

# **Killing Lincoln: The Shocking Assassination That Changed America Forever Study Guide**

**Killing Lincoln: The Shocking Assassination That  
Changed America Forever by Bill O'Reilly  
(commentator)**

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# Plot Summary

"Killing Lincoln: The Shocking Assassination that Changed America Forever" by Bill O'Reilly and Martin Dugard focuses on the conspiracy and assassination of President Abraham Lincoln.

The first part of the book focuses on the Civil War and includes many battles and plans for victory on behalf of the Union and the Confederacy. The crux of the Civil War focused on the presence of slavery in the southern states. The North was opposed to slavery and other practices in the South. The war lasted for four years under the leadership of President Lincoln and the president of the Confederacy Jefferson Davis. While the leaders made the major decisions and plans, the generals in charge of action on the battlefield were Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee.

The war was grueling and difficult. Both sides were devout in their convictions and went through untold horrors to follow their leaders into victory or defeat. The soldiers, particularly the Confederates, were starved to the point of death and had little in the way of clothing. The soldiers marched until they collapsed from exhaustion or simply could not fight any more. Many deserted and fled into the wilderness.

Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox Courthouse. Although the war was over, however, the Confederates were not prepared to give up and intended on seeking revenge on the north.

John Wilkes Booth was a famous actor and well respected. Booth was also a Confederate sympathizer and had developed a hatred of Lincoln and the Union. Booth decided to take part in a conspiracy that entailed kidnapping Lincoln and holding him until the Confederacy was restored. As Booth's obsession grew, so did his hatred against Lincoln. Booth decided that kidnapping was not enough, Lincoln had to be assassinated. However, Lincoln was not the only target. Booth also had other targets in mind including Andrew Johnson, Seward, and Grant. Only the assassination of Lincoln would be successful.

Booth's plan was intricate and relied heavily on all men being assassinated at the same time. Booth would attack Lincoln at Ford's Theater. If Booth was lucky he could also assassinate Grant. Grant had other plans for the evening and was not present at the theater. Seward survived the knife attack by Powell. Atzerodt got too drunk and never attacked Johnson who would have been an easy target.

After shooting Lincoln, Booth managed to escape from the theater amid chaos. For six days, Booth and Herold traveled the Maryland countryside and finally made their way into Virginia. Booth's broken leg hindered their journey. The men were caught at Richard Garrett's farmhouse where Booth was shot and killed.

Over the next three months a vast number of suspected conspirators were arrested and tried. Mary Surratt, Lewis Powell, and George Atzerodt and David Herold are found guilty and hanged. Others are sent to prison.



# Part 1: Chapters 1-15

## Part 1: Chapters 1-15 Summary and Analysis

Prologue:

Abraham Lincoln is being sworn in as the 16th President of the United States. The vice president, Andrew Johnson, has just given a rambling, drunken speech which not only embarrasses the president but also the crowd. Lincoln steps up to the podium and gives an uplifting speech. Nearby stands accomplished actor and Confederate sympathizer John Wilkes Booth.

"Lincoln's inaugural speech is a performance worthy of a great dramatic actor. And indeed, one of America's most famous thespians stands just a few feet away as Lincoln raises his right hand. John Wilkes Booth is galvanized by the president's words—though not in the way Lincoln intends." Prologue, p. 8

Booth becomes incensed at Lincoln's speech and lunges for him. Booth is caught by a policeman who believes that Booth merely stumbled. Not even Booth's fiancée has any idea of the plot to kill Lincoln.

Part 1: Total War

Chapter 1:

SATURDAY, APRIL 1, 1865 CITY POINT, VIRGINIA

Lincoln paces back and forth on the top deck of a ship watching as artillery explodes in the night. Lincoln knows that his best bet to end the four-year-long Civil War lies with Ulysses S. Grant and the capture of Robert E. Lee. Lincoln is so worried about prolonging the war that he has offered leniency toward Lee and promises that there will be no arrests of Confederate soldiers.

Lincoln, by nature an insomniac, falls into a deep sleep and has a most prophetic dream.

Chapter 2:

SUNDAY, APRIL 2, 1865 PETERSBURG, VIRGINIA

Grant and Lee face off at Petersburg. Grant has Lee surrounded on three sides but is barred from the fourth side by the Appomattox River. Grant knows that Lee has many more men and more artillery. However, Lee's men are starving and many defect to the Union side for food. Lee wants desperately to punch a hole through Union Lines to get to North Carolina but Grant isn't about to let that happen.



Grant makes a move that sends Lee into retreat.

Lee waits until nightfall. The Union troops miscalculate how many soldiers are located at the Lee camp and allow the general and his men to escape via the river.

Chapter 3:

MONDAY, APRIL 3, 1865 PETERSBURG, VIRGINIA

The Confederate soldiers' march across the bridge takes much longer than anticipated. Lee fears that Grant will fire upon the men. Grant, however, does not.

"The war's end is in sight. Killing those husbands and fathers and sons will impede the nation's healing. So now Grant, the man so often labeled a butcher, indulges in a rare act of military compassion and simply lets them go. He will soon come to regret it."

Chap. 3, p. 23

Grant wanted to capture the Confederates, not kill them.

Grant calls for a meeting with Lincoln. Lincoln rides to Petersburg despite the possible danger of being killed along the way. Grant believes that he can cut off and capture the Confederates on the way to North Carolina. Lincoln believes that the war is almost at an end.

Chapter 4:

TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 1865 NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

Booth and Lucy are in Rhode Island. The north seems untouched by the war as the couple enjoys the finer things in society.

Booth had withdrawn from acting for a time because of illness. During this time, Booth became even more obsessed with Lincoln and supporting the Confederates' intention to uphold slavery. Booth was secretive about his plans - so much so that even Lucy was unaware of what he planned to do.

"After recovering from his illness, Booth immersed himself deeper into the Confederate movement, traveling with a new circle of friends that considered the kidnapping of Lincoln to be of vital national importance. He met with secret agents and sympathizers in taverns, churches, and hotels throughout the Northeast and down through Maryland, always expanding his web of contacts, making his plans more concise and his chances of success that much greater. What started as an almost abstract hatred of Lincoln has now transformed itself into the actor's life's work." Chap. 4, p. 33

Chapter 5:

TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 1865 AMELIA COURT HOUSE, VIRGINIA



Lee travels for one and a half days hoping to outrun Grant. Jefferson Davis and others have already fled Richmond for the Carolinas. Lee knows that Grant will try to cut off the Confederate troops. Despite their weary state, Lee believes he can defeat Grant on open ground.

Lee's men are starving and there is no food to be had save for what they find or capture along the way. The supply lines have been cut off and many men desert the army fearing that the end is near.

Chapter 6:

TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 1865 RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

While Lee is starving, Booth remains in Rhode Island, and Lincoln is on board the USS Malvern. Lincoln is in danger of being shot but does not hide from potential danger. Lincoln and his men arrive in Richmond to find the city on fire and in ruins. This was not the work of Union forces but of the Confederates themselves. The people were convinced that the Union soldiers would steal all of their whiskey, so kegs were smashed, leaving the potent brew to flow into gullies and the James River. The people were starving but Confederate looters had stolen and stockpiled all of the food, including all of the rations for Lee's troops. Additionally, the Confederates decided to burn their most valuable commodity - tobacco. This was the most under thought idea. The burning tobacco set fire to the wooden buildings and store houses throughout the city. All of the Confederate money burned up, leaving its people penniless. The fire raged toward the discarded whiskey and the fire raged, setting off Confederate artillery. Although many of the people not present believed the Union Army had laid siege to Richmond, the Confederates are the ones that effectively and completely destroyed their own capital city.

Chapter 7:

TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 1865 RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

Lincoln's wartime history is discussed, including the fact that he has never fought in a battle.

"He is a politician, and politicians are seldom given the chance to play the role of conquering hero. It could be said that General Grant deserved the honor more than President Lincoln, for it was his strategy and concentrated movements of manpower that brought down the Confederate government. But it is Lincoln's war. It always has been." Chap. 7, p. 44

Lincoln visits Jefferson Davis' home, the executive mansion of the Confederacy. Lincoln thinks about where Davis might have gone but has no intention of hunting the man down or persecuting him for his crimes.

Chapter 8:



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5, 1865 AMELIA COURT HOUSE, VIRGINIA NOON TO MIDNIGHT

Lee's men continue to march despite their level of exhaustion and starvation. Once again, the troops have been denied food and will eat anything available including cows' hooves and tree bark. Even Lee himself is showing signs of wear and exhaustion.

Chapter 9:

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5, 1865 JETERSVILLE, VIRGINIA NIGHT

Grant thinks about his plan to defeat Lee. The plan is to get in front of Lee and cut him off. It is a simple plan and the best one the Union has at this point. However, Grant has a difficult time convincing his generals that the plan is sound. Generals Sheridan and Meade are not doing what it takes to conquer the Confederates. Grant places the blame mostly on Meade who will not fight. Meade is angry that the cavalry and the infantry must share the same road. There is no choice but Meade continues to pout like a petulant child. This will have to change if the Union is going to win the war. Black Thursday has arrived.

Chapter 10:

THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 1865 RICE'S STATION, VIRGINIA DAWN

Lee rides into Rice's Station as people cheer. Lee learns that the Union soldiers marched through Rice's Station an hour before. Lee is stumped by what to do next. If the Confederates cannot cross High Bridge, they will be defeated.

Chapter 11:

THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 1865 FARMVILLE, VIRGINIA MIDMORNING

Union troops race to set fire to High Bridge. General Washburn makes the decision to lead with the cavalry and leave the infantry to protect the rear. Washburn underestimates the rebels who confront the cavalry head on. Washburn hears shots and realizes that the Confederates have found his infantry and that the Union troop is surrounded. All of the Union soldiers are killed or captured. Lee has engineered a great escape.

Chapter 12:

THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 1865 ON THE ROAD TO FARMVILLE, VIRGINIA AFTERNOON

Meade's infantry finds the rebel column and opens fire. Meanwhile Lee hears the shooting and mistakenly believes that a massive Union contingent has fallen upon his troops. Lee chooses to keep his men at camp, a move that sealed the fate of 2,600 rebels. The rebels that escaped wait atop a nearby hill above Saylor's Creek, eager to continue the battle.





Chapter 13:

THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 1865 SAYLER'S CREEK LATE AFTERNOON

Grant's army appears. Lee's men are outnumbered, starving, exhausted, and running out of ammunition. In an attempt to flee, the troops try to cross the bridge in columns of two and three instead of single file. The bridge collapses under the weight. The rebels are trapped.

"Night does not come soon enough, and the fight begins. Almost immediately, the Confederates take incredible losses. Artillery and bullets level any man who dares to stand still. Many soldiers quit the war right then and there, convinced that this endless wave of blue is unbeatable. They see the wagons afire, and hear the explosions of the ammunition inside, and know in an instant that of the three things a soldier needs to survive in wartime—bullets, sleep, and food—they have none." Chap. 13, p. 71

Despite being outnumbered, the rebels refuse to give in. Out of ammunition, men resort to fighting using fists and the butts of their muskets. The battle is bloody and barbaric.

Lee knows he is all but beaten but cannot bear to admit defeat.

Chapter 14:

FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 1865 CITY POINT, VIRGINIA DAWN

Lincoln takes a much needed respite. He is desperate for news from Grant. Grant sends word that if they are pressed, the rebels will surrender.

Chapter 15:

PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 9, 1865 APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE

Lee's troops are cornered at Appomattox Courthouse. The contingency of 8,000 men is no match against Grant's forces of 60,000 soldiers. Lee's last ditch effort of punching a hole through Union lines has failed.

"Lee's proud shoulders slumped as he received the news. 'There is nothing left for me to do but go and see General Grant'" he said aloud. Lee was surrounded by his staff but was talking to himself. The man

who had succeeded his entire life, excelling at everything and failing at nothing, was beaten. 'I would rather die a thousand deaths,' he said."

Lee goes to see Grant. He had previously asked for leniency for the Army of Northern Virginia. Grant said little regarding the future of the rebels.



Lee waits for 2 hours but Grant is miles away suffering from a migraine. Lee is informed that the Union is prepared to attack, despite his flag of surrender. Lee returns to his men.

Lee is stopped along the way. Lee pens a letter to Grant stating his intentions. Grant replies and arranges to meet with Lee. The men meet and Lee surrenders.

Sheridan thinks Lee's surrender is a trick. The Union had captured the store of rations waiting at a station - rations that could fortify Lee's men and help them to break through on their way to the Carolinas.

Lee returns to his men and announces the defeat. Confederate and Union soldiers, once friends, reunite. For a brief moment, the war is forgotten. There are many in the South, however, that will plan on revenge for the Union victory.



## Part 2: Chapters 16-20

### Part 2: Chapters 16-20 Summary and Analysis

Part 2: The Ides of Death

Chapter 16:

MONDAY, APRIL 10, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. NIGHT

Washington is in a glorious uproar over Lee's surrender. Lincoln does not want to speak but is forced into it by the crowd Lincoln has been plagued with nightmares and knows there is a great deal of hard work in the future.

Chapter 17:

MONDAY, APRIL 10, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. NIGHT

Booth practices in a shooting range one mile from the White House. Booth is furious at Lee's decision to surrender. Now that Lee has surrendered, everything is in disarray.

"At this point, there are at least four Confederate groups conspiring to harm the president. Two are plotting a kidnapping, one is planning to smuggle dress shirts infected with yellow fever into his dresser drawers, and another intends to blow up the White House." Chap. 17, p. 100

The only thing that is forbidden in the conspiracy is black flag warfare or murder. Booth wonders if that restriction still holds.

Chapter 18:

MONDAY, APRIL 10, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. NIGHT

Booth is at his residence at the National Hotel. He wants to ride through Washington to ensure that he has an escape route from the city after he kills Lincoln. Lincoln does not believe that the American people will kill their president. Lincoln overlooks all of the historic examples of people killing leaders since the time of King Tut.

Chapter 19:

MONDAY, APRIL 10, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. NIGHT

Booth finds that his favorite horse has been rented. He decides to sell his carriage knowing he no longer has a use for it. Booth makes his way to Ford's Theater and asks one of the workers to clean the carriage and find a buyer.



Booth already has safe houses in place for his escape including Mary Surratt's boarding house and the home of Dr. Samuel Mudd.

Chapter 20:Chapter 20:

TUESDAY, APRIL 11, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. EVENING

Lincoln finally addresses the crowd. Although the speech is well thought out it is not full of the cheer the people expect and many leave. Booth stays however, incensed by Lincoln's suggestions that Negroes will be allowed to become citizens.



## Part 2: Chapters 21-26

### Part 2: Chapters 21-26 Summary and Analysis

Chapter 21:

TUESDAY, APRIL 11, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. EVENING

Lincoln is haunted by his dreams. He speaks of them to Mary and friends. The others are surprised by Lincoln's attentiveness to his dreams.

"Yes, Lincoln believes in dreams, in dreams and in nightmares and in their power to haunt a man. Night is a time of terror for Abraham Lincoln. The bodyguards standing watch outside his bedroom hear him moan in his sleep as his worries and anxieties are unleashed by the darkness, when the distractions and the busyness of the day can no longer keep them at bay." Chap. 21, p. 117

Despite the nightmares, Lincoln still does not believe that someone will try to kill him. Security worries that people have such easy access to the White House and to Lincoln. Despite attempts on his life, Lincoln refuses to make changes.

Chapter 22:

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. MORNING

Booth walks through the streets and thinks out the rest of his plan. He has decided to kill Lincoln in a theater. Booth chooses Ford's Theater, a place he has performed many times and knows by heart. Lincoln has seen Booth perform at the theater, a fact that enraged Booth so much that he gave a poor performance.

"So the theater it will be. Booth has performed at several playhouses in Washington. He knows their hallways and passages by heart. A less informed man might worry about being trapped inside a building with a limited number of exits, no windows, and a crowd of witnesses—many of them able-bodied men just back from the war. But not John Wilkes Booth." Chap. 22, p. 119

Booth thinks about others that could and should be assassinated. Vice President Andrew Johnson is unguarded and an easy target. Booth gives the job to Powell. Many others are on Booth's side although none can be fully trusted with the knowledge that Booth plans to kill Lincoln instead of kidnapping him as was planned. Booth learns that Grant may be in town and hopes that he will be at Lincoln's side, affording Booth the opportunity to kill both men.

Chapter 23:

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. AFTERNOON



Mary Lincoln chooses a new book to lighten her mood. It is Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar". This is ironic as Booth plans to kill Lincoln on the Ides of March, just as Brutus murdered Caesar. Mary will present the book to her husband who loves Shakespeare as much as low brow entertainment. Lincoln has seen many of Shakespeare's plays, in which Edwin Booth, John's brother, has played roles. Edwin Booth has another connection to the Lincolns - he saved Robert Lincoln's life when the young man was nearly hit by a train.

Lincoln is excited to know that Robert and Grant are due to arrive in Washington.

Lincoln argues with Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton over placing Confederates in office. Stanton thinks it is a terrible idea while Lincoln wants to avoid presenting the Union as an occupying force. Eventually, Lincoln withdraws his request.

Chapter 24:

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. MORNING

Sam and Julia Grant arrive in Washington. Grant is in no mood for celebration but does his duty. The Grants have often been separated due to war and are looking forward to spending the rest of their lives together. Grant meets with Lincoln at the White House. The men have not seen each other since Petersburg. Lincoln congratulates Grant. The men take a carriage ride through Washington, cheered on by its citizens.

Meanwhile Booth and his conspirators prepare for the evening's events.

Chapter 25:

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. NIGHT

Booth, Lewis Powell, David Herold and George Atzerodt go over the plan. Atzerodt tells Booth that he wants no part of an assassination. Booth blackmails Atzerodt. The man has no way out.

Ordinarily, it would be suspicious if a man would ride out of Washington at night. Tonight, with the illumination celebration, no one will think twice. If the escape fails, they will try again the next day.

Chapter 26:

Mike O'Laughlen was Booth's fifth conspirator. After a botched murder attempt on Lincoln, O'Laughlen tells Booth that he wants out. Booth is not easily dissuaded but the other man insists on leading a normal life.

The Grants are invited to numerous parties. Although the husband and wife are eager to return to their children, Mrs. Grant thinks it is a good idea to enjoy their one night in Washington. Grant agrees.



O'Laughlen seems to have changed his mind as he travels from Baltimore to Washington. He attempts to crash a party at Stanton's home. People remember him as being a drunk who talked of killing Grant and Lincoln. In truth, O'Laughlen planned to warn the men against Booth. After thinking it through, O'Laughlen realizes that he would still go to jail for the failed kidnapping attempt and leaves the party.

Lincoln does not join in the festivities and remains at home with a migraine.

"On the other side of town, John Wilkes Booth steps back into the National Hotel, frustrated and tired from hours of walking bar to bar, party to party, searching for Lincoln. The Deringer rests all too heavily in his coat pocket, in its barrel the single unfired round that could have changed the course of history. There has been no news of any other assassinations, so he can only assume that his conspirators have also failed—and he is right. Herold, Atzerodt, and Powell were all unable to conquer their fears long enough to cross the line from fanatic to assassin." Chap. 26, p. 143



## Part 3: Chapters 27-35

### Part 3: Chapters 27-35 Summary and Analysis

Part 3: The Long Good Friday

Chapter 27:

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. 7:00 A.M.

This chapter details Lincoln's morning routine from answering correspondence to reading his Bible. It is the last day of Lincoln's open door policy.

Chapter 28:

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. 9:00 A.M.

Booth walks to Lucy's room in the National Hotel. Booth knows he must say goodbye to Lucy forever. Lucy is not surprised and gives Booth a portrait to remember her by.

Chapter 29:

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. 10:00 A.M.

Mary Lincoln is torn between seeing a lavish production of "Aladdin" with a patriotic finale or the much touted "Our American Cousin." James Ford tells Mary that Laura Keene will be on stage and that it is an event not to be missed. Mary is well known for her temper and long winded rants - so much so that Lincoln would never go against her wishes. The couple will go to Ford's Theater.

When Lincoln tells Stanton of their plans, Stanton begs Lincoln to take a guard to the theater. Stanton knows Lincoln will not be dissuaded from his public appearance.

Chapter 30:

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. 10:30 A.M.

Lincoln sends a message to Ford's Theater requesting the state box if it is available. The Fords are thrilled about the request and Lincoln's presence, knowing that the news will fill the seats.

Booth learns of Lincoln's visit. Booth goes to the theater to watch the rehearsal.

"John Wilkes Booth prowls Ford's Theatre alone, analyzing, scrutinizing, estimating. His journey takes him up the back stairs to the state box, where he steps inside and looks down at the stage. A music stand provides an unlikely burst of inspiration. He hefts it in his hand, nervous but elated, knowing how he will make use of it tonight. By the time he





is done, Booth has come up with an audacious—and brilliant—plan of attack." Chap. 30, p. 158

Chapter 31:

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. 11:00 A.M.

The Grants have been invited to attend the theater with the Lincoln's. Julia Grant thinks Mary Lincoln is unstable and flatly refuses to attend. Grant is in the middle. He feels it would be ruse to disappoint his friend and ally but Julia Grant has the final say. Grant says goodbye to Lincoln during their afternoon meeting and the Lincolns leave Washington.

Chapter 32:

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. 2:00 P.M.

Booth makes his rounds in the city. He visits Powell and discusses the murder of Seward. Seward is badly injured and will not put up a fight. Booth visits a local theater and then a bar before going to Mary Surratt's boarding house. During Booth's travels, he learns that the Grants are leaving Washington. Booth is distraught that one of his targets will not be at the theater.

Chapter 33:

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. 3:30 P.M.

Lincoln talks with Crook, his bodyguard about the inevitability of an assassination. Lincoln is convinced that it will happen and he will be killed. Crook says he hopes that Lincoln is mistaken.

As usual, Lincoln speaks with crowds outside the White House. Inside, Mary is pleased at Lincoln's cheerfulness, something she has not seen in a long time. Lincoln says he looks forward to returning to Illinois after the end of his term so that he and Mary can live out their lives.

Lincoln returns to the White House to prepare for an evening at the theater where Booth is waiting for him.

Chapter 34:

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. 7:00 P.M.

Crook's replacement is more than three hours late. The Lincolns are going to have dinner with their sons and then go to the theater with Major Rathbone and his fiancée (and Mary's friend) Clara Harris. When Crook's replacement finally arrives, Crook briefs him and then says goodbye to Lincoln for the last time.



Chapter 35:

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. 8:00 P.M

Booth eats a quick dinner before going out for the evening. He stops in at a bar where he chats with the music director of Ford's Theater, Withers. Withers makes a remark about Booth's father being a superior actor. Booth says that by the end of the night he will be the most talked about man in America.



## Part 3: Chapters 36-47

### Part 3: Chapters 36-47 Summary and Analysis

Chapter 36:

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. 8:05 P.M.

The Lincolns are running late. Rather, the President has made them late due to an impromptu meeting with Colfax. Mary pleads with her husband to hurry. As they go to their carriage, people beckon to Lincoln but he politely states that they are going to the theater. The Lincolns pick up their guests and arrive at the theater at 8:25. The crowd enjoys the play and Lincoln laughs out loud for the first time in many months.

Parker, Lincoln's guard becomes bored. He cannot see the stage and longs for a beverage. Parker leaves his post and entices Lincoln's driver to go to a nearby pub.

"President Abraham Lincoln's only bodyguard, a man with a career-long history of inappropriate and negligent behavior, has left his post for the last time. Incredibly, he will never be punished for this gross dereliction of duty." Chap. 36, p. 186

Chapter 37:

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. 8:45 P.M.

Booth meets with his conspirators outside Herndon House. The men go over the plans. Although the plans had seemed haphazard the day before, tonight they are timed to the minute. Booth says it is vital that the assassinations take place at 10:15 P.M. Booth also tells the men that he has written a letter to the National Intelligencer recounting their plans for the assassinations. There is no way out.

"Booth looks over his gang. These four unlikely men are about to change the course of history, just as surely as Grant or Lincoln or Lee or any of the hundreds of thousands of men who died during the Civil War. They are now ninety minutes away from becoming the most wanted men in all of the world." Chap. 37, p. 188

Chapter 38:

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. 9:30 P.M.

Booth walks his escape route to ensure that it is not blocked. He returns to a bar where he has another shot of whiskey. Booth notes that Parker is still at the bar. It is time.

Chapter 39:

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. 10:00 P.M.



Booth enters the theater. He chats with a couple of employees before going up to the state box. Booth looks through a peep hole and sees Lincoln's position. Booth waits for a specific line to be delivered so that he can take his shot.

Chapter 40:

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. 10:15 P.M.

There is a knock at Seward's front door. Powell is at the door and insists that he deliver a vial of medicine to Seward. The servant refuses but is pushed out of the way. At the top of the stairs Seward's son blocks Powell's way and refuses to allow him into his father's bedroom. Powell fires at the young Seward but the gun jams. Powell beats Seward into unconsciousness, and most likely, death. Powell, despite screams and chaos, goes into the elder Seward's bedroom.

Chapter 41:

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. 10:15 P.M.

Powell's daughter, Fanny, hears the ruckus outside her father's room. Fanny and Private Robinson are in Seward's room. Fanny has finally coaxed her father to sleep while Robinson watches over the secretary. Robinson tries to bar the door but Powell manages to get inside. He stabs Robinson and punches Fanny in the face and knocks her unconscious. As Powell is stabbing Seward, Seward's elder son comes into the room. Powell stabs him as well. Powell is exhausted and leaves four bodies in his wake. Powell does not know that he has killed no one.

The servant, Bell, calls out to soldiers nearby. A courier appears at the house as Powell exits. Powell stabs the courier. Powell runs only to be followed by Bell. Eventually Bell gives up. When Powell reaches the meeting point, he sees that Herold has abandoned him. Powell is in deep trouble and does not know how to get out of Washington.

Chapter 42:

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. 10:15 P.M.

Atzerodt is missing his date with destiny. Although he had picked up his horse as planned, Atzerodt sits in the bar at the Union Hotel drinking whiskey. In fact, Atzerodt is quite drunk. So drunk, in fact he almost fell out of his saddle earlier in the evening. Instead of going up to Andrew Johnson's room to commit murder, Atzerodt stays in the bar. Although Johnson will become known as the worst president in history, he will not suffer the same fate as Lincoln.

Chapter 43:

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. 10:15 P.M.



"John Wilkes Booth takes a bold step out of the shadows, Deringer clutched in his right fist and knife in his left. He extends his arm and aims for the back of Abraham Lincoln's head. No one sees him. No one knows he is there." Chap. 43, p. 208

Booth pulls the trigger. Lincoln feels a sharp pain and then nothing at all. Rathbone jumps up to protect Lincoln. Booth stabs him in the bicep. Booth has planned this part to perfection - or so he thinks. Booth has blocked the door and will make his exit by leaping from the box onto the stage. However, Booth gets caught in a flag draped onto the box and tumbles onto the boards, breaking his leg. The crowd is still laughing but quickly becomes confused. Just as it is becoming clear what has happened, Booth manages to rise and run from the theater. Booth gets away.

Chapter 44:

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. 10:20 P.M.

Booth slows his pace. Word is spreading fast that Lincoln has been shot. The city is in a frenzy with many rushing toward Ford's Theater to verify the news and to see the injured president. Laura Keene tries to maintain order but fails.

Booth is careful not to draw attention to himself although he is well known in the city. He finally makes it to the bridge where he will leave the city. He is stopped by a soldier but is waved through.

O'Laughlen hears the news and knows he must get out of the city. Herold must also escape. At another celebration, 12 year old Tad Lincoln learns that his father has been shot.

Chapter 45:

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. 10:20 P.M.

Mary Lincoln hovers over her dying husband. Rathbone has no idea that Booth's knife missed every major artery by no more than  $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Only doctors are allowed into the state box. A young doctor Leale enters first and quickly examines Lincoln. There are no visible wounds. After a few minutes, Leale discovers the gunshot wound. Leale uses every ounce of knowledge and effort to save Lincoln but knows that the wound is mortal. Lincoln will not survive.

Chapter 46:

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. 11:00 P.M.

Lincoln cannot be allowed to die on the dirty floor. Leale orders four soldiers to carry him to a nearby residence where he can be placed onto a bed. Lincoln would never make it to the White House. Only the doctors stay with Lincoln in the room after Mary is told to leave. Mary begs Lincoln to live.



Chapter 47:

SATURDAY, APRIL 15, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. MIDNIGHT TO DAWN

Leale continues to work on Lincoln although he knows it is hopeless. He is eventually relieved by the Surgeon General and another veteran physician. Both doctors agree with Leale's assessment. Everything possible is done to save Lincoln's life. However, the efforts only prolong his live until just after 7 A.M. when Lincoln takes his last breath.



## Part 4: Chapters 48-55

### Part 4: Chapters 48-55 Summary and Analysis

Part 4: The Chase

Chapter 48:

SATURDAY, APRIL 15, 1865 MARYLAND COUNTRYSIDE EARLY MORNING

"John Wilkes Booth and David Herold, the most wanted men in the United States of America, have successfully fled into the Maryland countryside. They met up at the rendezvous spot in the dead of night. With no sign that Atzerodt or Powell managed to escape Washington, Booth and Herold pushed on with their flight, galloping their horses south, toward Virginia. However, Booth's leg injury is so severe, and their horses so tired, that they were forced to find a place to rest." Chap. 48, p. 234

The place the men choose is the home of Dr. Samuel Mudd, a well-respected physician and Confederate sympathizer.

George Atzerodt and Lewis Powell are still in Washington. Unlike Powell, Atzerodt has committed no crime. He does not return to his hotel room. Instead he books a room at the Pennsylvania Hotel the he shares with an acquaintance, Lt. Keim. Keim is stunned by Lincoln's assassination. Atzerodt, although drunk, manages to feign grief and Keim suspects nothing.

Investigators are on Atzerodt's trail. They search his room and find a ledger that connects him to Booth. A warrant is put out on the men.

Investigators also search Mary Surratt's boarding house but find nothing. There is a ton of evidence in Booth's room, including information that connects O'Laughlen and Arnold to the conspiracy. So far the police have six suspects, including the two men that appeared at Seward's home.

Atzerodt wakes from his drunken stupor and has no idea police are looking for him. He visits an old girlfriend, pawns his revolver and buys a stagecoach ticket. Atzerodt's dim-witted demeanor serves him well. No one questions him and he makes a getaway into the Maryland countryside. Meanwhile, Powell hides out in a nearby cemetery.

Chapter 49:

SATURDAY, APRIL 15, 1865 MARYLAND COUNTRYSIDE NOON

Booth is in bad shape. He has a broken fibula, was thrown from his horse, and suffers from exhaustion and a hangover. Dr. Mudd examines Booth's leg. Booth is in severe pain. The pain is so intense that Booth and Herold are forced to stop at Mudd's estate.



Otherwise they might have escaped into Virginia at sunrise. Booth has no idea that 1000 men are just miles away on a manhunt. Booth also does not know that Lafayette Baker, former Chief of US Intelligence, is on the job.

Chapter 50:

SATURDAY-SUNDAY, APRIL 15-16, 1865 NEW YORK CITY MORNING

Baker is a disgraced spy that hopes to regain favor by tracking and capturing Booth. Baker receives a telegram from Stanton requesting his presence immediately.

Chapter 51:

SATURDAY-SUNDAY, APRIL 15-16, 1865 MARYLAND COUNTRYSIDE

Mudd is reluctant to lend his carriage to the outlaws as it means hanging for Mudd and his wife. Mudd and Herold begin to ride into town but Herold knows it is a bad move as a stranger in a small town will be noticed. Herold is as exhausted as Booth. The men leave Mudd's house and enter the Maryland countryside. It is cold and Booth is suffering. It is clear that the men will not be welcomed anywhere. Just before dawn a fellow sympathizer announces his presence.

Chapter 52:

MONDAY, APRIL 17, 1865 MARYLAND SWAMPS

Jones, the sympathizer, is the only man who will be able to help Booth and Herold. Jones tells the men they must wait because it is too dangerous to move at this time.

Chapter 53:

MONDAY, APRIL 17, 1865 MARY SURRETT'S BOARDINGHOUSE NIGHT

Police return to Mary Surratt's boarding house to arrest her for being complicit in the Lincoln conspiracy. Powell arrives at that time and immediately lies about his identity. When Powell cannot answer questions satisfactorily, he is arrested. Powell is identified by Bell, Seward's servant.

Chapter 54:

TUESDAY, APRIL 18, 1865 MARYLAND SWAMPS DAY AND NIGHT

Soldiers are sent into the swamps. Many believe that even assassins would not choose to hide in such a foul area. A massive sweep takes place but Booth and Herold are not found.

Chapter 55:

TUESDAY, APRIL 18, 1865 MARYLAND COUNTRYSIDE AFTERNOON



The cavalry arrives at Dr. Mudd's estate. Mudd is questioned about the strangers that stayed at his home. Mudd had prepared a story but chokes under the pressure and contradicts himself on many points. The cavalry leaves but Mudd knows they will return.



## Part 4: Chapters 56-62; Afterword; Epilogue

### Part 4: Chapters 56-62; Afterword; Epilogue Summary and Analysis

Chapter 56:

THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 1865 MARYLAND COUNTRYSIDE 4:00 A.M.

Unlike Herold and Booth, Atzerodt heads north. This may be a sign of genius on Atzerodt's part but it is unlikely. While the man could have hidden in plain sight, he simply wandered from town to town.

"But the increasingly unbalanced George Atzerodt is not a genius. His escape is not a premeditated act of egress but a random wandering from home to home, accepting sanctuary and comfort wherever he can find it. He dawdles when he should be making continuous progress. After four days on the run he makes a critical mistake, boldly supporting Lincoln's assassination while eating dinner with strangers. His statements quickly make their way to U.S. marshals." Chap. 56, p. 259

Atzerodt is arrested and three months later is hanged.

Chapter 57:

FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. 7:00 A.M.

Lincoln's funeral is at hand. 600 people crowd inside the White House. Mary is too grief stricken to attend and spends her time sobbing in her room. Lincoln will be buried in Springfield instead of Washington. Along the route back to Illinois, 30 million people view the train and mourn their slain president.

Chapter 58:

FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 1865 MARYLAND COUNTRYSIDE NOON

The cavalry returns to Mudd's home. Mudd's wife turns over Booth's razor and boot. Mudd continues to deny knowing the existence of the strangers. Booth's boot has his name inscribed on the inside. Mudd is arrested.

Baker reasons that Booth will try to head for the hills of Kentucky and chooses Port Tobacco as his crossing point at the Potomac.

Chapter 59:



FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 1865 MARYLAND SWAMPS NIGHT

Jones arrives and tells Booth and Herold that the coast is clear. Jones leads the men to a boat on the river and then bids them goodbye. Jones will never be tried for his part in Booth's escape.

Booth and Herold spend another miserable night out in the open. The men make it safely to Virginia.

Chapter 60:

MONDAY-TUESDAY, APRIL 24-25, 1865 VIRGINIA-MARYLAND BORDER DAY

Baker receives word that Booth and Herold have crossed the Potomac. The report is erroneous. The men that have crossed are two other men. However, the cavalry does not know this and searches for many hours. Late in the night Baker's cousin, Lt. Baker, finds someone to positively identify Booth and Herold. Baker has a hunch about where the men might be hiding and rides to a local barn.

Chapter 61:

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 1865 GARRETT FARM, VIRGINIA DUSK TO DAWN

Baker arrives at the home of Richard Garrett where Booth and Herold are hiding. Garrett had believed Booth's tale of being a returning soldier. When Booth began to act strangely at the news of Lincoln's assassination, Garrett asked the men to leave. When the men refused, Garrett insisted that they sleep in the barn.

Garrett and his son guarded the barn. When the cavalry arrived, Garrett rushed in and told Booth and Herold to surrender their weapons. Herold wants to surrender.

The barn is set on fire. A shot is fired from outside and hits booth in the neck, severing his spinal cord. Booth will be dead by morning. He is only 26 years old.

Chapter 62:

FRIDAY, JULY 7, 1865 WASHINGTON, D.C. DAWN

Baker's search for the large web of conspirators grows. The investigation is taken over by Stanton. In the end 366 people are imprisoned, some of which are not guilty and are eventually released.

The trial begins. "After deliberating for three days, the nine-member jury finds Mary Surratt, Lewis Powell, George Atzerodt, and David Herold guilty. They will be hanged. As for Dr. Samuel Mudd, Michael O'Laughlen, Ned Spangler, and Samuel Arnold, their punishment will be the remote penitentiary of Fort Jefferson in the Gulf of Mexico."

Chap. 62, p. 282



Mary Surratt continues to beg for her life. Her son, John, never steps forward to save his mother. Mary Surratt becomes the first and only woman to be hanged by the U.S. government.

#### Afterword

The afterword details the lives of the main characters after the trial that sent Surratt, Powell, Atzerodt and Herold to death. Some lesser known characters are mentioned such as two officers at Saylor's Creek and Boston Corbett, the soldier who disobeyed orders and killed Booth.

#### Epilogue

The authors compare Lincoln's life and death to that of Julius Caesar, another leader who was assassinated at 56 years of age.



# Characters

## Abraham Lincoln

Abraham Lincoln was the 16th president of the United States. The authors begin the story as Lincoln enters his second term in office. The Civil War has gone on for four long years, taking a great toll on the president as well as the rest of the country.

Lincoln is a humble man who enjoys his family, good books, and communing with his constituents. Lincoln is a tall, robust man at the beginning of the story yet the war begins to deteriorate his well-being, causing him to become gaunt, exhausted, underweight, and melancholy. Lincoln is known to suffer from depression, insomnia, and is at the mercy of nightmares and prophetic dreams. In fact, Lincoln has dreams about his assassination but refuses to believe that any American has the malice or intention of killing their leader.

Lincoln is married to Mary Todd Lincoln, a woman that is deeply devoted to her husband and his state of mind. The Lincolns have several children including Tad, Robert, and Willie, the son that had died before the story begins.

Despite the goings on in Washington and with the troops across the country, Lincoln attempts to preserve his well-being, knowing that he must be able to lead Grant and his people. After the War Ends, Lincoln is not as happy as one might expect. Lincoln has great foresight and knows there is a great deal of work - and perhaps trouble - ahead.

The death of Lincoln was a great shock to the American people. To the Confederate supporters, it was a great victory. To the rest of the country, the death of Lincoln was a tragedy that would resound throughout the ages.

## John Wilkes Booth

John Wilkes Booth is one of the main characters in the story. Booth is a member of society from Northern Virginia, which technically makes him a Yankee. However, Booth's deepest desires and convictions lead him to support the Confederacy, particularly in their goal of white supremacy and maintaining a slave state. Booth is a supremacist at heart yet is able to hide this fact from those closest to him, including his fiancée Lucy Hale.

By profession Booth is an actor. Although he is not as talented or as lauded as his father and brother Edwin, Booth enjoys a fair amount of success and has performed throughout the north. Booth even performed in front of Lincoln at one point but was so enraged at Lincoln's presence that his performance was sub-par.

Booth is stricken with an illness that prevents him from pursuing his acting career with his usual fervor. During this time, Booth became more involved with his interest in the



Civil War and the progress being made by the Confederates. Booth became completely obsessed with doing anything he could to ensure that the South would win, or in case of failure, rise again. Booth joined up with a band of conspirators, funded by Jefferson Davis, which would promote their cause. Lincoln, among others, would be kidnapped and held captive until the war ended and the South prevailed. Along the way Booth changed the plan. Booth decided that Lincoln and vice president Johnson should be assassinated. While this was not approved by his band of conspirators, Booth was convinced he was right. Booth forged ahead with his plan.

In the end, Booth succeeded in his mission and became one of the most famous men in American history.

## **Ulysses S. Grant**

Ulysses S. Grant was the Union general often credited with ending the Civil War.

## **Robert E. Lee**

Robert E. Lee was the general in charge of the Confederate Army.

## **Jefferson Davis**

Jefferson Davis was the president of the Confederacy.

## **Mary Todd Lincoln**

Mary Todd Lincoln was Abraham Lincoln's wife.

## **Lucy Hale**

Lucy Hale was John Wilkes Booth's fiancée.

## **Andrew Johnson**

Andrew Johnson was Lincoln's second vice president.

## **Edwin Stanton**

Edwin Stanton was the Secretary of War during the Lincoln administration.

## **The Conspirators**

The conspirators that assisted Booth in his plot were David Herold, Lewis Powell, and George Atzerodt.



# Objects/Places

## Ford's Theater

Ford's Theater was the site at which John Wilkes Booth assassinated Abraham Lincoln.

Ford's Theater was a logical choice for Booth. Lincoln was known for his love of the theater and often attended plays with Mary and others as a form of relaxation and entertainment. Although the theater was located in the heart of Washington, Booth saw it as a perfect location.

"So the theater it will be. Booth has performed at several playhouses in Washington. He knows their hallways and passages by heart. A less informed man might worry about being trapped inside a building with a limited number of exits, no windows, and a crowd of witnesses—many of them able-bodied men just back from the war. But not John Wilkes Booth." Chap. 22, p. 119

John Wilkes Booth entered Ford's Theater during a production of "Our American Cousin," a play the Lincolns were eager to see. Booth carried a Deringer in one hand and a knife in the other. Just as the crowd burst into laughter over some antic on the stage, Booth fired a shot into the back of Lincoln's head. Booth attempted to stab Major Rathbone before leaping out of the box and down onto the stage. Booth misjudged his leap and ended up breaking his leg in a fall. It was only the confusion of the crowd that allowed Booth to escape before it was announced that Lincoln had been shot.

## Conspiracy

Conspiracy is one of the main themes of the book. During the Civil War a faction of Confederates, led by Jefferson Davis, formed a conspiracy that would ensure that the tenets and beliefs of the South would remain intact even if the Confederacy lost the war. John Wilkes Booth was one of many people that joined in on the Confederates' plot. Booth traveled to Canada a number of times to participate in meetings outlining the plot. Booth also met with people in discreet locations throughout the north, gathering information and meeting with people of like minds that did not want to see the North succeed.

Over a period of time, people came and went. Some people were more devoted to the conspiracy than others. Some realized the repercussions of the plan and did not want to face prison or death. Booth was a mainstay in the group of conspirators and had great disdain for those that he believed lacked conviction.

The main plan included kidnapping Lincoln among other plans. Black flag warfare, a code name for murder, was not supposed to be part of the plan. Booth became completely obsessed with doing anything he could to ensure that the South would win, or in case of failure, rise again. Lincoln, among others, would be kidnapped and held





captive until the war ended and the South prevailed. Along the way Booth changed the plan. Booth decided that Lincoln and vice president Johnson should be assassinated. While this was not approved by his band of conspirators, Booth was convinced he was right. Booth forged ahead with his plan. When one of his fellow conspirators attempted to drop out, Booth blackmailed the man into staying with the group.

There were failed attempts on Lincoln's life but Booth eventually succeeded.

## **Appomattox Courthouse**

This is the town in which Lee and the Confederates surrendered to Grant and the Union.

## **Sayler's Creek**

This is often referred to as the most vicious and bloodiest battle of the Civil War.

## **Mary Surrat's Boarding House**

This is one of the sites chosen as a safe haven by Booth.

## **Samuel Mudd's Farm**

This is one of Booth's safe havens and the site where he was eventually apprehended.

## **Richmond**

This was the capital of the Confederacy.

## **Washington, DC.**

This was the capital of the Union which would eventually become the nation's capital.

## **Willard Hotel**

This is a famous hotel where many notable politicians stayed during their time in Washington.



# Themes

## Abraham Lincoln

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## Civil War

Civil War is one of the main themes of the story. The crux of the Civil War focused on the presence of slavery in the southern states. The North was opposed to slavery and other practices practiced by the South. The war lasted for four years under the leadership of President Lincoln and the president of the Confederacy Jefferson Davis. While the leaders made the major decisions and plans, the generals in charge of action on the battlefield were Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee.

The war was grueling and difficult. Both sides were devout in their convictions and went through untold horrors to follow their leaders into victory or defeat. The soldiers, particularly the Confederates, were starved to the point of death and had little in the way of clothing. The soldiers marched until they collapsed from exhaustion or simply could not fight any more. Many deserted and fled into the wilderness.

Although the battles at Gettysburg and Saylor's Creek are legendary, it was the final stand at Appomattox Courthouse that ended the war. Robert E. Lee knew he had been defeated by Grant's men and surrendered. Soldiers that had been transformed from family and friends into soldiers facing one another on battlefields rejoiced at the end of the war and rekindled old friendships. Although the war was over, however, the Confederates were not prepared to give up and intended on seeking revenge on the north.

# Style

## Perspective

Bill O'Reilly is an author, historian, nationally recognized columnist and anchor of Fox News Network's "The O'Reilly Factor", a highly rated cable news program in the U.S. O'Reilly is a controversial figure and perhaps the most outspoken political commentator in modern times. O'Reilly has an admitted fascination with the lives of John F. Kennedy and Abraham Lincoln, and often makes comparisons to the men. O'Reilly is also the author of "Killing Kennedy: The End of Camelot" and "Lincoln's Last Days: The Shocking Assassination that Changed America Forever."

Martin Dugard is an American author and historian. Dugard has appeared on the New York Times bestselling list with several books of history, including "The Last Voyage of Columbus" and "Into Africa: The Epic Adventures of Stanley and Livingstone." Dugard has also authored "To Be a Runner," a collection of essays about distance running.

Together the historians give an in depth overview of the Civil War, the history of John Wilkes Booth and the convoluted and deadly plot to get revenge on the Union for its victory in the Civil War. It also delves into the mindset of the characters to give the reader greater insight into the reasons behind the assassination, the effects of the Civil War and the toll it took on the people of the North and South, and the way the nation coped with the loss of one of its most dynamic leaders.

## Tone

Bill O'Reilly and Martin Dugard are the authors of "Killing Lincoln: The Shocking Assassination that Changed America Forever." This is a work of non-fiction. The tone of the book is typically non-partisan. This is a particularly difficult tone to achieve considering the personal opinions of O'Reilly as a political commentator and controversial material in the text. The authors tend to stick to the facts except perhaps when it comes to John Wilkes Booth. It is not possible to ascertain exactly what Booth was thinking when he first tried to assassinate Lincoln, as the book details, Booth decided to kill Lincoln rather than kidnap him because of Lincoln's devotion to ending slavery. Booth was determined to be a man the people would remember and apparently the only way to do that was to become an assassin.

The role of John Wilkes Booth is explained as much as possible given that the man was unstable and no one can be altogether sure about his motives outside his deep devotion to the tenets of the South, slavery, and white supremacy. The authors do accurately portray and grief felt by Americans when Lincoln was assassinated and how it would affect the country and its people for generations to come.



## Structure

"Killing Lincoln: The Shocking Assassination that Changed America Forever" by Bill O'Reilly and Martin Dugard is a work of non-fiction. It is 329 pages in length. It contains a prologue, 4 parts, afterword, epilogue, notes, and index.

Without the afterword, sources, and acknowledgments, the total length of the work is 295 pages. The shortest part is 49 pages in length; the longest part is 89 pages in length. The average length of the parts is 75 pages. The prologue is 3 pages in length; the epilogue is 1 page in length.

Each chapter is separated into sections with subheadings. The work is generally chronological in nature beginning in 1865.

The Prologue begins with Lincoln taking the oath to begin his second term as President.

Part 1 is titled "Total War" and covers April 1, 1865 - April 9, 1865.

Part 2 is titled "The Ides of Death" and covers April 9, 1865 - April 13, 1865.

Part 3 is titled "The Long Good Friday" and covers April 14, 1865 - April 15, 1865.

Part 4 is titled "The Chase" and covers April 15, 1865 - July 7, 1865.

The Afterword details the histories of various characters after the assassination and death of John Wilkes Booth.

The Epilogue discusses the impact of Lincoln's assassination.

The Appendix is a recreation of a Harper's Weekly article about the assassination.



## Quotes

"The man with six weeks to live is anxious." Prologue, p. 8

"Lincoln (he prefers to go by just his last name. No one calls him 'Abe,' which he loathes. Few call him 'Mr. President.'" Chap. 1, p. 13

"Lee is the most wanted man in America. The soldier who captures him will become a legend." Chap. 2, p. 21

"George Custer, however, is not to be denied. He dismounts his men and orders them to assume an infantry posture." Chap. 12, p. 69

"The end has come. General Robert E. Lee rides forth from the Confederate lines, into the no-man's-land separating his dwindling force from the vast Union forces." Chap. 15, p. 90

"But the war is not so easily forgotten by others. Unbeknownst to all those men who risked their lives to fight those great battles—men who deservedly savor the peace—plans are being hatched throughout the South to seek revenge for the Union victory." Chap. 15, p. 87

"This is wartime. Killing the enemy is no more illegal than capturing him." Chap. 18, p. 100

"It would seem natural that Booth tells the others about his new plan." Chap. 18, p. 105

"By the morning after Lincoln's speech Booth has decided to shoot the president inside a theater, the one place in the world where Booth feels most comfortable." Chap. 22, p. 119

"Booth is satisfied that his plan is simple enough that the synchronized slayings will not tax the mental capacities of his underlings. Now all he needs to do is find Lincoln." Chap. 22, p. 125

"But Booth is nothing if not relentless." Chap. 26, p. 140

"I believe there are men who want to take my life. And I have no doubt that they will do it." Chap. 33, p. 171

# Topics for Discussion

Discuss Booth's history and obsession with the Southern way of life.

Discuss Lincoln's fascination and experience with dreams and how they related to the presidency.

Discuss the conspiracy to kidnap Lincoln.

Examine the relationship between Grant and Lincoln.

Discuss the importance of Lee's surrender to Grant.

Discuss the development of the conspirators that plot to kill Lincoln.

Discuss the other targets of Booth and the other conspirators and the purpose for each proposed assassination.