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# Being Nixon: A Man Divided

*Evan Thomas*

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**Being Nixon: A Man Divided** Evan Thomas
***NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLER • NAMED ONE OF THE TEN BEST NONFICTION BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY *TIME* AND ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY *RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH*** • "What was it really like to be Richard Nixon? Evan Thomas tackles this fascinating question by peeling back the layers of a man driven by a poignant mix of optimism and fear."**—Walter Isaacson, author of *Steve Jobs***

Evan Thomas delivers the best single-volume biography of Richard Nixon to date, a radical, unique portrait of a complicated figure who was both determinedly optimistic and tragically flawed. The *New York Times* bestselling author of *Ike's Bluff* and *Sea of Thunder,* Thomas brings new life to one of American history's most infamous, paradoxical, and enigmatic politicians, dispensing with myths to achieve an intimate and nuanced look at the actual man.

What drove a painfully shy outcast in elite Washington society—a man so self-conscious he refused to make eye contact during meetings—to pursue power and public office? How did a president so attuned to the American political id that he won reelection in a historic landslide lack the self-awareness to recognize the gaping character flaws that would drive him from office and forever taint his legacy?

In *Being Nixon,* Evan Thomas peels away the layers of the complex, confounding figure who became America's thirty-seventh president. The son of devout Quakers, Richard Nixon (not unlike his rival John F. Kennedy) grew up in the shadow of an older, favored brother and thrived on conflict and opposition. Through high school and college, in the navy and in politics, he was constantly leading crusades and fighting off enemies real and imagined. As maudlin as he was Machiavellian, Nixon possessed the plainspoken eloquence to reduce American television audiences to tears with his career-saving "Checkers" speech; meanwhile, his darker half hatched schemes designed to take down his political foes, earning him the notorious nickname "Tricky Dick."

Drawing on a wide range of historical accounts, Thomas reveals the contradictions of a leader whose vision and foresight led him to achieve détente with the Soviet Union and reestablish relations with communist China, but whose underhanded political tactics tainted his reputation long before the Watergate scandal. One of the principal architects of the modern Republican Party and its "silent majority" of disaffected whites and conservative ex-Dixiecrats, Nixon was also deemed a liberal in some quarters for his efforts to desegregate Southern schools, create the Environmental Protection Agency, and end the draft.

A deeply insightful character study as well as a brilliant political biography, *Being Nixon* offers a surprising look at a man capable of great bravery and extraordinary deviousness—a balanced portrait of a president too often reduced to caricature.

**Praise for *Being Nixon***

"A biography of eloquence and breadth . . . No single volume about Nixon's long and interesting life could be so comprehensive."***—Chicago Tribune***

"Terrifically engaging . . . a fair, insightful and highly entertaining portrait."***—The Wall Street Journal***

“Thomas has a fine eye for the telling quote and the funny vignette, and his style is eminently readable.”***—The New York Times Book Review***

“Thomas proves an amiable and fair-minded tour guide.”***—The Boston Globe***

“A measured, concise, and important American biography.”**—Michael Beschloss, author of *Presidential Courage***

*From the Hardcover edition.*

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