchid onto me.

Fred: No orchid, eh?

Plog: That's how I lost my wife.

Fred: On a quiz program?

Plog: Yeah. My wife was a hundred and two, the fella pinned an orchid onto her...

Fred: I see...

Plog: The weight of the orchid bent my wife over and snapped her spine.

Fred: Well, that's too bad.

Plog: Yeah, my wife won first prize, but she never knew it.

Fred: Well all right, Mr. Plog, now for our question. You may be King for a Day.

Plog: I don't think I'll last through the day.

Fred: All right, we'll hurry. Tell me, who was the sixth President of the United States?

Plog: The sixth?

Fred: There were three names.

Plog: Mary Margaret McBride?

Fred: Oh, I'm awfully sorry, Mr. Plog. But for making such a swell try, here is a gift certificate. Present it at LaGuardia Airfield, and you will get a brand new B-29 and a polka-dot form-fitting parachute. Happy

landings, Mr. Plog! And here is our next potential King for a Day. Your name, sir? Jack: Myron Proudfoot.

Fred: Myron Proudfoot? You look like a chap I know.

Jack: I'm not interested in your friends--start giving things away, brother.

Fred: What is your occupation, Mr. Proudfoot?

Jack: I'm a chaplain in a bakery.

Fred: What does a chaplain do in a bakery?

Jack: I put wings on angel cakes.

Fred: How long have you been in the cake business, Mr. Proudfoot?

Jack: Long enough to know a crumb when I see one. And I see one.

Fred: Now don't get sarcastic, Mr. Proudleg...

Jack: The name is Proudfoot and make with the question.

Fred: All right. Who was the sixth President of the United States?

Jack: John Quincy Adams.

Fred: John Quincy Adams is correct, and Mr. Myron Proudfoot is King for a Day!

CHEERING and MUSIC--"POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE"--for three seconds

Fred: Folks, here he is: King Proudfoot. Well, your majesty, how do you feel?

Jack: Never mind how I feel, what do I get?

Fred: First, for his majesty from Schnook's Sport Nook, a genuine no-splash beaver-board canoe paddle. Here it is.

Jack: (EXCITED) A canoe paddle! Oh, boy!

Fred: And with the compliments of Tiffany's, this chromium pitchfork! For our King for a Day.

Jack: (EXCITED) Gee! A four-pronger! And it's all mine!

Fred: And from Hemmingway's Hardware Store, two hundred pounds of self-hardening putty for King for a Day.

Jack: (EXCITED) Just what I needed! Just what I needed!

Fred: This is just the beginning, King. King, you are over thirty-five?

Jack: By two years.

Fred: Fine. A jumbo Podernockle Gym, for his majesty--he is over thirty-five.

Jack: Epiy! Epiy! That's "yipe" backwards.

Fred: And here, the piston rod from a genuine Baldwin locomotive for his majesty the King. A small locomotive. And here, from Melody Lane Music Shop, this case of two thousand soy bean mandolin picks. These are the mandolin picks.

Jack: (EXCITED) I just keep pinching myself to believe it!

Fred: Immediately after this program, your majesty will be guest of honor at a banquet at Hamburger Heaven. Tomorrow morning through the courtesy of the Sanitation Department, you will be guest conductor on the eleven-five garbage run through the Bronx. At night, in your ermine robe, you will be whisked by bicycle to Orange, New Jersey, where you will be the judge in a chicken-cleaning contest.

Jack: I'm King for a Day!

Fred: And that's not all!

Jack: There's more?

Fred: Yes. We're going to start right now to make you look like a king. Sam, of Sam's Super Shoe Shine Stand, is here to brush your shoes. All right, Sam.

Jack: Sam, watch out for the buttons!

Fred: Next, the president of The Busy Bee Hat Cleaners is here to block your hat. Take the King's hat, Mr. Bumble. Jack: And change the newspaper in the hatband.

Fred: Your suit is a little baggy, King. Boys, take his majesty's coat off.

Jack: Wait, wait...

Fred: On our stage we have a Hoffman pressing machine.

Jack: Now wait a minute! Wait a minute!

Fred: An expert operating the Hoffman pressing machine will press your trousers...

Jack: Now wait!

Fred: Take Mr. Proudfoot's pants off, boys.

Jack: Now wait! No wait a minute, Allen!

Fred: Keep your shirt on, King.

Jack: You bet I'll keep my shirt on!

Fred: We're a little late, folks. Tune in again next week...

Jack: (OVER FRED) Oh, come on, Allen, give me my pants!

Fred: Quiet, King!

Jack: Allen, where are my pants?

Fred: Benny, for fifteen years I've been waiting to catch you like this.

Jack: Allen, you haven't seen the end of me!

Fred: It won't be long now!

Jack: I want my pants!

APPLAUSE

THE END