

Accidental Resurrection in West Allis, Wisconsin



Fred Zimmerman

**DEDICATED TO
OUR LONG TERM FRIEND GEORGE
GLEESON WHOSE KEEN
OBSERVATIONS AND SENSE OF
RESPONSIBILITY
CONTRIBUTED TO THE
FORMATION OF THIS
PLAY**

**PLUS
ALL THE DEDICATED PEOPLE
WHO HAVE LABORED UNDER
DIFFICULT
INDUSTRIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

**AND TO
JOANELL E. ZIMMERMAN
AND ALL MEMBERS OF OUR FAMILY**

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Characters (In order of appearance)

Riley, Bartender at Burkhard's Restaurant

Charles Leerkopf, A third generation majority owner of EP

Lillian Moller, Professor of Industrial Engineering at Purdue

Edward Leerkopf, Charles younger brother and partner

George Gallagher, company Controller

Dudley Dubious, Partner in a private equity firm

Harold Hopkins, An investment fund manager

Dieter Dummermann, A banker

Solomon Bernstein, The firm's most senior director

Siegfried Schultz, Proprietor of a local plumbing business

Olga Schultz, Waitress at Riley's Bar & Restaurant and spouse of Siegfried

Mary O'Brien, An office worker at EP Industries

Stanley Gliszinski, Production Foreman

Schmidt, Welder

Patrick, Assembler

Therese Gliszinski, Homemaker and spouse of Stanley

Gertrude Siegel, Finisher

Robert Gilbreth, A book salesman

Description of Major Characters

Riley, Bartender at Burkhard's Restaurant

Irish.

Charles Leerkopf, A third generation majority owner of EP Industries

Exudes pomposity and attended a famous university.

Lillian Moller, Professor of Industrial Engineering at Purdue

A wise thoughtful and caring competent professor.

Edward Leerkopf, Charles younger brother and partner

Exudes pomposity, attended a famous university, and has allergies.

George Gallagher, company Controller

George Gallagher has more ability and industry knowledge than the corporate officers, who spends nearly all of their time sailing on Lake Michigan. He prefers not to aspire to the CFO job because he is reluctant to sign documents.

Dudley Dubious, A partner in a private equity firm

Typical.

Harold Hopkins, An investment fund manager

A top executive with the investment firm of P. T. Barnum and Associates.

Dieter Dummermann, A banker

Has trouble recognizing financial statements.

Solomon Bernstein, The firm's most senior Director

Respected investment elder in the community.

Siegfried Schultz, Proprietor of a local business

Has run the premier plumbing supply business for decades. Always eats dinner at Burkhard's where his wife helps out.

Olga Schultz, Waitress at Riley's Bar & Restaurant and Siegfried's wife

Olga doesn't need to work, but she doesn't want to be left out of what is going on.

Mary O'Brien, An office worker at EP Industries

Also Irish.

Stanley Glisczinski, Production Foreman

A loyal factory leader who has attempted to keep the chair company running.

Schmidt, Welder

Capable and thoughtful.

Patrick, Assembler

Capable and thoughtful, but not good at spelling.

Therese Glisczinski, Homemaker - spouse of Stanley

Keen observer and advisor to Stanley

Gertrude Siegel, Finisher

She doesn't need to work either, but she likes her friends.

Robert Gilbreth, A book salesman

Well educated in street savvy.

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE: WEST ALLIS, WISCONSIN

PANORAMIC VIEW OF THE MEDIUM SIZED CITY OF WEST ALLIS, NEAR MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN.

THE CITY OF WEST ALLIS SHOWS ITS AGING INDUSTRIAL CHARACTER.

[ENTER RILEY – A DISTINGUISHED IRISH MAN IN HIS 50’SWEARING A WHITE SHIRT WITH ROLLED UP SLEEVES AND A TIE]

Riley: Good evening ladies and gentlemen. My name is Riley and I am a bartender in what used to be the fine city of West Allis, Wisconsin. The story we are about to tell is about an industry and its community for they are inseparable, you know. The industry helps to make the community. The community helps to shape the competitive edge of the industry. It is through this interaction between community and industry that the prosperity of both is established. They are mutually dependent as are the elements of nature.

: But, let me be clear. Our story is not intended to be serious. Serious efforts to explore the interconnections between communities and their industries seldom retain the interests of either voters or audiences. Ours is a more relaxed and uninvolved purpose - as if we were running for office. Our story is absolutely true, but its not intended to be serious.

: Our story could happen most anywhere where there is industry. We have chosen to hold the story in Wisconsin because the scenery is nicer than it is in some industrial cities.

[SHOW PICTURE OF PITTSBURGH]



Riley: See.

Riley: Our story begins in the executive offices of the Eselplatz Chair Company - a venerable old firm that has been manufacturing restaurant chairs for over seventy years. The firm is now run by Charles and Edward Leerkopf, distantly related grand nephews of the founder, Heinrich Himmelherz. It is the day of the quarterly meeting of the Board of Directors. Our scene opens with Chairman Charles Leerkopf welcoming the newest Board Member, Dr. Lillian Moller, a Professor of Industrial Engineering at Purdue University.

[EXIT RILEY]

SCENE TWO THE VERY LARGE OFFICE OF CHARLES LEERKOPF

Charles: Dr. Moller, I'm ever so delighted that you have decided to join the Board of Directors of EP Industries. Your expertise in industrial engineering will be so helpful to us in improving the efficiency of our factory hands. We have quite a problem there you know. Our profits have been sliding for some time. Fortunately, our firm was at one time the largest manufacturer of chairs in the Midwest and when great uncle Heinrich died, he had everything paid for. But, that was more than twenty-five years ago and before the onslaught of imports that we are now experiencing. I do hope you will have some prescriptions for improving the work habits of our factory employees.

Lillian: Oh, I'm pleased to be included. But, please tell me, where is your factory?

Charles: The company's manufacturing facilities are located about ten miles South, near the intersection of the river and a major highway. Edward and I moved the corporate headquarters up here about ten years ago in order to gain some relief from the constant interruptions of factory matters so that we could concentrate more on corporate management.

Lillian: It is a very nice corporate headquarters. How many people work here?

Charles: Well, its by division you know. We have seven divisions in EP Industries at this time. All told, we have about

530 people at the headquarters - I think. I might have to ask our Personnel Director about that.

Lillian: And at your plant?

Charles: The chair plant has quite a few. I'm really not sure how many. Both Edward and I spend most of our time on corporate matters at this time. We're kept quite busy with the development of corporate strategy and our new diversification program. And, then of course, we play a little golf.

Lillian: I notice a golf course is nearby. But, please tell me about your seven divisions.

Charles: Most are newly formed units - except for the chair company, of course. We are in the process of considering some acquisitions to round out the strategic business units.

[ENTER EDWARD]

Edward: Good Morning, Chuck old boy. Here a bit early aren't you? Did your driver have trouble sleeping?

[CLOCK SHOWS 10 :00 A.M.]

Charles: Edward, I'd like to have you meet Dr. Moller. She's arrived earlier than the rest.

Edward: How nice to meet you Dr. Moller. I do hope you can tell our foremen how to shape up our factory group. Charles and I want to build the chair company into the cash cow of EP Industries. Lately, they have been much more of a cash drain - I think. I may have to ask our Controller about that.

Charles: Well, Dr. Moller, if you will excuse me, I have to see that the refreshments are fully in order for the board meeting. I will see you here at 11AM.

15:Scene Two The very large office of Charles Leerkopf

Lillian: Thank you for your invitation. I enjoy being involved with mature industries and I'm also interested in witnessing the effectiveness of diversification programs.

Charles: Fine. Again, cheerio.

Edward: Oh, By the way, Chuck, they did it again.

Charles: What! Those vandals! Those good-for-nothing ruffians. I'd like to catch the people behind it. It's property destruction in the most vulgar sense.

[CHARLES EXITS MUTTERING]

Lillian: What happened?

Edward: Oh, one of the disgruntled employees periodically puts a cow pie on the hood of his Mercedes and then plants the company flag in it.

Lillian: An interesting company you have here, Edward. Tell me, how do you and Charles divide your responsibilities?

Edward: Responsibilities? What responsibilities would we have. Charles and I own the business and we are looking for a proper return appropriate to our ownership. We were brought up in the business. We even worked here during the summers while we were attending Yale. Uncle Heinrich had us actually working in the chair plant. Fortunately, mother was able to intervene and we moved upstairs to the office.

[LILLIAN STROLLS OVER AND LOOKS AT A NEARBY BOOKCASE.]

Lillian: Charles seems to have some interesting books here. I recognize the authors. Peter Drucker, Tom Peters,

Chester Barnard, Andrew Van de Ven. These are very good books by some highly competent people. I wonder which is his favorite.

Edward: Favorite? Oh, my good woman, we do not read those books, you know. We have a service that comes and stocks the shelves. Every month they come in with a new batch. The books are appropriate to the headquarters of a modern corporation such as ours.

Lillian: I see. Well, tell me about some of the other Board Members.

Edward: Certainly. We now have seven Board Members including yourself. Charles and I represent management, of course. Dudley Dubious is a dear friend and a highly regarded partner in a private equity firm in New York. He has been helping us with our diversification strategy. Dieter Dummermann is a Vice President of the First West Allis Bank. We will of course need their support to fulfill our strategic plan. Harold Hopkins is a top executive with the investment firm of P. T. Barnum and Associates. All of these people make a fine contribution to the firm.

Lillian: But, that is only six people. Who is the seventh board member?

Edward: Oh, it's old Bernstein. He was a close friend of Uncle Heinrich's and has been on the Board for thirty years. He owns a paint company here in town. He's an antagonistic counter-productive old turd, but there's not much we can do about it. Uncle Heinrich had it set up that all of the directors would remain on the Board for life or until they resigned voluntarily. The old so-and-so is too stubborn to resign and, unfortunately, he's in good health - for someone who is eighty-two. Neither Charles nor can stand him. I'm sure you will soon feel the same way.

17:Scene Two The very large office of Charles Leerkopf

[ENTER ASSISTANT CONTROLLER - GEORGE GALLAGHER]

Gallagher: Mister Leerkopf, the Directors are here.

Edward: Oh, good. Please send them in.

[ENTER BERNSTEIN, DUBIOUS, DUMMERMANN, HOPKINS, ARNOLD, CHARLES AND LILLIAN. PEOPLE EXCHANGE GREETINGS.]

[CHARLES BANGS GAVEL ON TABLE]

Charles: The quarterly meeting of EP industries will now come to order. I know you all know one another but I would like to introduce our newest, Director, Dr. Moller from Purdue. Also, our new corporate counsel, Mr. Benedict Arnold, will be joining us later for cocktails.

[EVERYONE INTRODUCES THEMSELVES AND SHAKES HANDS WITH MOLLER AND ARNOLD]

Lillian: I'm pleased to meet you, Mr. Dubious.

Dubious: Likewise, but just call me Dud.

Bernstein: You got that right.

Charles: Well, ladies and gentlemen, the first item on the agenda is the refreshments. We have some Sacre Torts from a nearby Viennese patisserie. We have some French pastry as well. You may wish to partake in one of the several varieties of specially imported tea that we have available at EP Industries.

Then, after the meeting, Edward and I would like to treat you to a glass or two of the fine wine we recently

had imported from Germany. It is called *Spätzle mit Prädikat*.

Bernstein: I'll take a bagel with cream cheese but did you collect the money?

Charles: Sol, I must insist that you wait for the official business to begin. We do have an agenda which will be religiously followed.

Bernstein: That's good. This place could use some religion. The vow of poverty would be particularly appropriate.

Charles: The first item on the agenda will be to entertain a motion to dispense with the reading of the old minutes. Do I have a motion?

Dubious: I so move.

Hopkins: Second.

Charles: Discussion? If none, all in favor say "aye".

All except Bernstein: Aye

Bernstein: If we can't hear the minutes, maybe we could send a copy to Charles Adams who writes "Dilbert." Corporate minutes might open a whole new field for his comic strip.

Edward: Ahem!

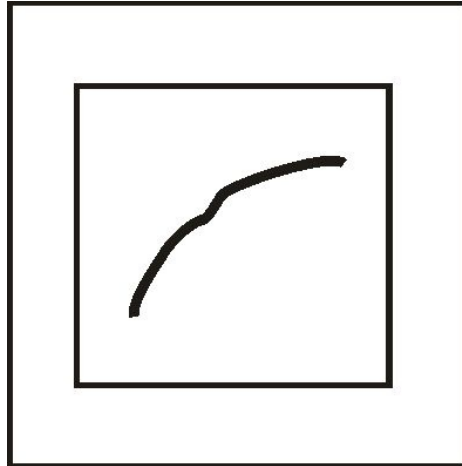
Charles: The first order of new business is the presentation of the new strategic diversification plan which Edward will present. Edward.

[EDWARD COMES TO THE FRONT OF THE ROOM WITH AN ARM FULL OF CHARTS]

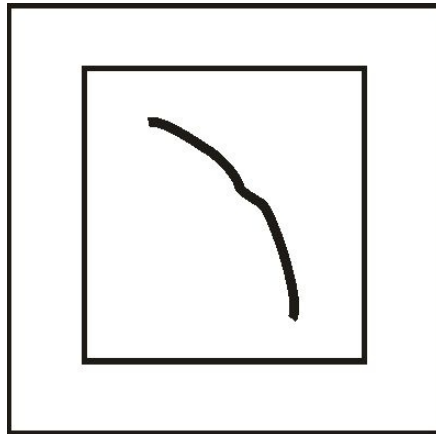
Edward: First, I want to show you a graph of our profits.

19: Scene Two The very large office of Charles Leerkopf

Here is how we are doing.



[GALLAGHER COMES TO THE FRONT OF THE ROOM AND ROTATES THE CHART NINETY DEGREES]



Edward: Oh! Sorry. Wishful thinking, I guess.

Charles: As many of you know from our last meeting, our chair company continues in a state of decline. We feel the company is well managed but the industry is a

slow growth, low margin business which is besieged by cheaper imports. There appears to be less and less reason to be in that business even though the Eselplatz chair continues to be a product of highly superior quality.

[HOPKINS' CHAIR COLLAPSES AND HE FALLS TO THE FLOOR - THEN HE SILENTLY GETS UP AND TAKES ANOTHER CHAIR]

Edward: Over the past several months, Charles and I have been examining new strategic opportunities. As most of you know from our prior discussions, we have staffed six strategic business units with highly talented and aggressive individuals who are charged with the responsibility of detail planning for our strategic diversification program.

These six strategic business units are :

1. Fuel-cell powered golf carts.
2. Specialty retail shops for aficionados of modern art.
3. The Office Design Studio - a nice business oriented to first class office furnishings.
4. Golf course locating software.
5. Interval ownership country clubs in Fort Lauderdale and Vail.
6. A national chain of quiche restaurants

Dubious: Those are all first rate choices. I am so excited.

Hopkins: At the appropriate time, we can raise money for a list like that. But, perhaps a bit later.

21:Scene Two The very large office of Charles Leerkopf

- Lillian: In the meantime, how will you finance such an aggressive program?
- Charles: That is an excellent question and that is where we would like to rely on some of your expertise. Our entire strategic plan depends upon being able to restore the profitability of the chair company. Within three years, we expect to have sixty-five percent of our revenue coming from new programs. At this time, however, the chair company still accounts for more than ninety percent of the annual revenue of EP Industries. We simply must restore the profitability of the chair company long enough to attract financing. That must be our business strategy.
- Bernstein: What's all this about business strategy. When my father opened his delicatessen in the morning, he would hose off the sidewalk and check to see that everything was clean. That's important in the food business. He would see that the bagels were fresh and that the pickles had enough salt. He'd tell the cook not to be as slow as yesterday and he'd ask him if he wanted the delicatessen should go broke. He'd tell the waiters and waitresses not to put two people in a four person booth between 11 30 and 1 PM. After that, it was O.K.. We then had the space. He'd also say don't give out the menus too quickly because most people know what they want and will order sooner without a menu. He'd put the cigars with the high markup next to the cash register. He would manage that business in little pieces - that's business strategy.
- Charles: That may have been true with your father's delicatessen, Bernstein, but with a corporation of the size and scope of EP Industries, we must have a strategic plan.
- Bernstein: What about a plan to sell some more chairs or to collect the money from the discount store or to get the paint booth operating right at the plant or to cut

down the huge overhead around this place. . Why aren't these things strategic?

Dubious: Please, Bernstein, we have valuable business to discuss here. We don't care about your father's smelly old delicatessen.

Hopkins: Ya, and we don't care about the paint booth either.

Dummermann: What did you say was the name of that wine?.

Bernstein: Oh, good grief.

Edward: As Charles was saying, we must press on forward with the task of redefining our corporate mission. We are here today to do two things. We want to approve in concept the strategic plan and to set the executive compensation for 2013. Are we agreed on the strategic plan? If so, I move we adopt it.

Dubious: I second the motion. A lovely plan, lovely.

Charles: All in favor, say Aye.

Dummermann: Aye.

Charles: Aye.

Edward: Aye.

Bernstein: I cannot vote for such a broad statement of strategy with no detail. It's like trying to paint the Mona Lisa with a four inch brush

Hopkins: Aye.

Lillian: I appreciate the work that you have done. However, I feel I'm really too new to pass on such a meaningful issue.

23:Scene Two The very large office of Charles Leerkopf

Charles: That's fine, I can understand that. Motion carries with five in favor, one opposed and one abstention.

: Edward, I do agree that we should do something more tangible about getting control of the chair operation. As Executive Vice President, I think you should go to the plant and see what can be done to improve productivity.

Edward: Charles, you know I can't go into the plant! I'm allergic to sawdust and cutting fluid!

Charles: Well, we will deal with that later. On to item two. Item two is the executive compensation for 2013. You have the figures in your packets. Any discussion?

Hopkins: A highly innovative compensation plan, lovely - very similar to the one we have at P. T. Barnum and Associates. It seems very appropriate to me. I move we adopt it.

Dubious: Second.

Charles: All in favor, say Aye.

Dummermann:Aye.

Charles: Aye.

Edward: Aye.

Bernstein: Not on your life.

Hopkins: Aye.

Lillian: I still feel I'm really too new. I'm sorry.

Charles: That's fine. We still appreciate your contribution. Motion carries with five in favor, one opposed and

one abstention. Well, unless there is more business, the meeting can be adjourned.

Hopkins: I move we adjourn.

Dubious: Second. Lovely to adjourn, lovely.

Charles: All in favor, say Aye.

Dummermann: Aye.

Charles: Aye.

Edward: Aye.

Bernstein: Crap.

Hopkins: Aye.

Charles: Well, that was a fine meeting, very productive. All of you are now welcomed to join us at the club for a round of golf. Will you be joining us, Dr. Moller?

Lillian: Oh, thank you very much but I'm afraid I don't play. All during life, I've had other responsibilities and I've really never learned. Do please enjoy yourselves.

Charles: I do so want to thank you all for coming. We will see you again in three months. Dr. Moller, again it is wonderful to have you here. Good day.

[EXIT ALL BUT BERNSTEIN AND MOLLER]

Bernstein: Well Dr. Moller, what do you think of this outfit?

Lillian: I am beginning to harbor some concerns. Tell me Mr. Bernstein, you have been associated with the firm for a long time, what was the founder like?

25:Scene Two The very large office of Charles Leerkopf

Bernstein: Heinrich? He was wonderful. He was honest. He was hard working. He knew production. He got along so well with suppliers. The employees loved him. The company needs somebody like him now. If old Heinrich were around, none of these things would be happening. A plant and a base business that is entirely neglected. Inefficient production. More inefficient administration. A work force that has been alienated. It's terrible.

Lillian: Tell me, Mr. Bernstein, what is the origin of the name Eselplatz?

Bernstein: He was German. It means a place for your ass.

Lillian: How did Charles and Edward become involved?

Bernstein: Heinrich never cared too much about owning stock. Neither did his wife, Mary. They were wonderful people - very generous. They donated a lot of the stock to various charities and to some families that needed help. They just weren't interested in money. Heinrich and A.P. Giannini, the founder of the Bank of America, were very good friends. Giannini wasn't interested in money either.

Lillian: Yes, I recall. He started out as an immigrant Italian fruit peddler. Later on, he started the Bank of Italy which became the Bank of America. He worked for almost nothing most of his life but built the largest bank in the world at the time. I understand he was fond of saying,

“No man owns a fortune. The fortune owns them.”

Lillian: But, where did Charles and Edward come from?

Bernstein: Heinrich didn't believe in nepotism and he encouraged his own children to go off and be successful in other ventures. And, they are successful too. Tom is a Vice President with the 3M Company -

a very fine outfit. Their son, Gregory, is now the Abbot at St. John's Abbey and President of St. Johns University up in Minnesota. Their daughter, Maria is a noted oncologist. All of their kids have done well. But, what Heinrich wanted is to have the line of succession unfold naturally from within the company on the basis of merit. However, one of his cousins had some company stock dating back to when the company was founded in 1920. Ultimately, Charles and Edward inherited this stock. When Heinrich died, they worked a deal with Hopkins, Dubious and Dummermann to take over the company which was in excellent shape at the time. The managers from within the company just didn't own enough stock to resist. Most of the good ones ultimately left the company and here we are today. Wonderful, isn't it?

Lillian: Did the company have a history of production expertise? I'm curious.

Bernstein: Did it ever. Heinrich had a wide circle of friends in the industrial community around Milwaukee. He was a very good friend of Otto Falk who ran Allis-Chalmers at the time. They were both interested in production efficiency and they would quite often go down to Kenosha and visit with another old friend, Charles Nash, who was kind of a mentor to them. The Nash automotive factory was probably the most efficient automobile plant in the world during the 1920's and 1930's. Nash Motors had higher profit rates than General Motors for much of that era. Old Charlie knew how to make efficient use of inventory and his inventory turn ratios rival what the Japanese achieve today. Charlie also knew how to get along with the troops. He spent most of his time with the factory people and didn't care much for society matters. He had no rug in his office. He didn't have a palatial setting like this place. But, he knew most of the employees by name and was always there if they needed help. You had to work if you were part of

27:Scene Two The very large office of Charles Leerkopf

Nash Motors, but if you did, there was nothing he wouldn't do for you.

: So, Charlie Nash, Otto Falk, and Heinrich Himmelherz would get together periodically and talk about efficient production and how quality products. They visited each others plants to share technologies and methods. They discussed how to build companies that were good for the communities in which they operated. They all eagerly adopted modern ideas and all three companies did very well. Eselplatz Chair Company was the most efficient furniture manufacturer in the country sixty years ago and the quality was first rate.

Lillian: I've often thought about the matter of industrial decline. It seems so sad and so unnecessary. So many people and families become affected.

Bernstein: You bet. Decades after that era, when different management was involved, the Kenosha plant is now closed. The Allis-Chalmers here in West Allis is now closed. That plant had over twenty thousand people at one time. Now the property has a K-Mart. That's probably where they got the blue light special. They found one left over from the road graders.

Lillian: This sort of thing has been going on all over the country.

Bernstein: You are right. Allis-Chalmers is bankrupt. American Motors, the successor to Nash has been sold off and this place is in a fast gallop to nowhere.

Lillian: Tell me, what is your impression of the other board members?

Bernstein: They are Rumpelstilskins in reverse. They weave gold into straw.

Bernstein: By the way, Dr. Moller, do you have a family?

Lillian: Oh, yes. My husband, Frank died many years ago. Moller is my maiden name. Frank and I had a wonderful marriage. We have twelve children and thirty grandchildren. They are all on their own now and quite successful, I am happy to report.

:

And you?

Bernstein: Yes, Sandra and I have two daughters and a son. They all have wonderful families of their own. We have eight grandchildren. I hope the world has a good place for our children and grandchildren.

Lillian: As do I. The times are not easy.

:

Well, Mr. Bernstein, I've enjoyed your conversation and your insights. I'll look forward to seeing you at the next Board Meeting.

Bernstein: Dr. Moller, I am most pleased to welcome you.

SCENE THREE BURKHARD'S BAR AND RESTAURANT

(A NEIGHBORHOOD RESTAURANT IN WEST ALLIS)

RILEY IS BEHIND THE BAR.

MRS. SCHULTZ IS WAITING ON TABLES.

A PATRON, MR. SCHULTZ IS SEATED AT THE BAR.

**TWO MEN (GLISCZINKI AND SCHMIDT) AND TWO
WOMEN (GLISCZINSKI'S WIFE THERESA AND MARY
O'BRIEN) ARE PLAYING CARDS AT A TABLE.**

**PATRICK DELANEY AND GERTRUDE SIEGEL ARE SIT-
TING SINGULARLY AT OTHER TABLES.**

Schultz: Tell me, Riley, who is going to be our next mayor?

Riley: Ah, it's not goin' to be a tight race, me boy. You wouldn't think that old fatso would get reelected. He's crooked and he's lecherous and probably very good for the saloon business. But, as bad as he is, our noble citizens see him as a known commodity. I expect him to handily win another term.

Schultz: Did you notice, however, that the polls show the challenger leading?

Riley: Oh I know. But, you see what the polls never measure is the depth of feeling people have about certain questions. People do have deep feelings on some subjects. But, you see, Schultz, with respect to political candidates, they really don't care a pickle for any one of them. Asking people about who they will vote for is very much like asking them if they like rutabagas better than parsnips, now isn't it?

Schultz: Well, you know the mayor did take the garbage collection away from the mafioso. Now it's being done by the government.

Riley: Aye, that's true. But, let me ask you, Schultz, how much did it cost you to have your garbage picked up when the mafia was doin' it?

Schultz: It was robbery. It was \$43 a month.

Riley: And, how much is it now, Schultz?

Schultz: It's \$53. But, it wouldn't have to be that high. They just don't happen to have anybody involved who knows anything about collecting garbage.

Riley: Ah, see my friend, as diabolical as greed is, it seldom extracts a price that is higher than inefficiency. That's why people will vote for the incumbent. They have him sized as a profligate scalawag. But, that will be preferable to something unpredictable that could be much worse.

Schultz: You might be right. My great aunt always told me, it is always better to do business with crooks because their motivation is known and you can easily plan accordingly. It's the honest people who are unpredictable.

Riley: Yes, that's true. Still, with this election, I'm not so sure.

31: Scene Three Burkhard's Bar and Restaurant

Schultz: You have doubts, Riley?

Riley: Well, it's the economy, you see. There is so many people out of work. More plant are closing every year. How long can we keep it up. People are out of work and they don't see any new jobs being created. They don't think the government is capable of doing anything. But, when good honest skilled people are out of work, they may vote for anyone.

Schultz: You don't have to tell me that, Riley. My relatives in Germany experienced that.

Riley: Sad fact that it is, my friend, demagoguery triumphantly rides in on the horse of economic instability.

Mary O'Brien: Tell me, Stanley, how were things in the shop today?

Stanley: The usual, of course. We haven't had a new end mill in six months. The drill bits have been ground down to within a half inch of the shank. I don't see how the shop can produce anything out there.

Theresa: I keep telling you, Stanley, why don't you find a better place to work - a place like Eselplatz used to be years ago?

Stanley: What place, Theresa? American Motors is shut down for good. Allis-Chalmers is closed. Harnishfager filed for Chapter 11. Ladish is much smaller. Keraney & Trecker is gone, also. All of the suppliers have had to cut back too.

Schmidt: Ya, I bet that fifty supplier companies have closed their doors in that past year.

Mary: You wouldn't think things were so bad. They voted each of the two dipwad brothers an extra two hundred thousand dollars a year today.

- Schmidt: Where did you hear that?
- Mary: They had a Board Meeting. I had to bring in the pastry so I took a copy of the proposals on my way out.
- Stanley: How do you know everything passed? I would think somebody would be getting concerned about how the company is doing?
- Mary: I was. That's why I took a copy of the proposals.
- Stanley: I mean the directors.
- Mary: Are you kidding? None of those directors would know a failing company from their next investment except old Bernstein. And, he's outnumbered.
- Gertrude: A million dollars for Charles? Why the average mentally-retarded baboon could do a better job running the company than Charles. Or, Edward..
- Mary: Edward has even less talent but, fortunately, he's so lazy he doesn't get involved to cause any problems.
- Riley: I thought Edward was an engineer?
- Patrick: Well, he must have gotten his engineering degree from a box of Cracker Jacks then, because he can't even intelligently open his car door.
- Stanley: I know what you mean. Last summer, he came down to the tool room to borrow a one inch drill bit to do some work on his boat. The next day, his boat sunk in Lake Michigan.
- Schmidt: It's such a shame when a good company like Eselplatz can fall into the hands of such idiots.

33: *Scene Three Burkhard's Bar and Restaurant*

Stanley: But, you know, Schmidt, the workers have been part of the problem too. Too many of them drink too much.

Schultz: Excuse me, please!

Stanley: Well, its true. And, they don't come to work enough either. Yesterday, Kelley applied for worker's comp because of a bad back.

Schmidt: A bad back? He's a pain in the back all right but its connected with any work he did.

[ENTER GEORGE GALLAGHER]

Gallagher: Hi there, everybody. How are ya?

Schultz: Good, George. And how are things at the pinnacle of fiduciary irresponsibility?

Gallagher: About the usual, you know. Lots of big ideas. No attention to the present business.

Schmidt: Let me ask you, Gallagher. You work in the front office. Will this place make it?

Gallagher: Oh, you never know, Schmidt. Remember what Joe Koenig used to say; "No amount of careful planning can replace dumb luck". Who knows, dumb luck may carry the day again. But, do you know what? They do need the Chair Company. As many problems as this place has, the rest of that outfit has more.

[ENTER ROBERT WITH A LARGE CARPET BAG FULL OF BOOKS]

Robert: Please, ladies and gentlemen, I wonder if I could have your attention for just a minute.

Riley: Say, stranger, there's no solicitin'.

- Robert: Oh, I'm not selling anything. I'm looking for help. I need to hire an assistant. I want to see if anyone is interested.
- Schultz: Well, this part of town needs jobs so go ahead.
- Robert: I have the world's most wonderful business here. It's growing like my Aunt Molly's dandelions. It's highly profitable. The hours are short and it's all inside work. An excellent opportunity it is for those who are interested.
- Mary: What business is it for goodness sake?
- Robert: I rent books to executives to display on their shelves. Every month I drop by and change a few books and leave them with a bill for sixty percent of the retail price of each books every month.
- Stanley: Then what do you do with the old books?
- Robert: I bring them to the next place.
- Schmidt: Wouldn't it make more sense for them to buy the books themselves?
- Robert: Ah, but you see, lad, executives don't KNOW what to buy. Very few of them read, you know. They are very busy with racquetball, golf and long range planning. You wouldn't expect them to have the time to investigate the really meaningful books that are coming on the market. They buy books so they won't be embarrassed. Can you imagine what might happen if the have the wrong books showing at their next meeting with their banker or when they are being interviewed by CORPORATE WEEK magazine? It's an honest professional service that I provide.
- Patrick: And how do you find out what books will interest them?

35: *Scene Three Burkhard's Bar and Restaurant*

Robert: Oh, I have some inside information on the matter of what books to buy. But, apart from that, anybody could do this job. Come on, now. The business is booming. I need some help. Would any of you be willing to take one of my routes. I just can't keep up. I'm working fourteen hours a day and the Missus is getting mad at me.

Theresa: And, what do we have to do?

Robert: Well, the first thing is, when you get a new book, you have to separate the actual book from the jacket. Then we go to the Salvation Army store and pick up some older books of about the same size. Then we put the new jacket on the old book. The new book doesn't really need a jacket, now does it? That way we can have two books for the price of one. The real book looks like what it is. The one with the jacket looks like what it isn't. It all works out fine.

Stanley: What if they open the second book?

Robert: Well, there are some ethical standards here. I do try to have the second book be in the same general subject area as the first book. See, look at this one. This one is an engineering book. On the outside we have "Design Principles of Modern Robots" and on the inside, we have "Tom Swift and his Electric Grandmother".

Schmidt: I still don't understand why they don't catch on.

Robert: Oh, once in a great while, somebody does open a book. It happened twice during the seventies. But, don't worry. I will personally handle all complaints. Now, who is interested?

Stanley: Let me look and some of those books.

[EVERYONE GOES OVER TO ROBERT'S BOX AND PICKS OUT A BOOK OR TWO.]

- Schmidt: Say, this one looks interesting. It's a study of "Waste in Industry". What's this? It was done in 1921.
- Robert: It is a classic in the field of industrial engineering. The book has an excellent checklist. It was used a few weeks ago in a nearby company and over half of the listed problem areas were checked by employees as existing in that company today.
- Mary: This one looks new. It's call "Manufacturing Matters".
- Robert: The book does a fine job of debunking the myth of the service economy.
- Patrick: Here's one on "Japanese Manufacturing Techniques" by some guy named Schonberger.
- Riley: Anything in there about running a more profitable restaurant?
- Robert: There is a copy of Theodore Levitt's article on "A Production Line Approach to Service."
- Theresa: My, some of these books look very interesting. Could we borrow a few to look over the program?
- Robert: Sure. I've got plenty. I'll leave the whole lot here for a week. Then I'll come back and see if anyone wants to help me.
- Gallagher: Hey, Robert, do you have anything more fitting for the Eselplatz situation? Something like "The Easiest Way to Start Making Money is to Stop Losing It".

37: *Scene Three Burkhard's Bar and Restaurant*

Robert: Of course.. I've got something like that right here. Did you plan to give it to the Leerkopf boys?

Gallagher: Naw, if it's not written with crayola, they don't understand it.

Riley: Here's one here that I've heard about before. It's called "Thriving on Chaos" by a fellow named Peters. Do you know this chap?

Robert: I have met him through a friend of my family. I fine person who really seems to care about what happens to our country.

PAUSE

Robert: Well, ladies and gentlemen, I must be on my way. I'll be most beholding if you'll consider my offer. I'll leave the books here and I'll be back in a week or so to hear of your response. In the meantime, I hope you enjoy the books.

Schultz: Have a good evening, Sir, and thank you for coming.

Stanley: These are interesting books. What do you say that we all take home a book or two and see if there are any ideas we could use at the company. We'll meet here in a week and discuss the matter.

Schmidt: Fine.

Patrick: Good.

Mary: Nothing to lose.

Gertrude: My son, Irving went to Columbia. I want to see if he knows anything about these books.

Stanley: O.K. We'll see you here next week.

**SCENE FOUR BURKHARD'S
RESTAURANT - ONE WEEK
LATER.**

- Schultz: Tell me, Riley, how does the economy look to you today?
- Riley: Oh, its still a problem, Schultz. Very serious, I think.
- Schultz: But I read yesterday that the leading indicators were up and that the gross national product was expanding. What do you think of that.
- Riley: The problem, Schultz, is in what's being measured and what's not being measured. We measure our economic performance on the basis of what we spend to get something - not what its worth when we get it. Take the Vininski's down the street. He had a good job as a set up man at the sheet metal shop and he was making \$50,000 per year. Then, that outfit had to close when Allis-Chalmers shut down. Now he works at another shop doing the same thing making \$30,000. At this point, the gross national product is down \$20,000. Then, the missus has to go to work which she doesn't want to do. Fine mother that she is, she would much prefer to raise their four children. But, anyway, she makes \$20,000 and the gross national product is even because it didn't put any value at all on what she did before.
- :
- But, that doesn't end it, Schultz. Now they have to take the two kids that are not in school to child care

39: *Scene Four Burkhard's Restaurant - one week later.*

and make other arrangements for the other two when they get home from school. This costs \$6,000 and the gross national product goes up by this amount. Now you see, Schultz, The Vininski's are worse off because they have \$6,000 less to spend even though they have two people workin'. The kids are worse off because the care is not as good as when their mother was doin' it. But, the gross national product is up by twelve percent. You see, Schultz, the measurements aren't designed to calibrate progress. The measurements are designed so office holders can say there is progress when there isn't.

Schultz: That's a fine observation, Riley, which I have noted myself. I've often wondered how the race track figures in to economic performance as they talk about it on the news. Or, the state lottery. These things are bad for the community. The families in this part of the state have enough problems. What we don't need are lotteries and race tracks swallowing up the precious money that the people have left.

[ENTER MARY, STAN, THERESA, GERTRUDE, PATRICK, GALLAGHER]

Schultz: Well, good evening to you all. Welcome back. It's good to see the Eselplatz people again.

Stanley: Thank you, Schultz. But, as you know, there is business to discuss. Tonight we want to report back on what we found that was useful in Robert's books - if there was anything that was useful. May I ask the group for their general impressions. Let's start with you, Patrick.

Patrick: I took three books, two by some fellows at Harvard and one about excellence in manufacturing by two fellows at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul. The books were all interesting but the third book was the most appropriate for us because it dealt specifically with improving the competitive

effectiveness of older plants. Both of these people had run large factories for many years and both spent a lot of time looking at how companies in other countries compete. All-in-all, these books were encouraging. We could turn Eselplatz around if we really wanted to.

Mary: Certainly we could. We know the company. We know the products.

Patrick: We know what's wrong.

Gertrude: And, we know how to fix these problems. The books could help us, but we have a lot of good ideas on our own.

Stanley: For just a few hundred dollars, we could greatly improve productivity just by getting some new drill bits and end mills.

Mary: The Leerkopf boys spend that much at lunch.

Patrick: And for very little we could get a used but more powerful radial drill for work on the large projects where we waste so much time. Now the workers have to drill three holes to get one big one because we don't have enough horsepower.

Gertrude: We could do a much better job at assembly if we could lay out the assembly space so that we weren't always bumping into one another.

Gallagher: A friend of mine works in a place with an up-to-date Cad/Cam system. That would save us tons of money on the product revisions that we do.

Theresa: Do you want to turn Eselplatz around? The managers and owners don't seem to care about it. Why should you?

41: *Scene Four Burkhard's Restaurant - one week later.*

Gallagher: Maybe that's not that unusual, Theresa. Some of the books I read by Emery, Trist, Botkin and others seem to suggest that a lot of improvements start with people other than the owners and managers. They call it a "from the periphery to the center" model.

Theresa: But, do you have the power to get improvements started. You don't have control of the money and that plant badly needs new equipment and supplies. But, you don't have the authority to make the needed changes even if we had the money.

Gertrude: According to Jeffery Pfeffer, ALL people in organizations have some power.

Stanley: We have to fix it. What else are we going to do? What else is the community going to do? What else can any of us do.?

Schmidt: You know, folks, one of the books I liked best was written eighty years ago. It was called "Shop Management". There are many good suggestions but the philosophy is what I liked best; "Harmony instead of discord, cooperation instead of individualistic opportunism, science instead of rule of thumb, and what was best of all was the idea of the "first class person".

Riley: What's that?

Schmidt: The idea is that each individual can become the very best worker that he or she has the ability to become. The idea instills pride. we have a lot of people who could be first class people. We don't have to be a part of all of these problems. We can do better. We don't have to fail.

Gertrude: That's right. My uncle Herman could straightened this place out in a week and his wife, Golda, taught him everything he knew. We all know what's wrong with this place. Let's fix it.

Schmidt: Imagine! Imagine me, a first class man.

Stanley: Look! Why can't we all be first class people? Why do we put up with being part of failing companies all of the time?

Gallagher: Agreed! These books tell us what needs to be done. In addition, we all KNOW what needs to be done. Everybody knows; all the workers, the barber, the grocery store people, everybody in this restaurant. Lets get Eselplatz fixed.

Theresa: But, how can anyone make a difference? Charles and Edward control the company.

Riley: As a minor refinement to Theresa's comment, Charles and Edward control what they know. But they don't know very much, now do they? They never go to to the plant. They never see any customers. They wouldn't recognize the product if it was their own personal bowel obstruction. How will they ever know if anything improves?

Mary: Riley, even though my heritage has taught me to be a bit suspicious of Irishmen, I believe you are absolutely on target. I work in the office, so I see Charles and Edward whenever they are in -- sometimes even twice a week. If the devil himself were to sit on Charles' desk with his spear in hand, there is no more than one chance in three he would ever be discovered.

Schmidt: What if we just went ahead and MADE the improvements that we all know are needed.

Gallagher: Well, one thing would be that the company would stop losing so much money and that would be very noticeable -- very difficult to hide.

43: *Scene Four Burkhard's Restaurant - one week later.*

Gertrude: Well, just a minute. Someone would suspect that something was up if all of the proceeds were to be returned to the company coffers.

Schmidt: Do you mean that we should keep the money saved from the improvements we make?

Mary: Oh, we couldn't do that. We would all have to go to confession.

Stanley: Well, what if we just kept the money in the company but used it to make further improvements? That way, there would be no extra money to be accounted for.

Gertrude: Gallagher, is it possible that you accountants could make things look worse than they really are?

Gallagher: Of course! We've been doing it the other way around for years.

Patrick: But, lets say we did make improvements. Then we would be able to produce much more -- the way we used to before Charles and Edward got involved. What would we do with what we produced?

Stanley: Hmmm. That is a dilemma. Let's see. How could we handle that.

Patrick: I know. What if we made really good chairs and sold them as if they were from another company -- maybe even a company from another COUNTRY.

Mary: Great idea. Another country! It would be much harder for anyone to track down where they came from.

Stanley: What country? China?

Patrick: No not China. I have to put the labels on the chairs and I wouldn't know how to do it in Chinese. Pick another country.

Gertrude: How about a very remote country that not too many people know about.

Stanley: Germany?

Gertrude: You want to suggest Germany is remote to people in Milwaukee?

Schmidt: I've got it. My nephew was in the Peace Corps in Belize. How about Belize?

Stanley: Great idea. But, we need to pick a name in Belizian or whatever language they speak there.

Schultz: They speak Spanish. I was there once on a business trip.

Riley: My niece spent a lot of time down in Mexico. Maybe she can help us with a name.

RILEY LEAVES TO MAKE A CALL.

Stanley: Well, folks. I think we are getting somewhere.

RILEY RETURNS

Riley: I've got it. How does this sound? *Lugar Para Sentarse*. How is that for a new name.

Schmidt: What does it mean?

Riley: A place for sitting. What else would it mean?

Gertrude: It's not bad. It sounds distinctive. My brother-in-law who owns a furniture store could sell something that had a nice sounding name like that. It sounds expensive. He would like that.

45: *Scene Four Burkhard's Restaurant - one week later.*

Stanley: Now let's see. I am sure we can make a fine chair.
 We've done it many times before. But, how could we
 sell them?

Mary: Look, we don't even have to design a new chair. Emil
 had a wonderful chair all designed with completed
 drawings when he was head of engineering before
 Charles fired him for not doing enough on his golf
 cart. We could use that chair.:

Patrick: Of course! I remember that chair because I had to
 assemble the prototype.

Schmidt: It was easy to weld the parts. I remember that.

Stanley: Of course, we will need to get some modern
 production equipment. What we have was new in
 1950. That will cost some money.

Gallagher: If you folks can build and sell some chairs, we can
 divert the money into buying better equipment.

Stanley: We CAN build good chairs. We can be a factory of
 FIRST CLASS PEOPLE.

Gertrude: You vant to sell chairs? I vill call my brother-in-law.
 He can sell anything.

Partick: I wish the name was a little easier, though. Sometimes
 I have problems putting on complicated name tags.

ACT TWO

47: Scene One EP Industries board room -- one year later

SCENE ONE EP INDUSTRIES BOARD ROOM – ONE YEAR LATER

**ALL BOARD MEMBERS ARE PRESENT. CHARLES CALL
THE MEETING TO ORDER.**

Charles: Gentlemen and Dr. Moller. I am glad to see you all here. I would now like to call the meeting of the BP Industries Board of Directors to order.

Bernstein: OK. Lets start. How are things? Are we making money yet?

Charles: Please, Mr. Bernstein, we have an agenda.

Bernstein: I was just wondering if you are making any money?.

Charles: Edward, would you please read the minutes of the last meeting?.

Bernstein: Fine. But as my Aunt Margo says, "only your enemies read your minutes."

Edward : The Meeting of the board of directors of EP was convened on September 14, 2012 at the corporate headquarters of EP Industries in West Allis, Wisconsin. All of the directors and corporate officers were in attendance...

Bernstein: We were here physically, but did we do our job?

Edward : Two items of business were accomplished. The Strategic Plan, ably conceived by management, was

overwhelmingly approved with special accolades from several astute board members.

Bernstein: The minutes should read that there was a dissenting vote plus one abstention.

Edward: Must we? Without further interruptions, I will continue.

EDWARD SCOWLS AT BERNSTEIN

Edward: The well-deserved and wholly appropriate compensation package for senior management was also overwhelmingly approved.

Bernstein: Once again, the minutes should read that there was a dissenting vote plus one abstention. That is actually what happened.

Charles: Mr. Bernstein, I must beg of you to allow the directors meeting to proceed in an orderly unencumbered manner. These continual interruptions are not helpful.

Lillian: Mr. Chairman, it is wholly proper to accurately tally the voting for all board actions. Furthermore, additional superlatives would not be consistent with responsible corporate governance because such inclusions could convey the impression that the board deliberations might not be even handed. In our graduate programs at Purdue, we recommend only factual recordings of proceedings. Mr. Bernstein is quite right in his correction of the minutes. :

Charles: Oh, all right. We will change them.

Bernstein: Then, we all approve the minutes after the changes are made.

49: Scene One EP Industries board room -- one year later

Charles: Not before?

Bernstein: Never!

Lillian: I am afraid not.

Charles: Then we will move on to strategic planning. We will deal with the minutes later. Edward, would you please lead the discussion on strategic planning?

Edward : In general, our strategic planning has been progressing very well. We have identified several potential acquisition candidates and we are well on our way to identifying 38 new locations for our chain of quiche restaurants. We have also hired some knowledgeable consultants to help us with the design of our fuel-cell powered golf cars. And, of course we are making good progress on our other initiatives as well.

Lillian: Edward, my understanding from the first board meeting I attended that the Strategic Diversification Program was to be financed on the basis of the continued success with the Eselplatz Chair Company. Might I inquire how that entity is doing?

Edward: Uhhh. Charles do you want to answer that question?

Charles: Well, let me say that we have encountered some unexpected competition.

Lillian: From where, might I ask?

Charles: A prominent foreign competitor has entered our market with inferior products, but with costs so low that it is difficult for us to compete.

Bernstein: Where are the products coming from? China?

- Charles: No, not China. Somewhere in South America, I believe, or maybe Spain or something, or some other place that speaks Spanish. Maybe Brazil.
- Hopkins: How do you know this?
- Edward: Well, you see, one of our largest customers described the product when we called to ask him if he would like to reorder some chairs from us. Then he laughed, told me about the product, and hung up.
- Dubious: What did he say?
- Edward: Some of what he said is not appropriate material for our board meeting. However, he did say that the name of the chair was something like *Lugar Para Sentarse*, whatever that means. Does anybody know what that means?
- Lillian: Yes, I gained some experience with that language when my husband and I were doing some work with Yellow Fever victims in Central America.....

SUDDENLY, A LOUD KNOCK ON THE DOOR

- Charles: Who could that be? They are disturbing our board meeting.

DOOR OPENS AND DELIVERY MAN ENTERS.

- Delivery Man: I am sorry, we couldn't deliver this one. The company that ordered it had a fire and they've gone out of business. Where should I put it?
- Edward: What is it?
- Delivery Man: It's a chair, of course. Where should I put it?
- Charles: Oh, just leave it here for now. We will deal with it later.

51: Scene One EP Industries board room -- one year later

Delivery Man: Ok! I'll be right back with it.

DELIVERY MAN LEAVES AND RETURNS WITH A SPANKING NEW HIGH QUALITY CHAIR

Edward: Why, that isn't one of our chairs. There must be some mistake.

Delivery Man: There's no mistake, mister. This is where the chair came from and this is where it goes back to. Here sign the receiver.

Charles: Well, ladies and gentlemen, I am sorry for the interruption. Now let's get back to our meeting.

Bernstein: Hold on, just a minute. Let's have a look at this chair.

Lillian: I must say that it appears to be well-engineered and built with excellent craftsmanship.

Bernstein: It looks like it has a name under the seat.

Lillian: Yes, it says *Lugar Para Sentarse*. Why this is the mystery competitive chair!

ALL BOARD MEMBERS GET UP TO EXAMINE THE CHAIR

Hopkins: Doesn't look that bad.

Dubious: It looks a little cheap, though.

Bernstein: What does that little tag say? It looks like it says where it was made.

Lillian: It says "Made in Baleez," spelled "BALEEZ." That's very peculiar.

Dummermann: I'm not interested in chairs, anyway. But, how did it get here?

Charles: Oh, we don't know. It is probably some kind of a mistake. Why should one of the competitors chair be "returned" to our company?

Edward: I wonder, though, if there is any possibility that some members of our company are somehow in league with the enemy. Perhaps we should investigate this to see what's going on.

Bernstein: Edward, finally after many years, I finally get to agree with you. We should see what is going on.

Charles: I suppose we should. Edward, can you go to the plant and see what's going on?

Edward: Me! In my condition? you know about my allergies. I will be sneezing for the next month. You go.

Charles: I am afraid I can't. I am scheduled to be a major golf tournament these next two weeks. Gallagher. You go.

Bernstein: Somebody has to go. You want I should go? Or, the professor from Purdue? Somebody has to go and see what's going on in this outfit.

Charles: Oh, all right. Edward and I will go, but it's going to have to be a week later. I am not going to miss the golf tournament.

SCENE TWO BURKHARD'S RESTAURANT ONE DAY LATER

RILEY IS BEHIND THE BAR.

A PATRON, MR. SCHULTZ IS SEATED AT THE BAR.

ONLY A FEW CUSTOMERS.

MRS. SCHULTZ IS WAITING ON TABLES.

Schultz: Riley, though your restaurant does not show it at the moment, there seems to be more activity in this part of town than you have had for years. What's going on that business is so good?

Riley: Ah, don't worry about the regulars, lad. They will be here later. They're putting in lots of extra time at the chair plant -- best its been since old Heinrich passed away.

: As for business levels in the community, it's the same old story, Schultz. Everybody seems to be better off when somebody is makin' somethin.' The barber is happy. The hardware store people are happy. The truckers are happy. And, we are happy here at Die Botschafter. Some cities have tried to exist without anybody makin anythin, but they always go broke, Schultz.

Schultz: And what accounts for the sudden upturn, I might ask?

Riley: Why it's the new chair, of course. It's selling like hot cakes. It could have happened years ago if the empty-heads hadn't taken over the company.

Schultz: Well, somebody must have done something, Riley. In any case, I suppose the Leerkopf boys are happy with the success.

Riley: They might be, Schultz, if they ever knew about it. But you see, Schultz, one of the problems our country has today is the fact that so many of the people in leadership positions do not really understand what they have -- or how to appreciate it -- or how to make it better. We're living off the wealth earned by people before us and many of us have forgotten how to do what needs to be done. It's very sad, Schultz. There are probably fifty companies in Milwaukee run by people much like Charles and Edward. They are not really evil people, Schultz. But, a monkey with a lobotomy could do a better job than either one of them and many of the other leaders as well

ENTER PATRICK, STANLEY, MARY, SCHMIDT, THERESA, GERTRUDE, AND GALLAGHER. ANIMATED CONVERSATION FOLLOWS.

Patrick: Well! This is a problem we did not need. What are we going to do? Charles and Edward are scheduled to visit the factory next week.

Schultz: Why?

Stanley: One of our new chairs was shipped to a customer who had a fire and couldn't accept it, so it was returned -- to the corporate office.

Riley: Oh.

55: *Scene Two Burkhard's Restaurant one day later*

- Gertrude: It could be quite embarrassing for us to be found making a competitor's in their own factory.
- Mary: At least we didn't take any of the money. Then we would have had to go to confession.
- Schmidt: I'm worried. I don't mind at all helping the company out by getting some up-to-date equipment, But I don't want to be in any trouble. By the way, Gallagher, how much are we helping? How is the pool for new equipment coming?
- Gallagher: Schmidt, thanks to all of your efforts, we are doing very well. The efficiency moves you have put in place have been very helpful.
- Patrick: J. T. Black's book on Manufacturing Processes has been especially helpful.
- Stanley: That was good, Patrick, but we need to make some changes in the labels you put on the chair to tell where it is made. Belize is spelled B-E-L-I-Z-E, not BALEEZ.
- Patrick: Well how should I know that. I don't speak Belesian!
- Stanley: It's Ok. Don't worry about it. You are doing a first class job.
- Patrick: Well, thanks.
- Gertrude: I got a lot of good information from technical literature on powder coating and new paint formulations.
- Schmidt: Some of the best ideas came out of books like Shop Management. Did you know one of the lead characters was a guy named Schmidt? He made so much money on incentives he earned by using better methods to load steel that he was able to buy a lot of Philadelphia real estate.

- Stanley: We were also fortunate because Heinrich always bought first rate equipment when he was here. It's a little slower than the modern stuff, but it does fine work.
- Mary: Did you have to spend much money, then?
- Stanley: Yes, we did spend about four hundred thousand dollars, but much of it was simply to replace the drill bits, inserts and other tooling that had worn out over the years. THAT made a big difference.
- Gallagher: But you also bought a new computer-controlled optimizer saw that greatly reduced wood waste. And, I am sure the new machining center helped.
- Stanley: Yes, everything helped. Most of all, the people helped. With the help of Robert's books, we organized better --- and, the people were really into it. They had something to live for.
- Patrick: We shouldn't forget the design of the chair. It is very easy to build. I read in one of the books that the Ford Motor Company has found that seventy percent of the cost savings are in design and only thirty percent in manufacturing. Emil did a good job on this chair.
- Mary: So, where does the till stand, Gallagher? Are we better off financially, or not?
- Gallagher: We are WAY better off. Our real production is up. Our sales are way up. During the past year, the Chair company has reported a small profit, but we have been able to put about \$1.4 million in our equipment fund. With all of the deposits coming in for the new chair, that fund now has close to two million dollars.
- Schmidt: But what if Charles and Edward go to the plant and figure out what is going on?

57: Scene Two Burkhard's Restaurant one day later

Stanley: I think we will be all right. I've met with several of the factory hands and Gallagher and I have a plan.

Gertrude: OK! Good! What's the plan.

Gallagher: First of all, when they walk in, we will have one of the new chairs, the *Lugar Para Sentarse*. right there for them to see. We will tell them that we purchased it to conduct a competitive examination -- to see if the chair is really as good as people say it is.

Stanley: And then... Remember a few years ago when we had leakage from one of the big paint vats?

Schmidt: Yah! We had to hang big curtains around the place where they were digging up all of the contaminated dirt. Those were very large heavy curtains that no one could see through.

Stanley: Well, we still have the curtains.

Gallagher: We can move all of the new equipment back to a corner of the plant, hang the curtains, and they will never know.

Gertrude: Und vot happens if they look behind the curtains?

Gallagher: They won't, Gertrude. We have a big sign that says

POLLUTED SITE - PEOPLE WITH ALLERGIES BEWARE!

SCENE THREE THE ESELPLATZ FACTORY OFFICE

DOOR OPENS. CHARLES AND EDWARD ENTER.

Stanley: Ah, good afternoon Charles. Hello, Edward. We are all happy to see you here today. Thank you for taking your valuable time to visit us.

Charles: Well, we do appreciate the hospitality. However, Edward and I are here to investigate something that seems unusual?

Edward: Yes, indeed. By the way.....

EDWARD LOOKS STARTLED

Edward: What is that chair doing here?

Gallagher: Aaah. Oha. Well, you see, our engineering department routinely brings in competitive products to examine. That way, they can engineer our products so they can be even better.

Charles: Oh, of course. I forgot we were doing that. Anyway, lets wrap up the visit and we can report back to the board of directors

Stanley: But, Mr. Leerkopf, the employees are so looking forward to seeing you. Wouldn't the two of you be interested in taking a quick walk through the plant.?

59: Scene Three The Eselplatz Factory Office

We've announced your coming and they are quite excited.

Charles: Oh, I suppose we could go for a short tour, right Edward?

Edward: Ahhhh Chooo!

THE ENTOURAGE EXITS THE DOOR TO THE FACTORY.

SCENE FOUR THE ESELPLATZ FACTORY OFFICE – LATER

ENTOURAGE RETURNS

- Charles: Well, Edward, the place is still pretty much as I remember it when we worked here back in the 70s.
- Edward: Aaaah Chooooo!
- Charles : I will say that I was glad to learn why the competitor's chair was here.
- Edward: Ssniffff.
- Stanley: In any case, gentlemen, we are glad you were able to join us.
- Gallagher: Yes. Me Too. Too bad about the pollution problem.

SUDDEN LOUD KNOCK ON THE DOOR.

SCHULTZ BARGES

- Schultz: Stanley, my friend, did you hear what just happened to The old foundry down the street?
- Stanley: No! What, Siegfried. By the way, let me introduce you to Charles and Edward Leerkopf. Charles and Edward, this is an old industrial friend, Siegfried Schultz.

61: Scene Four The Eselplatz Factory Office -- Later

Edward: Hello Mr. Schultz. Aaaaah Chooo to you!

Charles: Pleased to meet you. But what happened to the foundry?

Schultz: Pollution. A huge fine. Eight hundred thousand dollars payable in ten days. Then, they are liable for the cleanup expenses -- maybe two or three million.

Charles: Gallagher, what was going on behind that curtain out there.

Gallagher: Well, you see, Mr. Leerkopf, we had heard rumors that the Wisconsin Pollution Control Commission was doing a sweep of our district, so we wanted to display a cooperative corporate attitude and show the regulators that we were doing our best to conform to the spirit of the law.

Charles: What if they still nail us? After all, they might be Democrats.

Stanley: No, they are Republicans.

Charles: Probably not Tea Party, though, are they? We still might not be safe.

Stanley: Oh, I think we've handled it well. Not to worry, Mr. Leerkopf.

Schultz: Say, Stanley. You've done a nice job with the plant here. I could use a plant like this in my business. Let me know if your factory is ever for sale.

Gallagher: It's nice of you to say, Siegfried, but we think we are in pretty good hands, and things look like they are about to pick up.

Schultz: Ok, but you know where i eat supper, so let me know or let Olga know. It was nice to meet you both, Charles and Edward. I've heard quite a bit about you.

Edward: Sniffle. Thankq you.... Aaaa Chooo.

63: Scene Five EP Industries board room --- Two months later

SCENE FIVE EP INDUSTRIES BOARD ROOM — TWO MONTHS LATER

**ENTER CHARLES, EDWARD, HOPKINS, DUMMERMANN,
DUBIOUS, BERNSTEIN, AND MOLLER.**

Charles: Thank you all for taking your valuable time to attend the special meeting of the Board of Directors of EP Industries. We have many items to discuss today; some important strategic decisions relating to our carefully crafted future along with some procedural matters that would follow logically from the important decisions we have to make.

Edward, would you care to go into some of the background conditions that led us to where we are today.

Edward: Thank you, Charles. I will be happy to do that..

As you all know, our corporation has been struggling with our weakest division, the Eselplatz Chair Company for some time...

Bernstein: It is also your largest division.

Lillian: And, perhaps, the most profitable division.

Edward: But, it is NOT the most strategic division. The business has no future. It is a slow growth business and its market share is now small.

Lillian: According to the research of Professor Donald Hambrick, that profile fits about eighty percent of American industry -- and much of world industry. Many well-run companies accept that reality and make the most of it.

Edward: Possibly, but let's move on.

In addition to the lack of profitability, we seem to have some special at Eselplatz. Management and workers seem average, at best. Foreign competition is increasing. And, importantly, stemming from Charles' and my recent visit there, there may be even bigger problems. We saw there some very large curtains hung in a corner of the factory potentially indicating that there may be some potentially costly pollution problems at the factory. Aaaa Chooo.

Bernstein: Has anybody looked behind those curtains?

Charles: We don't have too. The plant has had a history of pollution problems before.

Continue on, Edward.

Edward: Following our visit to the factory, Charles and I had long discussions about the future of the corporation and what we might do with our most problematic division.

Bernstein: Chuckle.

Charles: After many hours of wrenching contemplation, Edward and I finally concluded that it might be time consider the sale of the Eselplatz business. The thought was casually introduced to us during a discussion at the plant when a Mr. Schultz said he thought it was a nice factory. However, we thought we might need some professional help in the matter so we have called upon our fellow board member,

65: Scene Five EP Industries board room --- Two months later

Dudley Dubious, to work the problem for us under a separate professional engagement.

Edward: As you all know, Mr. Dubious has a long and successful career as a private equity investor with the distinguished firm Slash, Burn, and Vanish in New York. Mr. Dubious, would you please provide us with your report?

Dudley: Thank you, gentlemen. I took on this assignment with great enthusiasm, as I personally believe the disposal of these assets is clearly in the long term interest of the corporation.

Bernstein: We'll see.

Dudley: My first task was to gather all of the appropriate financial information on Eselplatz.....

Edward: What does it look like?

Hopkins: Ya. I've never seen it.

Dummerman: Huh!

Dudley: including a list of all of the assets that might be sold. I then prepared a prospectus and shopped it among the many prestigious with whom Slash, Burn, and Vanish have informal working relationships.

Bernstein: And, what did they say?

Dudley: In a way, they were mildly interested -- up to a point?

Lillian: What point?

Dudley: They liked the \$12,324,525 worth on tangible assets in receivables, and fixed assets, with very little inventory.

Dummerman: They didn't like something?

Dudley: Liabilities of \$12,208,623 including accounts payable and recent debt that has been layered on the entity.

Bernstein: That gives you a tangible net worth of \$116 thousand dollars. It wouldn't pay for Charles car!

Lillian: Please continue. How did it go then?

Dudley: I'm afraid that, in general, there was not much interest. Everyone was polite and expressed appreciation for my visit -- except for the one fellow who gagged on his sushi.

Hopkins: Were there any further comments or discussions?

Dudley: The possibility of a future pollution problem was an absolute show-stopper for them. Even if the company were to be found totally blameless, the cost to handle the matter would be prohibitive. They were no longer interested -- even to the slightest degree after they became aware of pollution enforcement efforts going on in this part of the country. I did not have to disclose it. They knew about pollution abatement efforts in Wisconsin.

Dummerman: Well, did that end the investigation efforts, then?

Dudley: No. I then remembered the conversation Charles had with a Mr. Schultz during the last visit to the factory.

Dummerman: The one with the big plumbing supply operation?

Dudley: Yes. That's the one. I contacted Mr. Schultz and he said that he had been a friend of Heinrich Himmelherz and so he was sure it was a good factory. But, he said he was now 69 years old and was thinking of "throttling back" just a bit. Besides, the plumbing business had been a little slow since the housing downturn, so he thought he would pass.

67: Scene Five EP Industries board room --- Two months later

: However, He did know of a group of investors he thought might be more interested and that he would do a little nosing around and call me back.

Hopkins: Well?

Charles: Wait! He has some good news.

Dudley: A few days later, Mr. Schultz did call. He said he had located an investment group that might be potentially interested in the assets of the Eselplatz Chair Company. In fact, I did meet with a representative of that investment group, a Mr. Robert Gilbreth, a few days later.

Bernstein: Did anything come of it? Do they have any money?

Dudley: We had many discussions and, yes, they do have money.

Hopkins: Do you have a deal?

Dudley: It depends upon whether the Board approves it.

Bernstein: What's the deal?

Dudley: Well, they are definitely interested in the property, all of the equipment, company intellectual property, and all other tangible assets.

Bernstein: And?

Dudley: The will also assume all TANGIBLE liabilities directly associated with the chair business. They will also assume responsibility for the inter-company debt that EP Industries has incurred to support their corporate diversification program. However, it has to be fixed at its current level and they want the payments spread evenly over five years interest free.

Lillian: In a way, that sounds quite fair, but how much are they willing to pay?
.

Dudley: They will pay \$1.4 million for the net assets, but there are further clauses on the contingent liabilities associated with pollution.
.

Hopkins: Oh. Oh. What are those?
.

Dudley: They said they will accept 70 percent of all liabilities arising from correcting the pollution problems with what is behind the big curtains. They feel they understand that issue. In return, they would like EP Industries to 70 percent of all pollution related liabilities not behind the curtain.
.

Dummerman: That sound fair!
.

Dudley: It is fair. I found Mr. Gilbreth to be a very thoughtful person.
.

Bernstein: What's the name of the investment group?
.

Dudley: It is called the Burkhard Investment Group. I believe it is located in another city. I think.
.

Lillian: Are you recommending the deal, then?
.

Dudley: Yes, I am. I've done a lot of looking around and I feel this is the best you can do if you are interested in divesting EP industries of the chair operations.
.

Charles: So! Now we are asking for your input. Does it seem like this is a transaction we should pursue?
.

Edward: Of course. We've hated it for years. Ahaaaa Chooo!
.

Hopkins: Sounds good
.

Dummerman: Fine. I was never interested in chairs, anyway.
.

69: Scene Five EP Industries board room --- Two months later

Charles: Well, then. Let me call the question. Is there a motion to sell the assets of Eselplatz Chair operation for the cash sum of \$1.4 million dollars?

Edward: I second the motion.

Hopkins: I third it.

Charles: All those in favor of selling the assets of Eselplatz Chair operation to the Burkhard Investment Group for the cash sum of \$1.4 million dollars, please signify by saying "Aye."

Dummermann: Aye.

Charles: Aye.

Edward: Aye.

Hopkins: Aye.

Lillian: Normally, I would prefer a bit more thorough analysis, so I think I will abstain. I'm sorry.

Bernstein: Normally, I would also like a little more analysis, but I am not sure we have treated this investment very well. Maybe the Burkhard Group can do better. So, I think I will vote "Aye." Buy the way, that's my first "aye" vote since 1987. With that, I think I might retire from the EP Industries Board of Directors.

Charles: That's wonderful. Motion carries with six in favor, one abstention, and one retirement. The Eselplatz Chair operation has been sold to the Burkhard Investment Group.

HOORAY!

Edward: Gentlemen and ladies, not only do we have some *Spätlese mit Prädikat* in the next room, we also have some *Salon Blanc de Blancs Le Mesnil-sur-Oger 1997* champagne.

Bernstein: I think I'll pass on the drinks, gentlemen. I see the matter somewhat differently. Best wishes to you all.

BERNSTEIN EXITS SOLEMNLY

**EVERYONE CONGRATULATES ONE ANOTHER AND
CHEERFULLY EXITS THE ROOM.**

LILLIAN STAYS ALONE

ROBERT ENTERS THE ROOM

Robert: Hello, Mom.

Lillian: Hello, son.

Robert: Well, how do you think we did.

Lillian: Splendidly. Your father would be very proud of you.

Robert: If we were successful, then, where do you think we should go next?

Lillian: I was thinking Cleveland.

ROBERT AND LILLIAN EXIT

71 Scene Five EP Industries board room --- Two months later

Almost The End

EPILOGUE

RILEY COMES TO CENTER OF STAGE

Riley: It is sad for me to break it to the audience that the play is not fiction. It's a real story. A piece borrowed from one town and put in another. Real managerial methods imported to fit our situation. Common factory floor expression interspersed. Cynicisms sometimes shared among managers, directors, executives, and workers alike about the deteriorating industrial atmosphere in the United States and in other industrialized countries. Cynicisms that, unfortunately are known to us bartenders better than by anyone else.

But even though the story has its true parts, the ending is not always as displayed here. Not all situations of industrial decline end happily. But, to portray the thought that we can do better than we are, we had to rearrange things just a bit.

We had to go back many decades to find Lillian Moller Gilbreth, the famed Industrial Engineering Professor from Purdue, Time Magazine's Woman of the Year in 1947. She and her husband Frank and their family were the subject of the famous books and movies entitled *Cheaper by the Dozen* and *Belles on their Toes*.

Even the part about stocking the shelves with books is not fiction. It actually occurred at a corporation with sixty thousand employees that is now gone.

George Gallagher, the impish Irish Assistant Controller, is not entirely fiction either. Within any failing company, there are always dedicated and capable people who care.

The boardroom dialog is not without its factual foundation, either. The author has served as a director on fifteen corporate boards.

But there is hope, we think. We hope more situations can turn out as this one did here. We can do better.

Now, if you liked the play, you can clap. But if you think we can do a little better as a country, you can stand up and clap.

Thank you.

RILEY EXITS

The End

ABOUT THE INSPIRATION

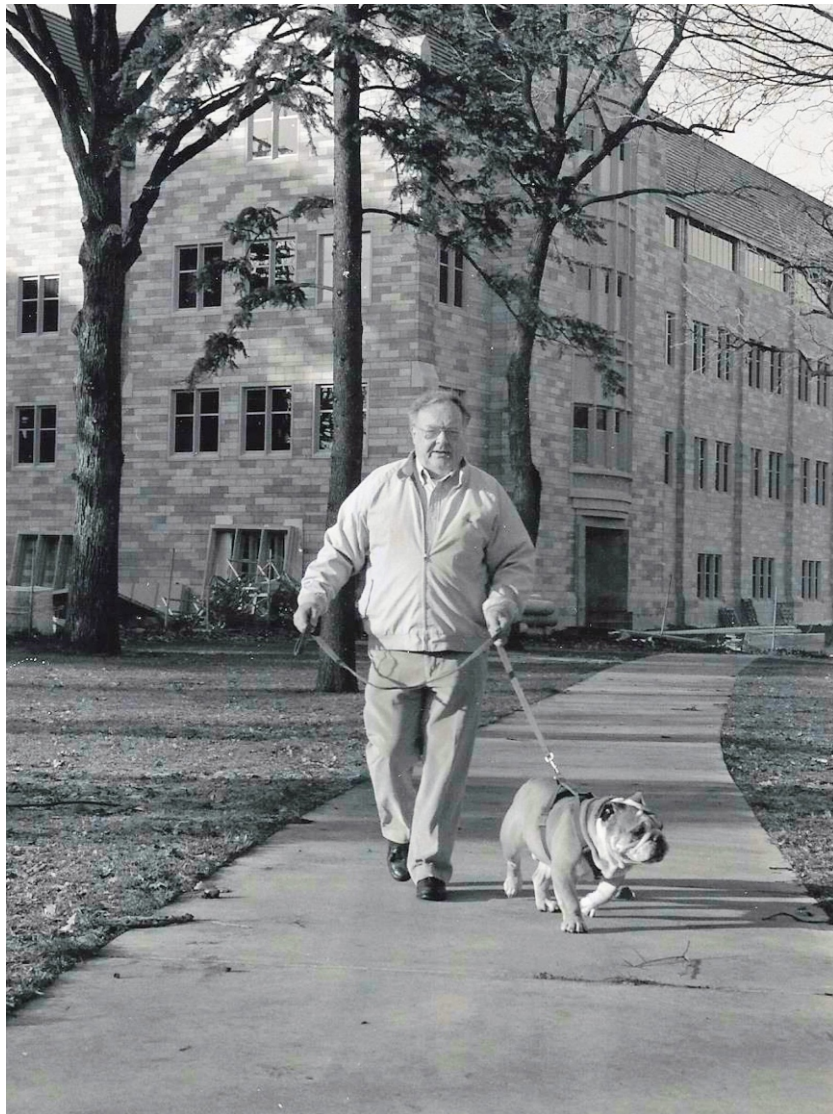
George Gleeson, the model for the character George Gallagher in the play, was an experienced consultant, accounting manager, chief financial officer, and prominent adjunct professor of profitability and performance management at the University of St. Thomas where he taught from 1986 to 2014. This play was actually started during a series of unproductive staff meetings at a company that ultimately failed but at the time was prominent and listed on the New York Stock exchange. George, along with two of his compatriots had started writing the play by using verbatim comments from the staff meeting.

George Gleeson was an industry expert and highly revered by his students, in part because of his well-practiced Irish wit and the impact of his colorful bulldog named Cashflow, but mostly because of his deep understanding of why companies fail in their endeavors and what steps they could have taken to operate successfully. Importantly, George stressed the horrible consequences of mismanagement including so many good people losing their jobs, families and communities disrupted, and the irresponsible dissipation of the wealth of savers and investors.

George cared about people -- independent of position, education, status, or credentials. He was as at home with production workers and labor leaders as he was with financial dignitaries and CEOs. He would joke with and listen to them all.

George Gleeson was influenced by witnessing first hand the tragic consequences of managers and executives failing in their responsibilities and he was able to describe these situations to attentive students enraptured by the seriousness of managerial responsibilities.

George was a highly effective contributor to many organizations. He was more insightful than many financial analysts because he knew, first hand, what he was analyzing. He was more useful than most PhDs. because he could fit real-world into respected theory. And, he was a universally admired very fine person.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Fred Zimmerman retired as a Professor of Engineering and Management at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota in December of 2005. During his twenty-five year association with the University of St. Thomas, Dr. Zimmerman served as Engineering Program Director, Engineering Department Chair, Member of the Committee of Deans, and full Professor.

For many years, Dr. Zimmerman taught both engineering and management classes, mostly at the graduate level. He has also taught at Universidad Catolica in Montevideo, Uruguay and at the Czech Management Center in Celokovice, Czech Republic, the University of Pittsburgh, and the University of Minnesota. He is a frequent source to the media on industrial issues. He is the author of numerous professional and technical articles plus several books including *The Turnaround Experience: Real World Lessons In Revitalizing Corporations*, *Measurement of the Industrial Economy*, *The Relocation Of Industry*, and the *Status of Manufacturing in Minnesota*. The book, *Manufacturing Works: The Vital Link Between Production and Prosperity* was co-authored with Dave Beal of the Pioneer Press and published by Dearborn Trade Press in 2002.

Prior to returning to academia in 1985, Dr. Zimmerman had spent more than 25 years in industry as an engineer, manager, vice president and president primarily with three computer companies; IBM, Control Data, and National Computer Systems. He has served on the boards of directors of 14 corporations.

Dr. Zimmerman resides in Minnetonka, Minnesota with his wife, Joannell. The Zimmermans have five children and have housed more than ninety foster children.