

**THE SOCIAL CONTRACT PODCAST
SEASON 2 EPISODE 4:
GEORGIE & GIGI
MEET THEODORE ROOSEVELT**

TAVIA:

Hello everyone! You're listening to the award-winning podcast The Social Contract, now in its second season. I'm Tavia.

GEORGE:

I'm George.

CLEO:

I'm CLEO.

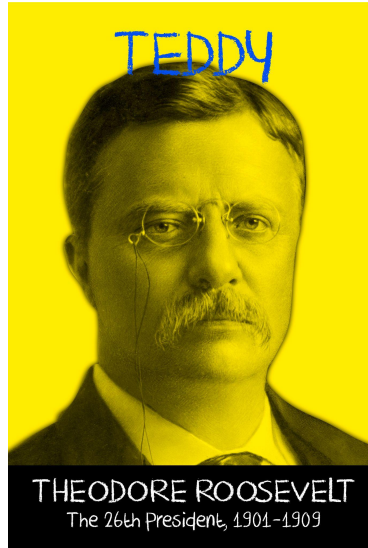
MAYA:

And I'm Maya. Welcome to this episode of The Social Contract – the new way to Saturday!

TAVIA:

That's right, Maya, new episodes of The Social Contract drop on the last Saturday of each month. So I hope our growing legion of younger listeners will keep tuning in to this podcast as part of your Saturday morning routine.

By way of a quick recap, this season of The Social Contract podcast follows ten-year-old BFFs Georgie and GiGi as they travel through time on a magical skateboard, meeting U.S. presidents throughout history. The two G's have already encountered George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. In this episode, they'll meet Theodore Roosevelt.



Known as "Teddy" or simply "T.R." – he was our 26th president, from 1901 to 1909. He was related to our other President Roosevelt – Franklin Roosevelt – even though Teddy was a Republican, and Franklin was a Democrat.

Now, here's our newest cast member Maya with this episode's first trivia question. Welcome to the podcast, Maya!

MAYA:

Thanks, Tavia!

Okay, how were Teddy and Franklin Roosevelt related – were they:

- a) brothers
- b) cousins, or
- c) father and son?

The correct answer is "b," cousins. So if you guessed correctly, give yourself a gold star!

TAVIA:

Good job, Maya!

At forty-two, T.R. was our youngest president – and one of the most energetic. By the time he'd assumed the presidency, he'd already written several books and was said to be "as fit as a bull moose."

Before he became president, Teddy Roosevelt was a war hero, who had led a brigade of soldiers called the "Rough Riders" during the Spanish-American War. He also served as Police Commissioner of New York City, Governor of New York, and Vice-President of the United States under President William McKinley. When McKinley was assassinated, T.R. became president.

Roosevelt had a lot of presidential firsts. He was the *first* president to be photographed wearing eyeglasses; the *first* to ride in an airplane; and the *first* to invite a Black person – author and scholar Booker T. Washington – to dine at the White House.

What was he like as a kid? Well, Teddy was born into a very wealthy family in New York City. You can still visit his childhood home on East 20th Street in Manhattan. When he was young, his asthma was so bad that he could barely blow out birthday candles. But, while he was bedridden with illness, he read tons of books and his bedroom became like a museum, filled with insects and stuffed birds. As he got older, he made himself stronger: he lifted weights, wrestled, and rode horseback. And by the time he got to college, he was strong enough to become a member of the boxing team.

T.R. had six kids of his own whose youth and vitality brought "a zest for life" that our still young nation simply adored. The kids would play on the White House lawn with their pet pony, Algonquin. And when young Archie Roosevelt was confined to bed with measles, his brothers Quentin and Kermit brought the pony up to the second floor of the White House residence *in an elevator* to cheer their brother up.

Now, I understand you have a question for me, Maya?

MAYA:

Yes, I do!

True or false: One of the most-loved stuffed animals today, the teddy bear, was named after Teddy Roosevelt.

TAVIA:

I know this one: true! The legend is that T.R. refused to kill a baby bear while on a hunting expedition -- and the term "teddy bear" was born. (But President Roosevelt actually disliked being called Teddy!)

Now, before we get to our story, I wanted to hear from our very own George Corey. Listen up kids as George tells us about what inspired him to write about Teddy Roosevelt.

GEORGE:

When we talk of presidents as great and heroic people, it doesn't mean they were perfect. After all, presidents are just *people* – like you and me.

You'll learn that they all had flaws and sometimes made downright bad decisions. But our most beloved presidents also made good, sometimes even *inspired*, decisions.

For me, Teddy Roosevelt's greatest accomplishment is that he was a conservationist, which is a protector of the environment. He realized that we're all part of nature, and so he did more to preserve it than all previous presidents combined.

It's important to remember that you don't have to be *a president* to help the environment. We can all pitch in – even you and me! Don't let the water run if you're not using it. Turn off the light when you leave a room. Throw trash in recyclable containers. Those little things add up, and we can all be conservationists!

TAVIA:

And now, let's listen as Georgie and GiGi meet Theodore Roosevelt. Stephen, take it away!

STEPHEN:

Georgie and GiGi were spun into a cloud of dust as a team of horses stampeded past them. It was now July 1, 1898, and the two G's had found themselves in the middle of the Spanish American War.

Suddenly, none other than Colonel Teddy Roosevelt scooped them up by the scruffs of their T-shirts and pulled them atop his horse.

“Hang on, children!” he shouted boisterously. Roosevelt led his Rough Riders (the name given to the brave First U.S. Volunteer Cavalry that became famous under his leadership) as they charged San Juan Hill in Cuba.

Georgie hung on tight to Teddy, as GiGi hung on to Georgie, the skateboard wedged between them as they galloped through the dust cloud. It felt as if they were in a cartoon or old Western movie come to life. The two G's squinted, barely able to see anything through the dust.

As the dust cleared, Teddy's horse slowed to a canter, then to a leisurely trot. They were now in the middle of a beautiful desert landscape. There was nothing but nature and an endless sky. Everything looked different.

Roosevelt also looked different from the dust-covered cowboy who had rescued them. He was wearing a flannel shirt, jodhpurs, and spit-shined boots, and he had a bandana tied around his neck.

“Welcome to the year 1906, and to the Petrified Forest, children,” Roosevelt announced. “But don't be scared, despite the name.”

“How'd we get here? And how is it suddenly 1906?” asked Georgie.

“Do you think you children and *that thing* (he pointed to the skateboard in Georgie’s arm) are the only ones touched by magic?” He continued, “We are in the middle of one of five national parks – this one in the great state of Arizona – that I have established as President of these magnificent United States.”

“Oh, yah!” exclaimed GiGi. “We learned about that in school. You’re ‘the conversation president!’”

Roosevelt corrected her with a smile. “Con-ser-vation, young lady, meaning the protection of our precious natural resources – including the establishment of 150 national forests, 51 federal bird reserves, 18 national monuments, four national game reserves, and, as I said, five national parks. All of this for the benefit of future generations – like yours. So, if one of my legacies is that of a great environmentalist, it will bring me great satisfaction.”

GiGi nodded along to Roosevelt’s words, saying “My Mom is an environmentalist, too.”

“She is?” asked Georgie.

“Didn’t you ever see the bumper sticker on the back of her Prius? It has a picture of our planet and reads in big letters LOVE YOUR MOTHER. Get it? *Mother Earth.*”

“Oh, cool!” exclaimed Georgie.

“Yes, wonderful!” chimed in Roosevelt.

“What made you fall in love with nature?” Georgie asked the president.

“Ah, well, as a boy, I was small and weak, and often the target of bullies. I suffered from a severe, rather debilitating case of asthma, you see. But my father, bless him, put me on a vigorous exercise program, from mountain climbing to boxing to wrestling. And I soon discovered that physically exerting myself actually lessened my asthma. So I grew to love physical activity and the great outdoors. And, it must be said, as I became stronger, in both mind and body, the bullies didn’t bother with taunting me anymore.”

“Oh, we’re totally against bullying,” Georgie assured the 26th president. “We are one thousand percent anti-bullying,” added GiGi dramatically.

“Good!” said Roosevelt, pleased. “As the saying goes, often attributed to yours truly, speak softly and carry a big stick.”

“What does that mean?” asked Georgie.

“Well, interpretations may vary, but for you children, suffice it to say *be nice*. People will respect you for it and admire your quiet strength.”

“Hey, can I ask you something?” said GiGi. “Before I was a *kid*, back when I was just a *kiddo*, I had this really cute stuffed toy bear, and my parents said that it was called a ‘teddy bear’ named after you. Is that true?”

“Yes, it is!” chuckled Roosevelt. “That honor came from my refusing to shoot a young bear while on a hunting expedition. Word of that story spread and the term ‘teddy bear’ was born.”

Georgie nudged GiGi excitedly, “Hey, G, have you ever gone skateboarding in a national park?!”

“No! Have you?”

“Nope. Do you want to?”

“Sure!”

As Georgie and GiGi balanced themselves on the longboard, Teddy Roosevelt gave them a soft push and propelled them into the year 1941, where they would soon meet Teddy’s fifth cousin, the “other President Roosevelt”: FDR.

TAVIA:

And now, to CLEO's Corner, where she'll unveil the Word Art that inspired this episode. Remember, kids, you can find illustrated transcripts at myTSCpodcast.com.

CLEO:

Strength.

Teddy Roosevelt was a physically strong person, and he was also a strong leader. It's important to remember that being strong doesn't mean being a bully. Remember, Teddy couldn't bring himself to shoot a baby bear. To me, that's true strength.



Joy.

Teddy was a joyful man – and much of his joyfulness came from being outdoors. It's a good reminder for all of us to put down our phones and *enjoy* the world around us.

And that brings us to the conclusion of our fourth episode.

We welcome you to follow The Social Contract wherever you find your favorite podcasts. Remember, new episodes drop on the last Saturday of the month – it's the new way to Saturday. We hope you'll catch us next on May 27th, when Georgie and GiGi meet President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. I can't wait.

In the meantime, check out our website at myTSCpodcast.com.

The Social Contract podcast is created by George S. Corey and CLEO. Produced and hosted by Tavia Gilbert. Music courtesy of liCten audio. Mix and Master by Kayla Elrod. Additional dialogue editing by Cathleen Conte. Social manager Suzette Burton. Production coordinator Tatiana Bacchus.

This has been a podcast from liCten audio, in association with Talkbox Productions. On behalf of George, CLEO, Stephen, Maya, and me, Tavia, thank you for listening!