

CHAPTER 7

Chapter 7 recounts the significant upswing in Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign following key endorsements from Caroline and Ted Kennedy, which appeared to symbolize a passing of the liberal torch and injected the campaign with a composition of optimism akin to the Kennedy era. Moreover, despite formidable challenges, particularly on Super Tuesday, strategic grassroots efforts in less populated caucus states, such as Idaho, resulted in a series of wins that bolstered delegate counts substantially against Hillary Clinton. Technology's growing role in the campaign signified a new era of political engagement, though Obama also reflects on its double-edged nature in politics.

Obama's recounting moves into a deeper, reflective narration on race in America, invoked by citing W.E.B. Du Bois's concept of "double consciousness." The personal challenge of navigating his identity amidst national scrutiny becomes evident with the controversies around his pastor, Jeremiah Wright, and charged accusations casting doubts on his patriotism and "American-ness." The backlash against his and Michelle's perceived identities underscores the campaign's recurrent theme of battling and bridging deeply entrenched racial and social divides.

His narrative further unfolds the complexities of running a large-scale, historic campaign. Evolving from intimate connections with staff and volunteers to accommodate the demanding security protocols that isolated him from spontaneous public engagement, Obama details the literal and metaphorical barriers that shape a presidential candidate's world. Despite the security, the enthusiastic public receptions energized his resolve, even as he grappled with the weight of their expectations against the backdrop of political stratagems and personal sacrifices.

Obama's recount of internal campaign reflections and decisions reveals a potent mixture of strategy, idealism, and pragmatic politics. The chapter masterfully intertwines tales of political victories, personal anecdotes illustrating the racial dynamics of his candidacy, and the novel challenges of campaigning in the digital age. It concludes with the contemplative moments before the final primaries, balancing the tension of an uncertain future with the camaraderie and hope that propelled his groundbreaking campaign forward.