

# Purgatory on Parade



A Play for Eternity by

*Fred Zimmerman*

Forward by

**Don Stolz**



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This story is dedicated to five groups of people.

Our dear son Hans and his lifetime of sacrifice.

My dear wife Joannell in recognition of our

Fiftieth Wedding Anniversary.

Her more than ninety foster children.

Our friends Don and Joan Stolz

and their lifetime of bringing joy to our

lives through wholesome entertainment.

And, the many people we have met

in life who have tried to do

their very best

and provided us with good example

-- often under challenging circumstances.

## Forward

Writing an introduction to a unique book authored by people whom you admire and for whom you have great affection is a delight.

In the past, I had read chapters of several books authored by Dr. Fred Zimmerman, an honored professor at the University of St. Thomas. His views on achieving quality in manufacturing and marketing were solid, clear, and achievable.

With this knowledge, you can imagine my surprise when I first met Purgatory on Parade. I should not have been surprised. Fred and his wife Joanell have always revealed a spiritual approach to everything in life including the long illness of their youngest son, their appreciation of the support and prayers of friends, and their complete lack of any condemnation of others.

I found Purgatory of Parade to be compelling, sometimes gently humorous, but always applicable. In their visit to Purgatory, Fred and Joanell find there is a revelation of the ills we have done and the good we have left undone. Whatever the situation in Purgatory, nothing is hopeless; all in time (on occasion, considerable time) can be corrected.

I found myself reviewing my own past, determining to start activity that I might have left undone until my own visit to Purgatory begins.

You will find Purgatory on Parade to be interesting, fun, and inspiring, as I have.

**Don Stolz**

*Owner and Artistic Director of the Old Log Theater.*

## Preface

Although *Purgatory on Parade* is a story — complete fiction, many of the characters represent real conversations and real people. A lifetime of memorable experiences interacting with people in business, academia, religion, and everyday life has supplied most of the material for this fictional manuscript.

Purgatory is a concept that has always made some sense to me. Very few of us are perfect and no one I know will assert that they are. We all have our flaws and it is only just for each of us to be allocated some time to ponder the ramifications of these imperfections. Though this fictional tale about Purgatory is fantasy, it still may be interesting to contemplate what we would do with this opportunity and how would we react.

This narrative, however, is not intended to be deeply theological. It is just a story that captures some of the collective wisdom and insights supplied by friends, associates, and others — some of whom the author knew only from a distance.

There are several serious threads in this story, however. One relates to the medical problems of our son. The youngest of our five children was diagnosed with severe cancer when he was a young child aged only twenty-three months. At this writing he is twenty-eight years old. During that time, he has had somewhere around thirty surgeries, many kinds of chemo-therapy amounting to three times the lifetime maximum dosage, radiation, and a five-organ transplant involving a new liver, pancreas, stomach, small intestine, and duodenum. The transplant, though initially successful, produced many complications of its own.

Our youngest son was, at one time, a robust, positive, cheerful person with noticeable skills in mathematics, sports, and music. Yet, it has been about all he can do to stay alive during the past quarter century. His survival has been greatly enabled by the heroic work of my wife, Joanell, who has labored long hours to help our son under a variety of difficult conditions. Due to the efforts of Joanell and many dedicated healthcare providers, Hans Survived twenty eight and one half years. He miss him greatly.

Along the way, in gratitude for the extended life of our son, Joannell took care of more than ninety foster children on a short term emergency basis — sometimes as long as several months. We were able to witness the broad capabilities of these precious children and the amazing potential each one of them had.

The threads about Hans, the foster children, and the experiences gained through a variety of business and academic exposures weave together to portray the main theme of *Purgatory on Parade* — hope. Hope in us, hope in our friends, and hope in the humanity around us. For, in spite of our human imperfections, there is much good in the world — many problems, but much good.

Almost none of the vignettes in *Purgatory on Parade* are entirely original with the author. The language, the situations, and the personal reactions displayed in each one of the story's segments were gathered from a lifetime of experiences with memorable people. These experiences were richer than fiction — and far less forgettable. Over the years, I have been so impressed with the insights of ordinary people that it seemed just to record these insights — if even in fictional form.

The characters in *Purgatory on Parade* were not just memorable, however. They were idealistic. Every society seems to have a corps of critical thinkers who believe that things could be better than they are. Some of these informed critical thinkers were academics, whose views on matters of importance were conditions by serious inquiry and study. Many more of the critical thinkers were ordinary people from a wide variety of professions, ethnicities, religions, and educational backgrounds. The world is fortunate to have them and our story is enriched by their observable traits.

God bless them and God bless all of you.



## Acknowledgments

Many interested people contributed to the creation of *Purgatory on Parade*. Our long time friend, Don Stolz -- Owner and Artistic Director of the Old Log Theater, reviewed the manuscript early in its formation and made some excellent suggestions. Beyond that, he became the main editor of the work -- tirelessly reviewing version after version until it reached its current form. I am indebted to him for his help, but perhaps even more for his vigor, interest and dedicated professionalism at age ninety-five.

Our youngest daughter, Brigitte, took time away from her graduate studies at the University of California at San Diego to provide some high-quality editing assistance. Other friends have offered both corrections and suggestions to my manuscripts over the years. Among these are John S. Adams of the University of Minnesota, Dave Beall of the Pioneer press, John Oslund of the StarTribune, colleagues at the University of St. Thomas, and many others.

The wisdom, sagacity, and insights supplied by the mostly unnamed characters in the story should also be acknowledged because, in many ways, *Purgatory on Parade* is about real people. The people are real, the dialog is often real, and the ideas expressed are more often theirs than mine. In most cases, the author was only a careful listener.

Buddy Bernstein is, in reality, my long time friend and mentor Alan K. Ruvelson, the first federally chartered venture capitalist in the United States. He was always kind and generous not only to me but to many others. His poignant Jewish phraseology and his street-savvy financial acumen blended effectively with his cultivated sense of what was proper behavior in business.

Mohammed Selim and Franz Mueller were both distinguished colleagues with international reputations at the University of St. Thomas -- exemplary in their strong interest in both religion and quality scholarship.

Clem could be one of any number of fundamentally decent and reliable people who populated the district of rural Minnesota

where I grew up. Splendid people -- all of them, and forever memorable.

Fidelia is a composite, also, of the many fine scholars from overseas that our nation has been fortunate to receive as immigrants. Bright, studious, conscientious, and laden with wholesome values, these fellow world citizens have greatly enriched both our country and our humanity.

Father William Cunningham (Father Bill) is real too. I knew him personally before he passed away from liver cancer several years ago. Some of the phraseology used in the story are his words, not mine.

That is also the case with other phrases used in the story. These are often phrases picked up in long conversations with business people, labor leaders, academics, artists, and welders. I appreciate their supplying so many memorable thoughts and ideas.

Even the sayings of the CIA agent are not entirely imaginary. I had gotten to know a few CIA people and other government advisors over the years and I am sympathetic to some of their frustrations.

Most of all, I would like to thank my wife, Joanell, for the many wonderful years we have had together, and for the dedication and sacrifices she made in caring for family members with illness.

Also, thanks to the readers, for spending time with this humble manuscript.

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## Characters in Order of Appearance

**Narrator and Henry Hammerschmidt**

**Eleanor Hammerschmidt**

**Buddy Bernstein**

**Fidelia**

**Clem**

**Messenger**

**Admissions Director**

**Lawyer**

**Father Bill**

**Mohammed Selim**

**Franz Mueller**

**Don the Bard**

**John D. Rockefeller**

**Kiesha**

**Joe**

**Matthew the CIA Agent**

**Walter Ruether**

**Charles E. Wilson**

**Leo the Ethics Professor**

**Molly**

**Molly's Husband**

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# Act 1 -- The Arrival

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## Scene 1 -- Entry

Narrator: (In direct communication with audience)

Shortly after the accident, Eleanor and I awakened slowly. We had no idea where we were. We had no idea why or how we got where we were.

We were in the opening of a large long hallway. It was arched with bare stone walls and ceiling, ivory in color. There were no windows, but yet there was light. At the end of the long hallway, we could see a person, but we could not make out who he was or what he might be doing there. He just stood there as if he was waiting for us.

We proceeded slowly, and with caution, down the hallway which had a slight downward incline. As we progressed, we could see that the hallway opened into a rather large cavernous room. The person who seemed to be waiting for us began to look familiar. He was short but stout — rather plump, but not obese. He was mostly bald and we could detect, even from a distance, a rather cheerful expression.

With a few more steps, a few of the details of the large room came into view. It was an expansive room with a very high ceiling — almost like the inside of a large railway depot. On one side, part of a prominent sign came into view. However, we were far enough back in the hallway that we could make out only the first two letters of the sign, “AD.”

As we neared the end of the hallway and the opening into the grand room, the person did become recognizable. I called out.

Henry: Buddy? Is that you?

Buddy: Yes, it's me. I've been expecting you. I'm glad to see you both.

Henry: I know you passed away several years ago. I have always been sorry that I was unable to attend your funeral.

Buddy: You were off in a hospital in Pittsburgh or somewhere looking after Sonny Boy. I knew you had important things to do. Anyway, I got through it.

ELEANOR GREETES BUDDY BERNSTEIN WITH A  
FRIENDLY HUG

Eleanor: I am glad to see you, too, Buddy, but what are we doing here? And what are you doing here? What is this place?

Buddy: Well, as the sign says, this is the ADMISSIONS area.

Eleanor: Admissions area! Admission to what?

Buddy: That depends on what you've done and it is not my call. As for me, I'm in Purgatory, as are most of us here.

Eleanor: This room is Purgatory?

Buddy: It is part of Purgatory, but only a small part. And, you have come to join us. You, also, are about to enter Purgatory.

Eleanor: Purgatory? I don't understand. We are entering Purgatory? This place does not seem like what I thought Purgatory would be like. And, you are in Purgatory?

Buddy: Yes, I am. I came here almost immediately after my funeral.



- Eleanor: What a surprise. What is a Jewish venture capitalist doing in Purgatory?
- Henry: Eleanor said exactly what I was thinking.
- Buddy: You are surprised that a Jew is in Purgatory? Jews, Christians, Muslims, Hindus, I suppose people from every religion are entitled to Purgatory.
- Henry: Well, I suppose I did wonder about that.
- Buddy: You want I should be going to a more punishing destination? (Chuckle)
- Eleanor: ( puzzled) So, this is Purgatory.
- Buddy: Of course, as I said earlier, this is just a small part of it — the Admissions Area. Soon you will be formally admitted to the rest of it.
- Henry: What about Heaven?
- Buddy: That is something for you to think about, but the answer will unfold later.
- Henry: After Purgatory?
- Buddy: Perhaps after Purgatory. First, you will be formally admitted and then receive your assignments.
- Eleanor: Assignment? What assignment?
- Buddy: We all have several assignments. One of mine is to be a greeter in the Admissions area. It's not too different from being a greeter at WalMart — I'm in a similar age group. I enjoy meeting the people and showing them around a little bit until they get their feet off the ground, so to speak."
- Eleanor: You said you had several assignments. What are your others?
- Buddy: Among other things, I am a sort of an advisor to St. Peter and his staff on white collar crime.

HENRY FACES AUDIENCE

- Narrator: (In direct communication with audience)  
At this juncture, I could not help but recalling my earlier business experiences with Buddy. These experiences were uniformly positive. He was a fine upstanding ethical individual with a great deal of business savvy. But I couldn't help asking –
- Henry: Why would St. Peter have a need for an advisor on white collar crime?
- Buddy: White collar crime is a growing field. As I said, I am an advisor. God does the deciding of course. St. Peter and his helpers pull all of the facts together so the evidence is complete. St. Peter is sort of like the penultimate clerk of court.  
As for white collar crime, it's a growing field. The folk's upstairs are very fair people, but they don't know the tricks. It is one thing to have ability and fair-mindedness, but it is quite another thing to know the territory. The people upstairs see so much good, they would never think of what some of these business people might do. I can help him out a little bit on what to look for. You know, things like to four Bs.
- Eleanor: What four Bs? What they are.
- Buddy: You know, the four things that screw up companies; Bucks — people dipping into the till, Booze, Boy/Girl problems, and Ballots — people running for office, internally or externally. These are the destructive forces that transform adequate companies into losers. They bring companies to ruin and make life miserable for good employees, creditors, suppliers, and customers — and, once in a while, a venture capitalist. Those are the four Bs; bucks, boy/girl problems, booze, and ballots.
- Henry: Buddy, Eleanor and I are impressed and partially amused by your insightful practicality. However, as a practical matter, we are both wondering about our own destinies. We are beginning to

feel apprehensive — even afraid. What will be next?

Narrator: (In direct communication with audience) A few more people began to drift into the admissions area. We wondered who they were.

Buddy: Please, let me introduce you to a couple of my associates. (Turning, he signaled across the room) Clem and Fidelia, let me introduce you to a couple of very old friends of mine — Henry and Eleanor Hammerschmidt.

HENRY FACES AUDIENCE

Narrator: (In direct communication with audience) Clem was a quite tall farmer-looking individual with a green John Deere cap, a plaid long-sleeved shirt, jeans, and boots. He spoke with a pronounced drawl.

Fidelia appeared to be an Hispanic girl in her early thirties, well-spoken and apparently very well educated. She was carrying a book entitled *Philosophy of Mathematics: Selected Readings*.

Clem: Howdy. I am very pleased to meet you.

Fidelia: Good evening, Mr. and Mrs. Hammerschmidt. We have heard Buddy talk about both of you, your wonderful family, and particularly your son, Anthony. We are aware that he has been ill.

Eleanor: Yes, Anthony has struggled with medical problems since he was a small child. He was diagnosed with cancer when he was 23 months old. We have deep appreciation for the many thoughts and prayers offered on his behalf in his several decade struggle with cancer, transplants, and other issues. We are quite proud of all of our five children.

But, please tell us about each of you. What are you doing here?

- Clem: Well, I'm from Nebraska. Farmed three thousand acres for quite a while there. We made quite a science out of it, I think, and we had some pretty good years.
- Eleanor: What assignment do you have here in Purgatory, Clem?
- Clem: Well, now, I'm primarily a multiplexer for the prayers for rain. I don't make any decisions, of course, but I do pass upward my impression of the areas that seem to be most in need.
- Henry: That is an important assignment.
- Clem: A lot of the world depends upon agriculture, you know.
- Eleanor: And you, Fidelity?
- Fidelity: For most of my life, I served as a mathematics professor at St. Louis University in Missouri. I loved teaching students, particularly young female students. They are so eager to learn mathematics. You know, there is a strong connection between mathematics and the rest of life.
- Eleanor: We agree. Yet, it must be difficult to teach such a demanding subject as mathematics.
- Fidelity: The problems are the symbols. People become fearful of mathematics because so many different symbols are used for the same things.
- Henry: I notice that you have with you an interesting book about mathematics.
- Fidelity: Mathematics, if it is done correctly, is clear and unambiguous. I love internal consistency. My role here in Purgatory is to help people formulate self-development plans that are internally consistent.
- Henry: We can tell the people we have met so far are sincere and conscientious about their responsibilities. What surprises us is that nobody seems to be suffering, or bitter, or sad. You even seem enthu-

siastic. This does not necessarily conform to my prior conception of Purgatory.

**A DIGNIFIED MESSENGER APPROACHES BUDDY.**

Messenger: Mr. Bernstein, your presence is requested in the boardroom. It seems they have some questions about Credit Default Swaps and Auction Rate Securities. Would it be possible for you to come right away?

Buddy: (nervously) I suppose so, but I am visiting with some old friends here. Aren't there any other financiers who have died and could answer the questions?

Messenger: Indeed, Mr. Bernstein, many financiers have died and many of them are familiar with the subjects being discussed. However, I am afraid that most of them are unreachable given their current location.

Buddy: OK, I understand. I will be there right away. See you later Eleanor. Auf wiedersehen, Heinrich.

**BUDDY EXITS**

Eleanor: I am not quite sure I understand what is happening in Purgatory. It seems much more relaxed than I had imagined. How does it all work?

Fidelia: Purgatory is the gradual and thorough process of creating empathy for the people we may have offended.

Eleanor: How does this happen?

Fidelia: We do this by gaining complete understanding of each of these individuals, including their circumstances, their own problems, and any disadvantages they may have had. In gaining this knowledge, we began to understand the ramifications to all of the offenses we committed during life.

Eleanor: Oh.

Fidelia: We have to live through each event by becoming personally acquainted with all the people who might have been affected.

Henry: It seems very involved. But is Purgatory relevant for all religions?"

Fidelia: As you will recall that in the Acts of the Apostles Peter was quoted as saying,

*"Truly I perceive that God shows no partiality, but in every nation any one who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him."*

Fidelia: In reality, there is much similarity between religions. All religions seem to implore their people to do what is right and just and many believers follow those prescriptions. There are some differences, but many similarities. Whether we call it Purgatory or something else, we do need to reflect.

Henry: It must take a long time

Fidelia: It takes a very long time to understand the situational background of all our events and then to re-live them in an acceptable way.

Most people are in Purgatory for many years — sometimes decades or even centuries. Our role here is not to suffer — except for the sorrow in learning what we have done. Our role here is to make sure we are sufficiently sorry for these offenses. The process is quite thorough. You will feel better after having gone through it. But, be patient. It does take a while."

---

## Scene 2 -- The City

AT THIS POINT, CLEM STEPS FORWARD AND MOTIONS  
WITH HIS ARMS

Clem: Tell ya what. Come over here and we will show  
you a little more about how Purgatory is laid out.  
I'll show you the ranch.

HENRY, ELEANOR, FIDELIA, AND CLEM WALK OVER  
TO A MORE CENTRAL PART OF THE LARGE ROOM  
WHERE WE WERE SHOWN WHAT LOOKED LIKE A SIZE-  
ABLE THREE DIMENSIONAL MODEL OF A MAJOR CITY.

Henry: Look. The model displays prominent sky scraper  
buildings, some smaller buildings, open spaces,  
parks, and arenas. They are all connected by what  
looked like an elaborate series of skyways and  
tunnels which appeared to provide the only en-  
trances or exits.





- Clem: Well, this is what we've got, declared Clem. Quite an operation, don't you think?
- Eleanor: (anxiously) What are all of these buildings? What are they for?
- Fidelia: Each of these buildings represents an area of our life that we need to re-examine, re-experience, contemplate, and potentially restructure. Each one of us enters every one of the buildings to examine what we have done, or in many cases, what we have failed to do.
- Eleanor: (repeats) What we have done and what we have failed to do.
- Fidelia: You see, Purgatory deals effectively with offenses, but also neglect. With our involvements, but also our detractions. Our interests and our priorities.
- Henry: None of the buildings seemed to have doors to the outside.
- Fidelia: That is because we all have to reflect on these major considerations.
- Clem: You can spend a lot of time in any one of these buildings — sometimes years.
- Eleanor: What is that big round building that looks like a Colosseum?
- Clem: Well, ma'am, you would have a special appreciation for that building. That is Arena of Neglected Children. Isn't it true that you have a strong interest in children?
- Eleanor: Yes, but what goes on there?'
- Clem: You see, each of us has had many opportunities in life to help people out. This particular building focuses on children. Some are brushed off. Some are abused. Some children are absolutely destitute. This building gives us the opportunity to consider their situations and what we might have done to help out a little bit, or sometimes more.



- Eleanor: But, what could we have done? We couldn't have cared for them all.
- Fidelia: That is true. No one could have cared for them all. But perhaps there were one, or two, or three, or maybe a few more instances where something could have been done to help them.
- Eleanor: But what do the people in Purgatory do in such a large arena. What is going on there?
- Fidelia: The people in Purgatory will be going to the arena, but individually, and they will be standing on the square at the center of the playing field. The children will be surrounding them on the playing field and in the seats in the stadium – many thousands of them. Each penitent will be surrounded by tens of thousands of children and they will get to know most of them, their need and how might have been helped. By the way, do you remember Chuckie?
- Eleanor: Why yes. He was one of our foster children and he seemed so pleased to be with us. He was in foster care with two of his sisters. We have always wondered how he was doing.
- Fidelia: Happily, Chuckie has moved up from Purgatory now and he is now in Heaven. So you will not see him here. But he does remember you and he would like to see you, again.
- Eleanor: And, we would be so pleased to see him.
- Henry: What is that large building that looks as if it is attached to another building on the upper floors?
- Fidelia: (calmly) That is the Monument to Media Superfluity connected to the Ipod Diversion Exhibit. That is where people go to reexamine the things they could have been doing, and the good they could have been accomplishing, had they not spent so much time watching nonsensical television, pointless movies, and listening to music with grammatically incorrect lyrics.

- Henry: But, music can be beautiful. Take Beethoven's 'Ode to Joy' or Franz Schubert's 'Ave Maria,' or Will Glahe playing the 'Liechtensteiner Polka.'
- Fidelia: Of course music can be beautiful and enriching. The question is whether the music is tastefully enriching or a mere diversion. There is, as you have implied much uplifting and wholly worthwhile music which does not detract from our character in any way. But, some of it might — particularly if it is constant or nearly constant. Then it crowds out other uses of our time that might be better for us, and the world, in the long term. It is a matter of prudence. Remember, as Aristotle noted, 'Nothing enters the mind but through the senses.'

**BUDDY BERNSTEIN RETURNS TO THE GROUP.**

- Fidelia: Hello, Buddy, How did your session go.?
- Buddy: Oh, it was OK. Disappointing in some ways. It's amazing what some of these schmucks will do to make a buck, which they probably don't even need. In this case, there were two questions: Was the transaction proper? And, then, was it appropriate for them to be bailed out by the Federal Reserve Bank? Big questions, I might add.
- Henry: Who were you discussing?
- Buddy: Buddy responded, Oh, none of us ever know what individual people have done, or not done. It's out of my scope of activity. I can offer some thoughts on the transactions themselves, but I never know who is involved.
- Henry: Do we know who is in Purgatory? Many of us have friends. It will be of interest to us to know their status or how they are progressing.
- Fidelia: Oh, I'm afraid that is impossible. The focus of Purgatory is our own repentance. It is not our job to evaluate or gauge others. Nor do we have

the capabilities of knowing how others are doing. Neither can we make any comments about any other individuals, even individuals we were close to in life.

Clem: Since Purgatory is for us as individuals, we are not able to make any comments about anyone else's soul. We can reflect on their efforts once they have moved on to Heaven, but we are not able to talk about anyone when they are still in Purgatory. It is a rule that makes sense, as I am sure you will agree.

AFTER A BRIEF MOMENT OF THOUGHT,

Clem: We are permitted to evaluate inanimate objects, though, such as machinery. We are free to discuss which machinery is better than others.

Eleanor: Why is that?

Clem: Well, some of us are John Deere people...

Henry: I would very much like to know more about how Purgatory operates. If such a large structure is devoted to music, what are the buildings like for offenses like murder, rape, and extortion?

Fidelia: Oh, we don't deal with the biggies here. Those are dealt with in another jurisdiction – but not in Purgatory. Here, we are working with people with some potential for perfection. It may take a while, but that potential for perfection is at least there. Looking at the problem statistically, we are largely dealing with the population within two standard deviations from the mean — you know, plus or minus two sigma – the middle 95 percent. The rest are either in Heaven – or someplace else.... Anyway, are there any other structures you wonder about?

Henry: Yes! What is that very large building just to the left of the Arena for Neglected Children?

- Buddy: That, my boy, is something many of us in business should know something about. That is the Institute of Fiduciary Irresponsibility.
- Henry: Again, what we have done and what we have failed to do.
- Buddy: The building is where people go to find out what the lives of other people would have been had they handled their affairs properly. The building presents, as many of the other buildings do, a contrast between the way things might have been and the way things actually turned out when something was mishandled. You know, lost pensions, ruined places of employment, destroyed personal savings. You were in business. You can imagine.
- Eleanor: This is such an unusual place. What is that big racetrack down there?
- Clem: That is the Aggressive Driving Restitution Track. Aggressive drivers go there to experience what they have been doing to others in heavy traffic.
- Henry: My goodness. I wonder if I will have to go through that. Are people there long?
- Clem: Some of them are there quite a while.
- Fidelia: The record is 428 years.
- Clem: One by one we can go over the purpose and descriptions of most of the rest of the buildings. There is the Citadel of Unearned Wealth, the Museum of Inflated Compensation, the Garden of Missed Kindness, the Institute of Irresponsible Indulgence, the Edifice of Miscarried Justice, and many others. Of course, the tallest building in Purgatory is the Palace of Perpetual Pomposity. Then, there is that tall white building near the center of the city ----.

**BUDDY INTERRUPTS**

- Buddy: That is one of my favorites, the Assembly of Inverted Stereotypes. Many of us have had impressions of what certain groups of people are like or have been like. Of course, the Jews have had their share of trouble in that regard, but I have to admit that it has occasionally been a two-way street. When I went through, I got to know some of the Palestinians very well. Some of them are very nice people. Now one of them is my bridge partner.
- Henry: You play bridge in Purgatory?
- Buddy: Yes, we play bridge and every now and then, we have a glass of wine in the evening with our friends. It turns out that there are some union people in Purgatory and we generally work an eight hour day. On the whole, the efforts of organized labor have improved the penitential conditions for all of us.
- Fidelia: It is important for time to be made available to think about things. We need our evening time to contemplate what has happened during the day. All of us need time to reflect.
- Narrator: (facing the audience) All this time, I could tell that Eleanor was thinking. She was looking closely at all of the buildings and she was even making some notes. At this point, she asked,
- Eleanor: Does Purgatory have primarily a negative connotation and experience? Are there positive buildings – those that build people up?
- Fidelia: (cheerfully) An excellent question! I can see you have some background in sociology, psychology, or social work. Yes, we do have many buildings with highly positive orientation. They tend to be in the greener part of the city over on the right. There is the Center for Renewed Relationships, the Happy Marriage Reflecting Pool, the Joys of Prison Ministry Marquee, and many others.
- Henry: Amazing.

- Fidelia: One of my favorites is the Collection of Unknown Help From Others where we get to see how many good people have helped us in so many quiet ways that, in most cases, we never knew about. Often there were tangible good works, but hidden from us – or perhaps unnoticed by us. Sometimes there were prayers about which we were never aware. Sometimes the hidden good works were quiet good words spoken in our behalf. Sometimes they were recommendations. Henry, your Uncle Francis became well known for helping so many people in quiet unsung ways. He, like Chuckie, has now moved on.
- Clem: When Mother Teresa was here for a short time, she spent quite a bit of time guiding others through the Joys of Helping the Poor Pavilion. It was a special interest of hers. She was fond of saying,
- Being unwanted, unloved, uncared for, forgotten by everybody, is a much greater hunger, a much greater poverty than the person who has nothing to eat.*
- Eleanor: Mother Teresa in Purgatory? I would have thought she would have gone directly to Heaven.
- Clem: Well, everybody has a few things to be sorry for. It turns out that she had some arguments with one of the archbishops. She was here for only a short time and then she moved on to Heaven.
- Eleanor: How can that be? What kind of problems did she have with the Archbishop?
- Clem: We can't talk about that now. The Archbishop is still here.

ENTER MESSENGER

- Messenger: Please step forward to the Admissions Window. Time to move on.

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## Scene 3 -- The Prayer Windows

### NARRATOR TURNS TOWARD AUDIENCE

Narrator: By that time, many people we had not seen before had flooded into the large room. We were instructed to form lines to be processed through Admissions. As we lined up, we were routed past a part of the room where there were two giant glass windows.

Eleanor: Why are they guiding us past these windows?"

Fidelia: This is somewhat of an historical experience. You will find it will be something quite new.

### AS PEOPLE APPROACH THE WINDOWS, FIDELIA TAKES OVER AS MISTRESS OF CEREMONIES.

Fidelia Each of you will be able to look through the windows and see something different from any of the other people in your group — even people who have had close associations in life. What we will be doing here is to remind you who you have prayed for and to indicate all of the people who have prayed for you. That is why there are two windows.

Please take your place in front of the right most window.

Our first window will reveal the people who have prayed for you. Go ahead and see if you see anyone you know.

Henry: Look, El. There's Aunt Martha -- my father's maiden aunt who was stricken with polio as a small girl. She survived with a crippled arm and a wonderfully up-beat disposition. She remained a studious and dedicated Lutheran all of her life of more than eighty years. For decades, she maintained the contacts with all of our relatives in Germany.

Eleanor: There's Aunt Eleanor. I was named after her. And Uncle Carl, and so many of the people at Immaculate Heart of Marry parish. But, I only recognize a few of these people.

Henry: And there is Sister Suzanna. She was our confirmation teacher in our small rural town. She gave each of us holy cards when we were confirmed. I kept mine my whole life. She cared deeply about her students.

And there. I see one of my co-workers, Sameer Kumar from India. And Margo and Fred Berdass and Father Notebart. There were so many people. There appeared to be thousands.

Fidelia: Some of them are the people from the Lutheran church in Elmore, Minnesota who were praying for your son, Anthony, when he was in the hospital. They heard about it through your son-in-law, Steve. Also, you will see some Jewish people and some Muslims, including some of the surgeons who helped your son.

Henry: Yes.

Fidelia: Then, there are the people you never met. Many people we have never met spend much of their lives in prayer, for others and for you.

There are also some people we have only casually met -- and then forgotten. But, they did not forget us. Please note, though, that each window is unique to each individual. It is entirely possible that people have prayed for you, and not for your husband, and visa-versa.



- Buddy: My friends, you'll find Purgatory is quite a discerning place. It's sort of a refreshing place, I think. Nobody seems to be trying to impress anybody. Nobody seems to be trying to get all of the credit. Instead, we are trying to understand each other – and more importantly, ourselves. One might say, it's the opposite of Congress and it is not at all like some of the corporate boards I've been on.
- Fidelia: After you have finished at the first window, please move slowly to the second window – the people for whom you have prayed. You may notice a difference. There may not as many people.
- Henry: I recognize most of the people, including a few I had forgotten about. But my immediate reaction is that there are many fewer people. Apparently praying is hardly a two way street.
- Clem: Well, I suppose you found out what most of us find out. There's a lot of people out there doing some of the plowing and planting for us. Ya know, having somebody praying for ya is a little bit like trading in your red tractor for a green tractor. You are likely to get a lot more done.

THE LINES MOVE SLOWLY IN FRONT OF THE TWO WINDOWS. AFTER SOME TIME, THE PARTY ARRIVES AT THE WAITING ROOM OF THE ADMISSIONS AREA. THEN A DEEP FEMININE VOICE SAYS,

- Director: Just keep moving, everyone. We'll be with you in a dinky-little fraction of eternity.



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## Scene 4 -- Admissions Processing

THE ADMISSIONS DIRECTOR AT THE ADMISSIONS STATION IS A HEAVY SET BLACK WOMAN ABOUT SIXTY YEARS OF AGE. SHE IS CHEERFUL, BUT CLEARLY IN CHARGE WITH AN AURA THAT INDICATES YEARS OF EXPERIENCE WITH AUTHORITY.

Director: All right, move right along there. Make room for the next person. You're not the only one in Purgatory, you know. Lands sakes, I've seen a pen of hogs get organized more quickly than you folks. It's true that we have eternity, but we don't want to spend it just looking for our seats. Come on, people. Move along and take your place. Your carefully selected admissions counselor will be with you in a minute.

Lawyer: Who's the admissions counselor?

Director: It depends upon who ya are and what ya did. Some people get some gentle, soft-spoken, compassionate fella or gal and some of you might get a retired marine corps drill-sergeant like my husband. I feel sorry if you tie into him – I'll tell you.

Extra: Who are you?"

Director: I am the Admissions Director. These counselors work for me.... Well, not exactly for me, of course. We all work for God. But, my job is to see that your time in Purgatory gets off to a good productive start. No lollygaggin. The whole experience is to be taken seriously – very seriously."

Extra: Have you been doing this for long.

Director: That is NONE of your business. Nobody here gets to wonder about anyone else. The subject at hand is you. Nobody else. Just you.

Extra: You mentioned your husband. He is here in Purgatory, too?

Director: Yes, by the great mercy of God, he is in Purgatory, somewhat to my surprise – and his. He has to consider himself V-E-R-Y fortunate, if you know what I mean.

OK, let's begin with a with a few general instructions. The purpose of Purgatory is not only to provide you with an opportunity to be sorry for what you did, it is also to give you a chance to know better some of the people in the world that you might have offended, might have brushed off, or missed altogether. You will get a chance to understand, very well, what other people have been going through.

In order to help you along, a series of assignments has been provided for you to accomplish when you are with us. In short, there's some work for you to do. Some of it is pleasant work. Some of it is work you might rather not do. Tough bounce. Your admissions counselor will explain the whole situation to you.

I might also explain that time is not particularly relevant here in Purgatory. You may run into people who lived during entirely different time periods than you. You may see people who are historical figures from long ago -- or perhaps people from the future. Time is of little importance other than the fact that some people need to spend more time in Purgatory than others. That is all I have to say about time.

Alright, who's first to see the counselors?

Lawyer: Do we have a choice in what kind of an admissions counselor we get?

Director: No! No! No! We have all the records here and everything is prearranged depending upon what's gone on in the past. You! Why don't you go first?"

Lawyer: (impatiently) I feel I should have something to say about my future treatment. I'm a lawyer and I want to ensure that due process is observed.

Director: Oh you do, do you. Well you ain't no lawyer no more. What you are now is a penitent. And if you don't like how we do things here in Purgatory, there's a one-way down elevator right over there and that'll take you to you know where. All you have to do is push the button.

Director: (muttering to herself) It's not for me to judge, but if I was a bettin' woman, I wouldn't be surprised to see him here longer than even some Congressmen.

I can see right now that man is a possible candidate to spend a lot of time in that Edifice of Miscarried Justice or maybe that Citadel of Pointless Argumentation. Some of the academics we have with us call that place "the faculty meeting."

ONE BY ONE, THE PEOPLE EXIT TO MEET WITH ADMISSIONS COUNSELORS. HENRY AND ELEANOR REMAIN.

Director: Alright, the two of you can step to your right and go down the hall to see Father Bill. He's a nice man, but he's nooo patsy. You should have seen the assignments he delivered to his last customer.

Director: (muttering) Privately, I thought he was right on target.

HENRY AND ELEANOR PROCEED DOWN THE HALL TO A SMALLER, MORE PRIVATE, ROOM.

Father Bill: Well, Mr. And Mrs. Hammerschmidt, I'm very pleased to meet you.

WHILE FUMBLING AROUND AMONGST A MYRIAD OF  
SCATTERED PAPERS ON A MESSY DESK, FATHER BILL  
FINALLY SPEAKS

- Father Bill: Father Bill is my name. I'm here to convey your assignments, if I can ever figure out what I did with them. They're here some place.
- Narrator: (Facing the audience) I had met Father Bill on earth; the first time when he received the Gold Medal of the Society of Manufacturing Engineers – the only non-manufacturing person to ever receive that award. He was a parish priest in Detroit during one of the frequent downturns in the automotive industry. As the industry downsized and moved out to newer and more modern green-field sites in other areas, Detroit festered and decayed. Unemployment was mushrooming – particularly among minorities. Shortly after the 1967 inner-city riots, Father Bill and a few associates formed the Focus Hope organization to provide young core-city youth with the work skills and personal traits that would enable them to gain employment in the auto industry where he many friends.
- Father Bill passed away from liver cancer in 1997.
- Henry: Father Bill, I recall that you were involved in founding Focus Hope, which has continued to provide services to several hundred thousand urban families.
- Father Bill: Well, that's all true, but water under the bridge, now. We all have work to do in here Purgatory, you know. Like the Admission Director says, 'no lollygaggin.'
- Eleanor: We will be pleased to find out our assignments, but what is a theologian doing in Purgatory? Wouldn't many theologians be in heaven?"

Father Bill: Ha, ha, ha. That's a good one. Some theologians are in heaven, of course, especially the inclusive ones. You know, the theologians who acknowledge the virtues of well-meaning people with different traditions and histories and foster an appreciation for all people who want to please God and help their neighbors. A lot of those theologians are in heaven. The rest are either here or somewhere else.

Besides, I'm not really a theologian. I'm a parish priest. The jobs are entirely different. A theologian has to read and write. A parish priest has to listen and talk. There are quite a few priests down here in Purgatory, because the only way you can get anything done as a parish priest is to be in constant trouble on trivial issues.

No, I'm not a theologian. Once in a while, the diocese would send us off to a conference on theology. But then they started sending nuns to the conferences and that was bad.

Eleanor: Why was that bad?

Father Bill: They studied! (shaking his head).

Oh, by the way, we have a place for you folks to stay – a nice little place on the edge of the city where you can stay when you are not at your jobs.

Henry: We can stay together then?

Father Bill: Sure. You've probably read, 'what God has joined together, let no one separate,' – not even here in Purgatory. Any other questions?

Eleanor: (puzzled) Will it be just like home. Will there be a place to cook and everything.

Father Bill: Oh, perhaps you haven't heard. Women are not allowed to do any cooking in Purgatory. And since we instituted that rule, nobody has seemed very hungry....

- Father Bill: Now, let me see, what did I do with those assignment lists. Ah, yes. Here they are. Well, Mr. Hammerschmidt, it says here you were a college professor for the last few years of your life. Is that true?
- Henry: Yes, that was true for the last twenty-five years or so. Before that I work in manufacturing.
- Father Bill: Well, I hope you do better than that one professor we had not too long ago.
- Henry: Why, what did he do?.
- Father Bill: He apparently wasn't a very thoughtful or exciting professor and his assignment was to sit in class as a student for 75 years. Hard wooden chairs, too.
- Father Bill: Yep, I guess we have a job for you. It says here you were sort of an efficiency expert. So one of your jobs will be look after the people who have been downsized in company cutbacks. It often affects them mentally, and perhaps spiritually, as I am sure you know. Your job will be to change places with them for a while, perhaps a decade or so, so you will understand the long term effects of your decisions. We are not saying that all changes for the sake of a business are whimsical and unneeded. That would be foolish. But, we do want you to accumulate a full understanding of ALL aspects of what is happening and have empathy for the people affected by our actions. Michael Moore will be your guide.
- And, wow, it looks like you have a second job. I see you were born in 1935, too young to be a real part of either the depression or World War II, and yet at exactly the right age to participate in the prosperity following the war. And, you lived in the United States, the most prosperous country in the world, at the time. Now, you will also be asked to spend some time with the people born in Africa in 1975. I am sure you will benefit from the experience.



Eleanor: How about me? What will be my job?

Father Bill: According to our records, you are very fond of children. We have lots of them here – many of them died at young ages in places like Africa or Asia. Others were neglected or impoverished in more developed places like Detroit. Your job will be to help them develop as if they had survived in less hostile settings. All children deserve an avenue to earn God's grace, don't you think? How does that sound?

Eleanor: It sounds fine. It's right up my alley. However, I can't but wonder, how do you decide who gets what job?

Father Bill: Oh, I don't decide anything. I'm just the message carrier. But, I can tell you this. Purgatory is, to some extent, an inversion of life. For those people who had it quite difficult in life, such as the destitute children in Africa or other places, we try we try to provide a chance for them to be a part of some opportunities they have never experienced.

For others, who have a lifetime of good fortune, particularly if they have not shared it, we often provide those people with some makeup opportunities. You might say that life plus Purgatory is a zero-sum game. You have it swell in one place, you pay the price in another. Who among us would suggest a different way?

Henry: Then what happens to the very fortunate people, such as the wealthy people on Wall Street.

Father Bill: Primarily, they're roofers. Oh, not all of them. There are some principled and charitable people on Wall Street. Fidelia told me she has identified twenty-three.

Henry: Twenty-three in all those years?

Father Bill: My memory's getting bad. It might have been twenty-four.

In any case, some financiers and others like them may indeed have been very good people. We don't believe in class warfare here in Purgatory.

Eleanor: What happens to the rest? Are they all roofers?

Father Bill: No, they are not all roofers. Some may need to work in a homeless shelter or perform some other essential service that is quite distant from their lifetime occupations from the perspective of work requirements and compensation.

Some of the roofers, though, may get quite good at productive labor. Not all of them. We have resigned ourselves to a few leaking roofs for the sake of the learning experience.

By the way, none of this should surprise anyone. There is the parable of Dives and Lazarus and many other examples in the sacred texts of most of the world's religions. Dante Alighieri fully outlined most of what we do here in Purgatory in his *Divine Comedy*. You wouldn't even have to read the whole book. Just look at the table of contents, 'Canto XXVI Fraudulent counselors, Canto XXVIII Sowers of discord and schism, Canto XXX Falsifiers of all sorts. You get the idea.

Eleanor: It sounds very thorough.

Father Bill: Yes, it is thorough. In any case, it is time to formally admit you into Purgatory and get you on your way. Buddy and Fidelia will escort you over to your residence. The assignments will begin on Monday. Take the weekend to look around a bit. There are church and temple services of all sorts, we have an excellent library, some wonderful parks, and some first-class museums.

Well, enjoy your stay.

Henry: Thank you for your time and efforts.

Eleanor: Yes. Thank you.

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## Scene 5 -- Journey to Our Residence Begins

Narrator: Fidelia and Buddy seemed pleased to escort us to our new residence. We left the Admissions Area and entered onto a long broad footpath with majestic trees on one side and some smaller commercial-looking buildings on the other side. In between the smaller buildings, we would occasionally encounter a more substantial edifice.

Henry: What is that larger building?

Fidelia: That is the Purgatory Institutional Library. All of the world's classic books in every language are stored there – even the books that were destroyed when the Ancient Library of Alexandria was set fire and looted by various troops. There are classic books from every era of every civilization. Some of our penitents spend quite a bit of time there as they endeavor to understand better their responsibilities to build a better world, and to understand what happens when the world is not made better.

Henry: Are the sacred texts there?

Fidelia: Of course. All of them, of every persuasion. We have a study group that meets Monday evening where we attempt to find commonalities. It's fun. Lots of thoughtful, intelligent people wishing for the best for the people of the world.

Fidelia: This next structure is a remarkable building. It is the Institute of Impeccable Statistics. It houses ALL of the world's perfect data. For those of you who have occasionally been skeptical of official statistics, it may please you to know that all of the data in Purgatory is flawless and correct – absolutely accurate in all respects. That has never been done before. The building has been quite a revelation to journalists, economists, and people running for public office – especially those who had made public pronouncements on the financial status of their governmental units, or the state of the economy, or perhaps the financial condition of pension funds. Most of them leave the building looking a little sheepish.

A LARGE MAN, MOHAMMED SELIM, DESCENDS THE STEPS OF THE INSTITUTE OF IMPECCABLE STATISTICS. HE IS WITH ANOTHER STUDIOUS LOOKING COMPANION, FRANZ MUELLER.

Selim: I heard that.

Fidelia: Oh my goodness! I did not know you were listening, Professor Selim.

Eleanor and Henry, I would like you to meet two of our most prominent economists: Mohammed Selim from Egypt and Franz Mueller from Germany. Both of them are distinguished economists with a great appreciation for accurate data. They are prolific users of our libraries and statistical resources.

Selim: My dear mademoiselle, what is this about economists looking sheepish? I am surprised that a lady of your vast intellect would miss the immense contributions that we economists have provided in enabling a better understanding of how people can make and lose money at the same time. You

are a mathematician. Don't forget that without economists, the number of opinions the world would have would easily be reduced by at least thirty percent. Don't you agree, Franz? Ha, ha, ha.

Mueller: Yess, I would haff to agree. You see, vun off the problems is that there is too much talk about distribution. Everyone vants someting, so ve spend lots of time and write lots of articles of how things can be better distributed. Some of dis iss OK, because ve do have to worry about who gets vot und who takes vot, but distribution iss not de only answer. Many problems cannot be solved by distribution because it is not possible to redistribute someting dat hass not been produced in the first place. Vunce in a vile, ve haff to worry about production, as the records in this building vill clearly show.

Selim: My dear friend Franz, as is often the case, you have summarized one of the great dilemmas of our civilization in only a few words, and with only slightly more than the usual number of consonants. My congratulations to you on your insights.

Fidelia: What, may I ask, did our two distinguished economists find in our Institutional Library today.

Mueller: Ve are trying to find out how many people are vorking,,vich is not an easy ting to find oud.

Selim: Not enough people in universities are really working, but then we knew that, didn't we, Franz? (chuckle)

Mueller: In a serious vay, ve vanted to know vot the true level of unemployment iss throughout the world. Dat's not easy. Zum people haff jobs, but zey don't do much vork. Others do much vork, but zey don't haff jobs.

Eleanor: What is your objective with the study? Surely these things have been studied before.

Selim: Oh, yes. They have been studied many times before, but always with the assumption that employment results in useful and profitable activity and unemployment does not. However, we doubt this assumption. For instance mothers do much valuable work, but their labors are never counted as contributing to the Gross Domestic Product. Same with volunteer doctors and nurses, nuns, monks, and other uncompensated helpful people.

On the other hand, we often have people in well-paid positions who perform no useful function and yet their compensation and costs ARE counted as part of the Gross Domestic Product. Professor Mueller and I are trying to get to the bottom of these anomalies with the aim providing a better method of measuring economic progress.

Eleanor: But, why are you doing it in Purgatory?

Mueller: We haff to do it here. Nobody would listen to uss on earth.

NARRATOR FACES AUDIENCE.

Narrator: With many questions surfacing in our own minds, we extended our thanks and best wishes to the professors and we continued on our way to our residence.

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## Scene 6 -- The Theater

Henry: Look Eleanor, look at that exhilarating building with a large marquis in front.

Fidelia: This is our theater, the Old Stone Theater, and we are very proud of it. The man standing in front of the building is our bard. He and his wife Joan manage the theater. They are both well-known as influential thespians. Most every day, they arrange a short preview of the upcoming performance. Today, I see he is reciting a poem about the that very presentation which I happen to know is about the decline of industry and the impact it has on society.

THE BARD STEPS FORWARD AND VERY PROFESSIONALLY READS THE FOLLOWING POEM:

*Carl came from Sweden in nineteen thirty three  
as a worker making chairs in the land of the free.  
The shop grew and prospered until it became  
the best known of any, the most recognized name.  
Through the thirties, the firm survived  
while others, less capable, stumbled and died.*

*During the fifties, chairs grew in demand  
as more people sat and few liked to stand.  
The sixties provided an increasing trend  
in lawyers and bankers and officials no end.  
All of these people needed chairs for their labor,  
chairs for themselves and their visiting neighbor.*

*The chairs grew in size and in comfort and price.  
The industry got bigger. The profits were nice.*

*At the time, Carl wondered if all this was good.  
People weren't working the way that they should.  
During the seventies, it seemed even more fitting  
for people to work by conversing and sitting.  
Though more chairs were sold, some costs were imposed  
through regulations and taxes and lawsuits composed  
to draw funds from producers and workers alike  
so the sitters could experience a lifestyle hike.*

*And the government officials came to implore  
more inspections and forms and reports galore.  
And before the sawdust was put in the trash,  
it had to be separated between pine, oak and ash.  
Taxes went higher and went through the roof,  
while government officials became more aloof.  
Carl's workers were working and doing a good job  
but they were losing ground to the rest of the mob.*

*Taxes rose even further to build more schools  
to train people for sitting instead of using tools.  
It was explained to Carl that it was his obligation  
to fund activities and pay for litigation  
and for race tracks and shopping malls and other endeavors  
while his own costs kept rising, forever and ever.  
Meanwhile, foreign producers, unburdened by torts  
sent more and more goods streaming through U.S. ports.*

*The banker noted with some indignation  
that company income was far short of inflation.  
He said that without a strong profit trend,  
the bank could no longer continue to lend.  
Consultants came by and began to entreat  
that the company could no longer compete.  
It's outdated, they said. It isn't strategic.  
No acquisitions, no mergers. It's truly anemic.*

*So the chair plant was sold to a firm from New York  
financed by the state, a new form of pork.  
Carl soon died and his sins he confessed  
to St. Peter who listened and thoughtfully assessed.  
"That ain't too bad," Peter said with a smile.  
"But, go down and shovel coal for a while."*



*So down to purgatory Carl descended  
“A short sentence,” Peter said. “It soon will be ended.”*

*But, he wasn't there long when Peter intruded.  
“Carl!” he said, “You've been re—routed.  
Your going back to earth. They need you there now.  
The place is in chaos. They do not know how  
to sharpen the drills or to lay out the job,  
to set up the Bridgeport or turn the right knob.  
They can't read a print and the grinding isn't right.  
They can't use a gantry with all of their might.  
Welding and painting are way beyond their scope.  
Everyone just stands around like a dope.*

*The chairs ordered for the church picnic are late  
We must hurry. It's important. A very big date.  
The bishop has made an appeal to upstairs  
for you to return and to finish those chairs.  
So drop your shovel and leave with great speed.  
It's urgent. It's crucial. We have a great need.”*

*“How can I?” Carl said. “I can't leave my post.”  
“Forget it.” said Peter. “You'll go back as a ghost.”  
So up from purgatory and back to earth  
came Carl the worker as in a new birth.*

*The plant was closed when Carl walked in,  
deserted, neglected, a truly great sin.  
But Carl knew just how to proceed  
and he began working which he did with great speed.  
The chairs for the picnic were delivered on time.  
The bishop was happy, the parishioners sublime.*

*But, Peter had forgotten that Carl was gone  
and Carl kept working on and on and on.  
The factory prospered again, of course,  
a one—man performance, or really one ghost.*

*It was awkward, at first, because it wouldn't be right  
for a ghost to be selling, especially at night.  
But, the chairs were so good and the service so true,  
people called in their orders and picked them up too.*

*Business was booming with much lower expenses,  
no bankers, no consultants, a much improved census.  
The firm, by itself, still prospers today,  
with very few bureaucrats getting in the way.  
The enforcement people cannot say desist  
to someone who officially doesn't exist.  
The cashflow is good with such low overhead.  
When taxes are due, he just says that he's dead.*

*What this story shows is what we all know.  
It's not the workers, it's the rest of the show.  
We have some good people but we get in their way.  
We harass them and burden them and make them all pay.  
We keep our best companies on the brink of despair,  
but competing in the world is a family affair.  
And, if we could learn that we must all work together  
to improve our situation, we could make it better.  
If services and overhead could be made more efficient,  
American producers are surely sufficient.*

AFTER THE RECITATION, THE BARD COMES OVER AND  
INTRODUCES HIMSELF.

- Bard: Hello, I am Don, the town bard. I am so glad you are here.
- Eleanor: Oh, thank you so much for the interesting poem. We are most pleased to meet you. Have you been in the theater business long?
- Bard: All my life and then some. You know, the theater is of essential importance in extending knowledge about situations we may not have considered before. One of my old English professors used to say, "You are wasting your time attempting to improve the world with the application of logic. All major improvements begin with literature. Look at Uncle Tom's Cabin, as an example, or A Christmas Carroll."
- The theater is the most efficient mechanism for conveying important ideas to the public – be-

cause the people are entertained by those new ideas.

For that reason, the theater can be our most powerful stimulant of progressive thought. And where is progressive thought more in need of stimulation than in Purgatory? After all, what would Purgatory be like if no one was reminded to improve?

Could I interest the two of you in some tickets to tonight's play?

Henry: Well, since you are so enthusiastic about the upcoming performance, I guess we feel we should buy tickets. Besides, we were impressed by the poem and your strategy of poetic marketing.

Bard: Thank you for the compliment, but we are only using the skills that God has given us.

Henry: We had learned in our orientation that there was no money in Purgatory. People pay for what they need in "good works" – pledges to do something nice for someone within a specified period of time. What do the tickets cost.

Bard: The price of four tickets to the evening play is five good works.

Henry: Eleanor, perhaps we could invite Clem and his wife, Edith.

Bard: Oh, good. We will see you at the performance.

Eleanor: Henry, as we walk along, notice the beautiful parks, but also notice off in the distance the Museum of Child Labor. We probably won't be able to go in it tonight, but I am sure there will something there of interest for a later time.



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## Scene 7 -- The Mailman

Henry: Buddy, who is that elderly gentleman going in the opposite direction. He appears to be carrying a large satchel of mail.

Buddy: Good Morning, John. Any interesting mail today?

BUDDY TURNS TO HENRY AND ELEANOR AND EXPLAINS

Buddy: This is our Purgatory mail man, John D. Rockefeller.

Eleanor: THE John D. Rockefeller?

Mailman: Well, I am not the only one. There are others.

Henry: Standard Oil Rockefeller?

Mailman: Yes, that's me.

Eleanor: What are you doing here?

Mailman: I'm the mailman, of course. I deliver the mail.

Eleanor: But, why you?

Mailman: Well, I've been here since 1937 and I have come to know quite a few of the people in Purgatory. Somebody has to do it.

Eleanor: Wouldn't you rather be somewhere else, doing something else?

Mailman: Not given the alternatives provided to me at the time of my introduction.

Henry: This is fascinating. I would love to talk to you some time about the oil business.

Mailman: Well, I'm quite available when I am not delivering mail. By the way, Mr. Bernstein, here is another request for your testimony -- probably on sovereign debt instruments this time, if I could guess (serious tone).

Buddy: Thank you, John. I will take a look.

BUDDY LOOKS QUICKLY AT THE DOCUMENT HE RECEIVED.

Buddy: Well, folks, I guess I have been called away for a while. Fidelia will take you the rest of the way and I will catch up with you a little later.

Henry: Thank you, Buddy, for your help to us.

TURNING AGAIN TO ROCKEFELLER, ELEANOR ASKS,

Eleanor: Pardon me, Mr. Rockefeller, but you don't seem very talkative for a man of your accomplishments and reputation.

Mailman: I know. I was always accused of harboring a dead-pan expression and that seems to have intensified now that I am actually dead.

Henry: Do you ever talk about the oil business?

Mailman: Oh, I am willing to talk about it, to the degree that I talk about anything. It was a rough and tumble business in my day. ...So much waste. Oil gushing out of the ground and nobody knowing what to do with it. My colleagues and I tried to intervene to bring some order. We succeeded, but then some people thought we were cornering the market and collecting huge profits.

Henry: Were you?

Mailman: Yes. We thought that would be better than the waste"

Eleanor: Were you happy with your wealth?

Mailman: Heavens no! There is nothing more time consuming than having a lot of money and then having to dole it out, one dime at a time.

And then, there were constant visitors wanting me to pay for something. I finally resorted to charging them for meals and lodging.

Henry: You charged them?

Mailman: I had to. Otherwise they would inundate me forever.

Then later on, it fell upon me to fund a university, the University of Chicago. If you think the early oil early oil men were wasteful, you should examine the workings of a university. A university is the only institution on earth where total consensus is necessary even if there is no issue to be decided....

Then, of course, there were the dealings with the politicians. Do you think it was fun to bribe all those officials???. Their wants were insatiable. Yet, if we did not bribe them, the nation's oil pipelines would be SIX INCHES LONG.

Henry: I understand that there was a lot of opposition.

Mailman; Indeed. There were many days when I was totally fatigued with it and longed to be poor. I am so happy to be delivering the mail here in Purgatory. People don't seem to be on the take quite as much here.

I wish people could understand that before we built the pipelines and tank cars, all of the oil was transported in barrels -- wooden barrels. Why there would not have been a tree left if we had not built pipeline across several states. But what misery that was.

Henry: If you don't mind, Mr. Rockefeller. I wonder if I might ask you one more question. In 1911, the Supreme Court of the United States broke Standard Oil up into many separate companies -- now

named Exxon, Chevron, Amoco, Conoco, Sohio, Marathon, Mobil, and a few others. Then, in the 1990s, the executive branch permitted many of them to merge and become very large once again. How did you feel about that when it happened?

Mailman: Some of my former associates and I got together and we cackled about it for a week.

I'm not saying the Supreme Court was wrong in breaking us up. It was actually better for us and it was probably better for the country. Then we owned a piece of several of the fastest growing companies in the world -- all of which seem to thrive as separate entities.

I was actually amazed, in fact astounded, when these separate companies were allowed to merge.

Politicians.... I think Pericles was right. Choose officials randomly and you get higher quality than if they are elected.

Henry: I always wondered what you might think of that -- and I am not surprised about your response.

Mailman: I am sorry, I can't even think of the oil business any more today. I have to finish delivering the mail. And, I am late for my therapist.

AS THE MAIL MAN WALKS AWAY, HE SHOUTS OVER HIS SHOULDER.

Mailman: Remember what Harry Truman said at a later time:

*"If you want a friend in Washington, Get a Dog."*



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## Scene 8 -- The School

Narrator: (In direct communication with audience) Proceeding along the winding path from the park, we came to another large playground area next to what appeared to be a school. Suddenly, from out of the school yard came running a young black girl -- probably about twelve years old. She bore a countenance of great joy and excitement as she ran directly up to Eleanor.

Kiesha: Eleanor, I am so happy to see you.

Eleanor: Let me think for a moment. I am a little puzzled, but I do THINK I know you.

BEFORE ELEANOR CAN SAY MORE, THE YOUNG GIRL BLURTS OUT WITH ENTHUSIASM...

Kiesha: Do you remember me? I am Kiesha. I was one of your shelter children when I was about two years old.

Eleanor: (with joy and enthusiasm) Oh, Kiesha, I do remember you and I am so glad to see you. But, what are you doing here? I thought you would be grown and have a family of your own by this time.

Kiesha: Well, I'm afraid I never got the chance. I did live until I was eleven, but I have been here ever since. I am enjoying working with the other children, though. I am sort of a teacher's helper and they tell me I am an excellent student.

Henry: I remember you, Kiesha. You were the little girl who kept shaking hands with Roy Vanderplast during the greeting at church. You liked the idea

of shaking hands so you kept sticking your little hand out and Roy kept obliging you by continuing to shake your hand as many times as you wanted. It went on for quite a while -- right in the middle of Mass. Oh, Kiesha, I am glad to see you, too.

Kiesha: Yes, I remember those times as happy times, but they were quite brief.

Eleanor: The time was brief. As you know, we were only emergency shelter parents. After a short stay in our shelter home, the Country required that you be placed in a longer term foster home. We missed you, very much.

Kiesha: Eleanor, we are all excited that you will be taking over as one of the directors at our School for Abandoned Children. We could not have wished for a better school director.

Eleanor: Thank you, Kiesha.

Kiesha: There are a couple of other children whom you know. Most you do not know, of course. Your job will be to give them a little taste of what life could have been for them. They are all deserving of some make-up attention.

Eleanor: What a wonderful assignment.

Kiesha (excitedly) I am going to be one of your helpers. I am soo excited.

Eleanor: Well, I am excited, too. Tell me Kiesha, how many children are the School for Abandoned Children?

Kiesha: At last count, there were 23,128,634 and more keep arriving every day. But they will not all be in your section. You will have around 150 children at any one time and you will have three helpers -- one of whom is ME.... Of course some of the children will move on to Heaven and then new children will arrive from Earth. By and

large, the children are not in Purgatory as long as the grownups.

Henry: I am not surprised about that.

Eleanor: That sounds wonderful, but even 150 children, starved for love and attention, sounds like a lot of work. Do you think I can do it.

Kiesha: We all know you can do it, because you've done it before. You'll be wonderful.

Eleanor: But, can I do all that needs to be done?

Kiesha: Oh, you will have some volunteers. Your friend Pat Blake reads to the children. And the famous mathematician Gerhardt Tintner teaches them both math and economics. Some famous musicians have working with the children as part of their musical assignments.

Eleanor: Well thank you for your confidence, Kiesha. I will so much look forward to working with you. And, thank you for greeting us.

WITH THAT TEARFUL REPLY, ELEANOR AND HENRY  
CONTINUE ON OUR WAY.



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Act 2 -- Continued Along the  
Way

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## Scene 1 -- Joe

Narrator: (In direct communication with audience) As we were leaving the School for Abandoned Children. I felt good about El's assignment. She had been so dedicated to children her entire life. She was not only devoted to the service of children, she was also good at it. Children always fascinated her and they were fascinated with her. Children and Eleanor brought much joy and hope into each other's lives.

I then began to wonder about my own assignment. I did so with trepidations. A life in manufacturing brought with it incidents of accomplishments, but also remorse. Often, costs had to be reduced in order for the firm to be able to be successful -- and even survive. Costs were often an impediment to survival and costs were often people.

Oh, we agonized about how to handle the difficult choices involved in keeping a company solvent. We even agonized about the choices involved in helping a company improve its operations. But, the fact remained that we made the choices -- quite often quickly and expeditiously.

None of us worried very much about some of the situations. There were cases of theft, dereliction of responsibilities, or overtly improper behavior. In those cases, we simply did the best we could and moved on.

But many cases were less clear. Quite often, these situations were clouded by the ambiguity of information and results that were more mixed than definitively bad. We couldn't let the companies

drift, so there was always pressure to make what we thought were improvements. We made the choices in these instances also -- sometimes with trepidations as to what we had done.

One of the situations that had bothered me for years was Joe. Joe was a fine, upstanding, good-hearted fellow who was a close friend of the owner of a company where I was involved as a corporate director. Joe had lost his prior job because of a shutdown during a tough economy. He was out of work for a while when the owner hired Joe to head his manufacturing operation.

Joe tried hard, but he had little experience in manufacturing. He was conscientious about his responsibilities and he did his very best to assimilate the technical knowledge necessary to function in the fiercely competitive, quite specialized, business of supplying very high quality components to some very demanding customers.

Joe never completely failed. He was creative in sketching out the tooling necessary to produce the component parts. The workers liked him because he was fair. He was immensely dependable. But, as the competition intensified and profit margins shrank, the board of directors and the management made a decision to let Joe go and to seek a more experienced manufacturing professional. I have to admit we were all in favor of it.

Regrettably, the strategy never worked. Over the next couple of decades, we did hire individuals who looked like they were manufacturing professionals, but none of them were much better than Joe. For the next quarter century, manufacturing in that company remained behind where it needed to be.

In the meantime, Joe became quite discouraged. He was in his late fifties or early sixties when he was let go. Joe was a deeply thoughtful and religious man. I am not sure he ever found another



significant job. We would hear about him from others over the years, but he never came around much. Not too many years after he was let go, he passed away.

After many decades in business, I had seen many people lose their jobs. Some I didn't wonder much -- though maybe I should have. These were the crooks, the self-indulgent, the immoral, and the blatantly self-interested. However, in retrospect I do wonder if we always had the facts.

But, I did worry about Joe, and others like him. Good people. Dedicated people. But people who just didn't have quite the experience we were looking for, or thought we were looking for. I often wondered if we could have done something that was more effective -- and more helpful.

As Eleanor and I were walking toward our new residence. I saw Joe sitting on a park bench. He was there alone. I greeted him as we passed, faintly saying,

Henry: Hello, Joe.

Joe: Hello, Henry.

Narrator: And, we continued on. But, I knew that I would have to talk to Joe, again.



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## Scene 2 -- The CIA Agent

Narrator: (In direct communication with audience) Next, we came to a large park-like area where we encountered another forlorn looking man sitting on a park bench. He exuded being depressed, but he did say, "Good afternoon."

Fidelia: How are you today, Matthew. It's nice to see you.

FIDELIA TURNS TO HENRY AND ELEANOR AND EXPLAINS

Fiedila: Matthew was an agent for the Central Intelligence Agency and he is meditating. He does this quite often.

Henry: Matthew, how did you happen to become involved with the CIA?

Matthew: Oh, it was with the best of intentions initially. I was an honors student in both high school and at the University of St. Thomas, a well regarded Catholic university in Minnesota. We were all energized to try to do something that would help the world in some way or other. My own specialty was mathematics and statistics. In addition, I had taken some engineering and science courses. The CIA came to our campus to recruit people who might be interested in helping the United States improve the quality of its information on developments in other parts of the world. The job that was described to us was heavily analytical, which was much to my liking. I was there for 39 years and much of it was rewarding, though I am afraid not all of it.

Eleanor: What was the most rewarding?

Matthew: Oh, I very much enjoyed the analytical work. The people at St. Thomas made us all take languages besides English. I learned some German, some Spanish, and later on, quite a bit of Russian. So, I could read the newspapers and technical publications to piece together written information which would reinforce or reject information we were getting through other channels. I did this work for several years.

Then, as I became more experienced, they assigned me to more important projects that often times had serious political ramifications for the United States, as well as for the countries we were studying. We were quite good at it, I think. We had a good crew, and they were committed. We were working very hard to ensure that both the military and executive branches of the United States government were receiving high quality information.

Henry: It sounds very important, but not so easy.

Matthew: It wasn't easy, but we all felt it was necessary because many of the military and political leaders of the United States did not always have good information relating to crucially important decisions that had to be made.

Henry: What was not so rewarding?

Matthew: Well, after we became more experienced and rose further in the organization, the legitimate and useful activities of Central Intelligence began to be more political. Instead of screening our information for accuracy, utility, and importance, we found that we were more often expected to confirm what some elected or appointed official had said in a speech.

Officials from both major political parties ushered us along on the path of less intelligence and more endorsement, which was not to our liking.

We felt the country was being ill-served. Then there were the dirty tricks.

Henry: Might I ask, what dirty tricks?

Matthew: Well, for one, I became a tabasco sauce mixer.

Eleanor: A tabasco sauce mixer?

Matthew: It was known that the Soviet Chairman, Leonoid Brezhnev had a serious problem with hemorrhoids, for which he arranged to import Preparation H from the United States. We would intercept the shipment and mix in a little tabasco sauce and send it on.

Some of the higher ranking officials thought it would alter his disposition and create a cleavage between he and his people. Perhaps it did, but it was hard for us to rationalize it as either informational or patriotic.

Eleanor: Anything else?

Matthew: Oh yes, there were many. Most of them I would rather not talk about. Overall, our experiences at the CIA were mixed. We did, indeed, provide some very accurate and important information.

On the other hand, it was often hard to get people to pay attention to it. In later years, it quite frequently became both discouraging and depressing. I thought it about a lot on earth and I think about it every day here in Purgatory. I still do not understand why important political decisions are so impregnable to reliable, accurate, objective information. Why don't political leaders pay attention to what is actually happening?

Take for instance water. A mountain of information is available regarding the scarcity of water. The number of people in the world who exist without sanitary water is staggering -- two billion people or more. Water is a critically scarce resource in some of the most troubled areas of the world, including the Middle East.

Yet, three quarters of the world's surface is covered with water. Seawater is hugely rich in minerals. Calcium, Magnesium, Sodium, and Potassium are extractable today.

But, seawater also contains many other essential and valuable minerals. Imagine what it would be like if we could develop methods to provide clean water as we extract essential minerals to help pay for the conversion of saltwater, which is both difficult and expensive. Imagine what impact it would have on the world if everyone had enough clean water. Do you realize that deserts are encroaching on the fertile areas of the world at an alarming rate?

If we had more fresh water, we could grow more plants, purify the air, improve our climates, feed more people, beautify our cities, reduce our need for costly air conditioning, and experience many other much needed benefits.

Imagine what it would be like for the United States to play a material, helpful, role in providing water to the places in the world that desperately need it.

But, the politicians were never interested in information on things like water. They only wanted unfavorable information about their enemies and political rivals -- along with justification of what they had already suggested.

ALL SEEMED BOTH STUNNED AND INTERESTED

Matthew: I'm sorry. I have to think about this a while longer. I am going back to my park bench.

Eleanor: Thank you Matthew. Thank you for your time.

PARTY CONTINUES ON.

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## Scene 3 -- Two Friends Playing Checkers

- Narrator: (In direct communication with audience) We soon came to a shady section of a pleasant picnic area where two elderly men were playing checkers. They were talking and laughing and did not seem to be taking the game too seriously. Clearly, they appeared to be friends. As we passed by, the taller man greeted our party.
- Walter: Good afternoon, Buddy. It is a nice day, isn't it?
- Buddy: Yes it is a fine day. We've had excellent weather lately. I would say it has been heavenly, but that might be presumptuous.
- Walter: But, whom do you have here? New members of the rank and file?
- Buddy: These are two newcomers; my old friends, Henry and Eleanor Hammerschmidt. And, of course you know my associate, Fidelia.
- Walter: Of course we know Fidelia. All of Purgatory comes to her for help with math problems. Hello, Fidelia we are glad to see you, again. And we are so pleased to meet you Mr. and Mrs. Hammerschmidt. My name is Walter Reuther.
- Henry: The labor leader? The president of the United Auto Workers?
- Walter: Well, not any more. That was some time ago. But let me introduce my friend, Charles E. Wilson.
- Henry: The former President of General Motors -- when it was well-run?

Charles: Well, we were probably lucky. Not much competition in the years immediately following World War II, but we also had some very good workers. Right Walter?

WILSON PATS REUTHER ON THE BACK.

Eleanor: You two are good friends? Not adversaries?

Charles: Ha ha, Walter and I have always been good friends. We were good friends much of our lives. I believed in what the United Auto Workers was doing. I carried my union card all of my entire life -- even when I was President of General Motors. I always felt we were partners with labor, not adversaries.

Henry: And weren't you Secretary of Defense in the Eisenhower administration?

Charles: Oh yes. I hated that job. So many politicians. They have nothing to do but sit around trying to find some trivial event where you have handled things in some imperfect way. And, if you tell them the truth, they intentionally rearrange the words to make you sound stupid, which is not always a hard thing to do when you are supposed to be managing part of the government.

Eleanor: Was it you who said, *What's good for General Motors is good for the country?*"

Charles: That is exactly the kind of situation I am talking about. No! I never said that. What I actually said was, *For years I thought what was good for our country was good for General Motors and vice versa.*

Now, what in the cat hair is wrong with that? Industry and the country should be on the same page.

Besides, what kind of job is it when you have to tote around an army of effete pointy-headed bureaucrats who can't even wald to peruse every last syllable before it is said to keep some ladder



climbing Congressional psychopath from misquoting you to his own advantage?

Actually, I often got the impression that Ike felt the same way about it.

Walter: I have to go to bat for my friend, here. He was always sincere with us. We did not always agree, and we should not have always agreed. He had his job and we had ours. Charley Wilson was tough, but he always treated us fairly. I do agree, though, that he was sometimes treated harshly by the press.

Charles: How come they never misquoted you, Walt?

Walter: Why would they? They were all members of the Guild? (Chuckle).

In any case, management and labor got along well. We worked hard, the company was well run, then. Together, we were efficient and those years were the peak years for American prosperity. And, we union people were thankful for it.

Charles: So were the managers. The year 1965 was one of the best years in our industry.

Henry: Well then, if the auto companies were so well run in earlier times, what gave rise to their troubles in later years?

Walter: Oh, we did have some problems that we brought upon ourselves. We did not anticipate the productivity that would be gained through both automation and lower cost through product design. Some companies were better than others at improving productivity, but all of them made progress.

After several decades, we began having more people in retirement than we had workers. Perhaps if we would have been able to anticipate these improvements, we might have been more creative in what we might have been able to do to reduce the crisis.

The decline in the U. S. auto industry was not good for anybody; not workers, not the companies, not suppliers, and certainly not the communities in which the companies operated. Most of the important future trends were not very well understood by either management or labor at the time I left the scene in 1974.

Charles: There were a lot of product problems, too. After a while, all of the cars looked alike. You couldn't tell a Cadillac from a Chevrolet. And some of the products were real dogs. Ford had its Pinto. We had our Chevrolet Nova and a few other duds. Chrysler had the Aspen and Volare. Too bad we just didn't keep making Oldsmobiles and Pontiacs the way they used to be.

The new cars are better in some ways. They get better mileage and they last a little longer. But, if you take any one of these new cars and melt it down, it wouldn't make a good hub cap on a 65 Oldsmobile Ninety-Eight.

Henry: Well, I want to thank you two gentlemen for your insights, but I suppose we had better let you get back to your game of checkers.

Walter: Oh, we were just taking a short break. We don't play checkers very often. Our real job in Purgatory is to contemplate what we might have done better. Perhaps, for instance, as labor leaders we might have advocated less for some of the changes that ultimately threatened the survival of our employers.

Charles: And maybe we could have found ways to make life a little better for our workers so that they were less focused on retirement. We could have improved the intrinsic satisfaction of their work.

And, of course, we could have paid our executives and consultants less in an effort to share the burden of cost reductions. We both know we could have done more. And that is the purpose of

Purgatory, you know. To reconsider what we all might have done better.

Eleanor: Gentlemen, we should be on our way, but let me ask something of you, Mr. Ruether. You are well-spoken. You have dignity. You seem quite insightful. You don't look or sound like a labor leader. I always thought that a labor leader would be a cigar smoking, fist-pounding, very loud individual who would attract a lot of attention.

Walter: My good madame, you have just described Lee Iacocca.....(Chuckle)."

WITH THAT, THE TRAVELERS CONTINUE ON THEIR WAY.



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## Scene 4 -- The Ethics Professor

- Narrator: (In direct communication with audience) Following their exposure to the two friends playing checkers, we contemplated the ramifications of flawed labor relations and what might have been done better. Then, their deep thought was interrupted by the messengers again approaching Buddy.
- Messenger: Your presence is requested again, Mr. Bernstein. They need you right away.
- Buddy: Ok, what is it this time? Do you have any idea so I might give the matter some thought?
- Messenger: Not really. I am only the messenger. I did overhear something about collateralized debt obligations. However, I do not know what they are.
- Buddy: Neither does anybody else – not bank executives, not regulators, not investors – nobody. So you are not alone, my friend.
- The fact that nobody knows what they are is a big part of the problem. I keep telling people to never get involved with a financial transaction that takes more than eight words to explain.
- But the financial community never listened either to me or my Aunt Gloria. She always said, "You have to make money one penny at a time. If you try to make it all at once, you might lose it all at once."
- Well, folks, I will catch up with you later.
- Fidelia: Along the way to your residence, let me point out some interesting structures and open areas. We are approaching one of our universities.

Along side of it you will find a beautiful garden area with some large shade trees. Beneath some of the trees there are lawn chairs, tables, and benches — suitable for either small discussion groups or individual meditation.

AT ONE OF THE TABLES SITS A FELLOW APPEARING  
VERY STUDIOUS -- PERHAPS PREPARING NOTES.

Leo: Well hello, Fidelia. Goodday to ya. And, whom do you have this afternoon? New customers, I presume?

Fidelia: Yes, Leo, and good day to you. I would like to introduce you to Henry and Eleanor Hammerschmidt – newcomers to Purgatory.

FIDELIA TURNS TO TRAVELERS

Fidelia Leo holds the Albertus Magnus Endowed Chair in Behavioral Ethics at our Purgatory College of Penitential Science. It is a college of notable rank and Leo is a highly acclaimed full professor.

Leo: Oh, twern't nothin. Being close to retirement always helps with academic advancement.

But, I am so glad to meet you both. Welcome aboard. Where are you folks from, might I ask?

Eleanor: We lived most of our lives in Minnesota, but we've also lived in Kentucky, New York and California before moving back to the Midwest.

Leo: Oh, I love the Midwest. I spent many years there.

Henry: What part of the Midwest?

Leo: Leavenworth, Kansas – nice town, so they say.

Henry: What were you doing in Leavenworth? I know there is a college there and also a large federal prison. Were you teaching at the college there?

Leo: No, I was at the prison.

Eleanor: You were an instructor at the prison?  
Leo: No, I was an inmate.  
Eleanor: You were an inmate at the prison?  
Leo: Yep.  
Eleanor: What were you in prison for?"  
Leo: Oh, not much. Robbery, extortion, embezzlement, mail fraud -- things along those lines.  
Eleanor: And now you are a Professor of Ethics.  
Leo: Yep.  
Eleanor: How did you make the transition?  
Leo: Two ways. First, Deacon Clarence. Then I died.  
Eleanor: This sounds very interesting. Can you explain?  
Leo: Well, my behavior during my younger years in Australia was sub-optimal. I moved to the United States but landed in prison with a long sentence in my early thirties.

Generally speaking, prison was a miserable place and I wouldn't advise it as a place to spend much time. But we did have a dedicated and very capable chaplain by the name of Deacon Clarence. He took an extraordinary interest in us and gave us the feeling that there was something to live for -- even if we didn't have any place to go.

Deacon Clarence was a well educated chap and he taught classes to provide us with our first introductions to Kant, Aristotle, Aquinas, Newman, Plato, Bohnhoffer, and many other thoughtful people not normally discussed in the line of work we were in.

The exposure to spirituality and the classics was something quite different for me and I was fascinated by it. Later on, Deacon Clarence worked a deal with the Warden to set up a library of classic books for us and I spent a lot of time there.

After a few years, Deacon Clarence got me transferred me out of the license plate stamping shop on to the education staff. I had that job for the next fifteen years until I was released from prison.

- Henry: Hmmm. From metal stamping to the education staff. An interesting transition.
- Leo: Oh, I would never underestimate the value of metal stamping. You wouldn't have a car if we couldn't do it, you know.
- Eleanor: Then, did you continue teaching after you were discharged?
- Leo: No. I would liked to have done something like that, but it is very hard for an ex-convict to get any job – even if he or she has straightened out. So, I just drifted around. I did stay out of trouble, but one night I was attacked by a couple of thugs in a dark alley, and here I am.
- Eleanor: I am so sorry to hear that. However, at this juncture, I cannot help raising a question. It sounds as if you had a better life in prison than out of it. Is that true?
- Leo: Well, I don't know if you will remember, but, our situation was briefly described in the 1955 movie, *We're No Angels*. Three convicts successfully escaped from a prison in Argentina only to become discouraged with the quality of life on the outside. After many difficulties, the three of them finally decided to give themselves up and return to prison. Humphrey Bogart's closing sentence in the movies was, 'I'll say one thing about prisons. You meet a better class of people.' [Chuckle].
- Henry: I am still wondering, with all of the people in Purgatory, why was it that you were chosen to be a professor of ethics.



Leo: Oh, it's pretty simple, governor. It's a matter of subject mastery. Over a very long period in a life of crime, I've done almost every unethical thing imaginable – and I understand fully both the technical details, the patterns of progression, and the consequences.

I might suggest that one of the problems with education today is that many of the teachers do not know the full extent of the subjects they are teaching. They may understand the theory and that can be valuable. But, they may understand, only in vague imaginary terms, the details of what actually goes on -- including the pros and cons of certain behavior patterns. These insights are important if one is teaching something about ethics. There is nothing quite like having been there and having done it.

Eleanor: I suppose experience is as applicable here, as anywhere.

Leo: Right you are. Having done almost every unethical act imaginable, and being sorry for it, I can describe more completely than anyone on our faculty the full spectrum of deviant behavior – and how it starts. In addition, prisoners such as myself are in an excellent position to describe the many consequences that result from deviant behavior -- consequences to others as well as myself.

Prisoners can also describe more vividly the sadness that follows. Most people can only imagine it – which is incomplete knowledge, if you know what I mean.

Henry: Whom do you teach?

Leo: Most everyone who passes through Purgatory take my classes because quite a few people play games with ethics at one time or another.

Henry: I suppose that does include all of us.

Leo: Yes, probably all of us. I seem to have quite a few lawyers and financial planners, auto mechanics, real estate developers, orthodontists, bankers, and insurance salesmen. Lately, I've had quite a few surgeons. Over the years, I've had members of almost every profession.

Eleanor: Even social workers?

Leo: Yes, even social workers. It should be pointed out that these students are very rarely evil people -- at least they don't think they are. Evil people go elsewhere. I try to show the class participants that almost all ethical breakdowns begins with the gradual process of trivial compromise -- an almost imperceptible erosion of basic principles.

Of course, there is both a Type A and a Type B error in ethics. Some blokes compromise too much and others never do. That's what makes the teaching of ethics so hard. It requires inspired judgment.....

Eleanor: I suspect you are an excellent teacher.

Leo: Ah, but there's much more to the matter than whether someone is an acclaimed professor. That, it turns out, is unimportant. The fact of the matter is that we can all learn from one another -- if we are wise enough to do so. Effective teachers are aware that much of what we know, we learn from the students. We can learn from everyone.

In learning from someone, we acknowledge their contributions to our development and to society. Almost everyone contributes, but some people do not get enough credit. They make up for it in Purgatory, though.

Eleanor: Good. I am glad.

Leo: As an example, a college president may live in a large house and host sumptuous dinners for people potentially interested in supporting the school. But, if it were not for the college's physi-

cal plant staff, the college president might as well be roasting hot dogs over a wood stove in a log cabin without electricity.

All people make contributions – including contributions to our knowledge. That is why we, as teachers, are never permitted to place too much emphasis on our own importance. We are not special. We are servants, as are all members of society – whatever their role in it.

Henry: We can be thankful for the many contributions of so many people.

Leo: Within that framework, there is no contradiction in an ex-prisoner becoming a teacher of ethics. There would be a contradiction, however, if he claimed that the position entitled him to something. We are all servants, don't you agree?

Eleanor: Yes, we do agree.

Leo: Well, I had better get back to my class preparation. Again, it was a great occasion to meet you both.

Fidelia: Yes, I we do and thank you for your time, Leo. We all hope you have a nice day.

Henry: Thank you, indeed. Both Eleanor and I extend our sincere appreciation.

THE PARTY CONTINUES ON ITS WAY.



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## Scene 5 -- The Citizens

Narrator: (In direct communication with audience) We then came to the largest building we had seen yet, a gigantic structure — much more massive than several huge stadiums merged together. Loud mourning sounds emanated from the building. People were crying. More than any place we had yet seen in Purgatory, this place exuded profound suffering and regret.

Eleanor: What building is THAT?

Fidelia: That -- is the Citadel of Selfish Citizenry. It is occupied by some of our most remorseful penitents.

OUTSIDE, NEAR A LARGE BARRED GATE AT THE FRONT OF THE BUILDING, STANDS AN ELDERLY LADY WITH HER ARMS FOLDED AND SHAKING HER HEAD IN DISGUST.

Fidelia: The woman's name is Molly. She's a thoughtful and contemplative person.

Molly: Aaah, tis a terrible thing (moaning). It is absolutely terrible.

Henry: What is terrible?

Molly: What we've done, of course. It is terrible.

Eleanor: What have you done? Why are you here standing outside of this building?

Molly: Aaah, me husband's in there and he'll be be done for the day before too long, for it's nearly six o'clock.

Then he'll go back tomorrow, while I go on to my Penance for Tarnished Reputations Group.

I got to Purgatory before he did and I've completed the Selfish Citizen drill. He's still in there moaning away. The fact is that we are citizens and we have ruined everything.

Eleanor: What have you ruined?

Molly: Our country, the world, the place that we live, and the future of our children, and our basic morality along with it.

Henry: Oh, come now. It can't be that bad. Can we help in any way?

Molly: Well, I'm afraid that it is such a terrible situation that it is beyond help. Besides, what do you know about it? You haven't been through it yet.

Henry: Madame, perhaps I can be of help. I have a PhD.

Molly: Sure and that stands for Perpetually Hindering Decisiveness, but it's not worth much here.

Henry: You say you are citizens. Of what country, may I ask.

Molly: Ah, faith, nearly all of them. We are French, Irish, Greeks, Argentines, Spaniards, Uruguayans, Russians, Brazilians, other countries. And of course we have many people from the United States. I myself was from a large city Eastern city.

Henry: What did you do to warrant this somber treatment?

Molly: We didn't DO anything. We WANTED everything. We wanted more social programs, no taxes, early retirements, free medical care for us all – even when we ate like whales, drank like starved camels, and smoked like chimneys. We hated regulation — even when the result was financial catastrophe.

Meanwhile, we didn't give a belching hoot about our industry. We had no interest in getting anything useful done.

We wanted electricity, but no power plants or transmission lines. My husband worked in a steel mill, but that closed because no one had an interest in producing a quality product at a competitive cost.

Our son worked in an auto plant, but that closed.

One company after another moved out of our community -- sometimes because of taxes, but more often because of other lethal repelling forces or because our school system had stopped training the people who could be hired to do something. We had too few workers and too much overhead.

Eleanor: What influenced the growth in overhead?

Molly: To my way of thinking, we had too many paper clips and not enough welding rod.

We didn't worry about it when we spent money like drunken sailors. We could always borrow more money and pay it back later. Pretty soon, the debts were so large that they were not payable without stifling growth, scaling back needed programs, raising unemployment and neglecting further our schools, roads, bridges, and sewers -- all of which were falling apart at the seams.

Before long, our countries ran out of money, of course. They all went broke and severe hardship descended on almost every land -- which should not have surprised even our neighbor's Irish Setter.

It was easy for us to blame our elected officials, and some of them were good-for-nothing blaggards, for sure. But, perhaps their greatest fault was listening too much to us, the citizens. They tried to please us when we didn't deserve it.

Things did not get better when we fell upon harder times.

While we fought with one another about which political party was the greatest evil, we were plunging into a terrible economic abyss that even Satan himself would not have been pleased about. The debts were so large that we couldn't pay them without ruining companies and flinging most everyone into the street.

Some people said we needed to make adjustments. But everybody wanted the adjustments to be borne by somebody else. None of wanted to change our own behavior or make ANY sacrifice -- even small ones. Prosperity and comfort were gone. The future of our country and our children was gone. You can easily see why people are lamentin their role in it.

JUST THEN, A GATE OPENS AND A SULLEN LOOKING FELLOW EMERGED AND JOINED THE WOMAN.

Husband: Good evening, dear.

Molly: Good evenin, Hon. Let's go home, now.

MOLLY AND HUSBAND WALK QUIETLY OFF.

Henry: Well, Eleanor my dear, we should be on our way, but don't you wonder what is in store for us.

Eleanor: I certainly do.



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## Scene 6 -- The Reflecting Pool

- Narrator: (In direct communication with audience)  
We were all quiet as we left the Citadel of Selfish Citizenry — perhaps thinking of events of our lives that we could have handled better -- events that had far more extensive ramifications than those we anticipated at the time. So, in somber moods of reflection we all walked slowly along until at last we came to a beautiful park-like area with a gorgeous small lake in the midst of it. Then, Buddy spoke.
- Buddy: I'm sorry, my good friends, but I have to step away for a while. I have been summoned to another conference. I should not be long — pretty straightforward stuff — Ponzi schemes. I should be back within a half an hour.
- Fidelia: I'm afraid that I also have to be gone for a while. I am still a math teacher, you know, and there are some papers to correct and some grades to report. I will also return before an hour. Buddy and I will meet you back here. Please make yourselves at home.

### BUDDY AND FIDELIA EXIT

- Narrator: (In direct communication with audience)  
Quickly, our two escorts were gone as El and I were left alone in the wonderfully scenic area.
- Eleanor: Isn't it gorgeous?.
- Henry: It is beautiful, I have to agree. Something about it looks familiar though. Look into the lake.

- Eleanor: Why there we are, on our wedding day. There you are and there I am. It was September 8, 1962. This must be the Happy Marriage Reflecting Pool they were talking about earlier.
- Henry: Yes, you were so beautiful, and you still are. I was very nervous, but very glad and happy.
- Eleanor: Who wasn't nervous. Look, there is my Dad putting a penny in my shoe for good luck. It must have worked, right Henry?
- Henry: Indeed it did. We have been so very lucky. Look, Eleanor, there we are at Wisconsin Dells on our honeymoon.
- Eleanor: Look, there you are overhauling the 52 Pontiac on the streets of New York while I was decorating the baby basket for Josef.
- Henry: There we are on our way back to Minnesota from New York.
- Eleanor: Yes, we saw Niagara Falls -- in December. Look over here, Henry, there is Josef in his bouncy jumper chair. Our first child.
- Henry: And our first daughter Michelle with the bow Scotch-taped onto her head because she did not have much hair.
- Henry: And there we all are, the five of us at the time, when you came home from the hospital after having Joanell. Joanell was so very small, and not very well for a while there.
- Eleanor: But she got better quickly and she was such a cheerful child.... There we are camping up near Park Rapids in the tent. There is Michelle sweeping out the tent with the broom in the middle of the night.
- Henry: Way over there, it is Amy in the Sound of Music play when she was in high school.
- Eleanor: And Anthony scoring the only goal in the soccer game.

Henry: There he is playing catch. He was such a gifted athlete.

Eleanor: Over there is Joannell's wedding, with all of our family and the folks from Elmore, Minnesota.

Henry: And Michelle's wedding and Josef's wedding.

Eleanor: Look, there are all of the grandchildren. Aren't they splendid looking children.

Henry: (with appreciation) Look Eleanor. There we are on our fiftieth wedding anniversary. You are so beautiful.

Eleanor: Henry, isn't it all wonderful? We have had such a wonderful life. I love you so very much.

Henry: And I love you so very much. Thank you for marrying me.

Eleanor: Thank you for asking.



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## Scene 7 -- Arrival at Our Residence

- Narrator: (In direct communication with audience)  
Soon, Buddy and Fidelia returned to the park and we continued on our way. Off in the distance we saw a well-kept bungalow. It was not large, but quaint. The house was situated in a beautiful setting, sunny but with many trees and a gently flowing creek not far from the back yard.
- Buddy: Well, here we are. I am sure you will enjoy your stay here for a while.
- Eleanor: Oh, its wonderful. It's a beautiful little place.
- Fidelia: We are glad that you like it. Come on. Let's go in. There is someone inside you might like to see.

HENRY AND ELEANOR WALK THROUGH A SMALL VESTIBULE IN THE FRONT OF THE HOUSE. EVERYTHING IS CLEAN AND IN PLACE.

- Eleanor: Whoever lived here last certainly took good care of the place. It's immaculate.
- Fidelia: The person is still here. You see, sometimes we have to share facilities in Purgatory. But, I don't think you will regard this sharing as an inconvenience. Let me introduce you to your fellow tenant.

AT THAT POINT, A HANDSOME YOUNG MAN STEPPED IN FROM THE BACK YARD.

- Anthony: Hi Mom. Hi Dad. (smilingly).

Eleanor: Anthony! Anthony, is that really you?

Anthony: Yes, Mom, it is me, and I am so glad to see you both.

Eleanor: Anthony, you are so big. You look so strong and healthy.

Henry: Oh, I am so glad to see you. But, what is this? Tell us your story.

Anthony: Oh, it isn't much of a story, and you know most of it. You know about the cancer, the thirty-some surgeries, of course, the chemo-therapies, the transplants, the radiation, and the many hospitalizations. When I arrived here in Purgatory, they greeted me warmly and said I had come close to setting some kind of a record.

Eleanor: For surgeries or hospital days?

Anthony: No, not for that. I am sure many people have suffered more.

No, my numerical accomplishments were for the number of prayers offered on my behalf. Members of our family, of course, but many more. Those Lutherans down in Elmore, Minnesota were a big help. Then, there were the Monks up at St. John's Abbey in Collegeville. Of course, there were the people from Immaculate Heart of Mary parish.

And, prayers by our Jewish friends -- the Siegels, Dr. Roback, the Steins, and others.

But, it turned out there were many others -- people I never knew, but knew about me from my siblings, or the two of you, or from someone else who learned of my situation through Mom's Caringbridge updates, or from Benilde-St. Margarets, or from many other encounters over time.

When I got here, I went through the admissions process just like you. It took Father Bill quite a while to find all of the records. He said that I al-

ways did have a bulky chart. But when he did find them, he gave me a job that I really enjoy. Then he sent me off with Clem and Fidelia to this place. They said I would have company some day, but they did not know when since Purgatory has no time sequence."

Henry: What job do you have? Fathers are always interested in gainful employment, you know.

Anthony: Yes, you can be assured that all of the Hammerschmidt children are aware of that interest.

Along with most of the rest of us here in Purgatory, I have several jobs. During the week, I teach math to the school children out of Africa. I was sure my sister Amy would have appreciated my involvement with the children from Africa. Then, on the week end, I coach soccer to some of the same children. They think I am some kind of an all-star.

Henry: Well, son, you do look pretty strong and healthy. How tall are you?

Anthony: Now, I am six feet four inches tall (smiling). You will recall that I was in the 90th percentile in size and weight before the cancer came when I was a young child. I can run fast, too. No bags, no tubing, no wires, no pouches, bandages. No more hearing problems or numbness resulting from embolizations and surgeries, no open wounds. I can just run.

I weigh 195 pounds now -- a far cry from the 100 pounds the last few years. And, I play center field on a baseball team -- the Purgatory Penitents. I can throw all the way from deep center field to home plate with pretty good accuracy.

But, most of all, I very much like working with these children from Africa. I thought my life was difficult at times, but you should see what some of them went through.

By the way, do you know who is the doctor for those kid? Dr. Roback, that's who. He also reads at the synagogue and then spends his afternoons reading to the children. He is quite a citizen around these parts, but they say he won't be here too long. He'll move on.

AS ELEANOR WIPES THE TEARS FROM HER EYES, SHE  
SOBS

Eleanor: Oh, Anthony, I am so so happy to see you.

Henry: So am I, son. So am I. You are a good kid.

Anthony: You're a good dad. I love you, Mom, and I always will.

Anthony: By the way, Mom and Dad, let's go for a walk. I will show you around the neighborhood. Then, afterwards, Dad, maybe we can play a little catch. And, Fidelia and I are taking in the play at the Old Stone Theater tonight. Would the two of you like to go? The play is about American industry.

EXIT ELEANOR, HENRY AND ANTHONY



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## Scene 8 -- Consensus

CLEM, BUDDY, AND FIDELIA REMAIN ON THE FRONT PORCH OF THE HOUSE FOR A FEW MINUTES UNTIL THEY ARE JOINED BY FATHER BILL.

Father Bill: Well, folks, how did it go?

Fidelia: It was wonderful. Everyone was overwhelmed with the reunion.

Father Bill: Well, that is one of the blessings of Purgatory. You get to see things you can only wish for on earth. Purgatory has the interesting attribute of allowing us to see the good things that could happen – if we have enough faith.

Fidelia: They all seemed like nice people and I enjoyed meeting them all. I will enjoy working with them all during their stay here.

Clem: Well, I suppose we should get back to the Admission Area. Let's walk together.

SOON, THEY ARE JOINED BY MOHAMMED SELIM, THE ECONOMIST AND CLEM.

Selim: Good afternoon, my fine friends. Would you mind if an aging economist joins you on your walk? I need the exercise and it's such a fine day.

Clem: Come on, friend, we have only been thinking, which is not always easy for any of us.

Selim: And what have you been thinking about, good sir?

Clem: All-in-all, it has been a pretty good day.

- Fidelia: Henry and Eleanor seemed so very pleased, and so happy.
- Buddy: Yes they did. I know a little of the history of that family, which I have known since before Anthony was born. It has been a tough ride for them all, particularly for Anthony. I know about it because I lost both a wife and a daughter to cancer — almost the very same kind. It is devastating. But thank God that there is more to life than earth. As I learned long ago from the book of Job:

*'The Lord also was turned at the penance of Job, when he prayed for his friends. And the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before. And all his brethren came to him, and all his sisters, and all that knew him before, and they ate bread with him in his house: and bemoaned him, and comforted him upon all the evil that God had brought upon him. And every man gave him one ewe, and one earring of gold. And the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning.'*

- Selim: Ah, yes. I am familiar with that passage. As you know, ALL of us are people of The Book. We Muslims are great students of both Christian and Jewish teachings and we have many lessons like the one you just referenced in the Quran — as you all have in your sacred texts. The world would be so much better if we all abided by them.
- Father Bill: It is good for us to reflect upon the experiences of the day, the reunion of Anthony with his parents and, of course, the nature of Purgatory itself.
- Fidelia: Think what a great job Eleanor will do with those children.
- Selim: And how wonderful it will be for the other children to learn math from a fine young man like Anthony. I would loved to have him as an eco-

nomics student. And I am sure the children will benefit from his soccer expertise as well.

Buddy: Yes, it is certainly true. Most of us could be better than we really are. We are all hampered by our imperfections.

Father Bill: In his great wisdom, God provides us with opportunities to see how wonderful things could be if we did things right.

Purgatory provides us such an opportunity, but we **DO** have similar opportunities at many times in life -- if we choose to accept them.

Fidelia: As we used to say in my home town of Guadalajara, Nunca es tarde cuando la dicha es buena. It's never too late for joy.

CLEM PLACES HIS ARM ON THE SHOULDER OF FATHER BILL

Clem: Well, Reverend, there's a lot of good to say about Purgatory. It is a well-thought-out concept and I have always been impressed with it. Purgatory restores your faith in life having meaning.

Probably a lot of us felt that we didn't get quite everything done in life. Now, there's a chance to button things up.

However, Father Bill, speaking as a Lutheran, the only suggestion I would make about Purgatory would be to have it be at the beginning of life on earth, instead of at the end. Maybe we would all behave differently.

**The End**



## **Hans Anthony Zimmerman**

**June 28, 1984 to December 26, 2012**

Zimmerman, Hans Anthony age 28, of Minnetonka, passed away December 26, 2012. Our beloved Hans passed away peacefully surrounded by family and friends, having been able to enjoy Christmas with his family at home. Hans was a relentlessly brave, generous, thoughtful, sincere, devoted, forgiving, humorous, intelligent, ambitious, passionate, and inspiring young man. Throughout his life, Hans enjoyed animals, soccer, martial arts, music, art, technology, and cooking. Graduating with honors from Benilde- St. Margaret's School in 2003, he received a standing ovation, along with the distinguished President's Award.

Most of all, Hans greatly loved spending time doing anything with his family. He was loving, a joy and an inspiration to his parents, siblings and nieces and nephews. Hans Zimmerman was a remarkably gentle person, always kind and considerate to the people who cared for him. Incredibly witty and always giving toward others, Hans could bring light to any room. Everywhere he went, he put a smile on people's faces and touched them with his calm dignity and deep respect for all. At the time of his death, Hans was surrounded by members of his family, Deacons Clarence Shallbetter and James Peterson, and several of the doctors who had come to know him.

A lifelong resident of Minnetonka, Minnesota, Hans is survived by his loving parents, Joanell and Frederick M. Zimmerman; his brother, Frederick J. Zimmerman and his wife Sarah Stein; his sisters, Carita Zimmerman and her husband Peter Ekola, Christina Ristau and her husband Steve, and Brigitte Zimmerman; and his nieces and nephews Emma, Peyton, Cooper, Ira, Julius, and Fiona.

The funeral mass will be celebrated Monday, December 31, at 11 AM at Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church, 13505 Excelsior Boulevard, Minnetonka. Visitation will be held December 30, 4:30-7:30 PM at Huber Funeral Home in Eden Prairie, and December 31, 10-11 AM at Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church. Memorials preferred to Immaculate Heart of Mary School, Benilde-St. Margaret's School, Minneapolis Children's Cancer Research Fund, or Animal Humane Society. We wish to

extend our sincerest gratitude to everyone who has prayed for Hans and for our family over the years. We also thank the numerous community members who provided assistance when we needed support, service, and renewed faith. We could not have made this journey without you.

Obituary published in Star Tribune from December 28 to  
December 30, 2012

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## 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 and currently holds the rank of Professor Emeritus. 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. When he retired at the end of 2005, he was awarded the University of St. Thomas Distinguished Service Award.

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, Joanell. The Zimmermans have five children and have housed more than ninety foster children.

