

THE ACQUISITION

A New Play

by

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CHARACTERS

TED MALCOLM

A retired businessman and a veteran of World War II

ANNE MALCOLM

Ted's wife

ROY EVANS

Ted's successor as president & chairman

TOSHI TENAKA

The president of the Japanese company

MIRO AYOTO

His chief financial officer

BILL LOOMIS

The head of the union and a war veteran

MIKE ROBBINS

The vice president of legal

CAROLE EVANS

Roy's wife

CLYDE TALBOT

A corporate raider

AKIRO TENAKA

The elder chairman of the Japanese company and a veteran of World War II

NEWSCASTER

Off or taped

The play takes place in and around the living room
and adjoining den of the Malcolm residence in
Boca Raton, Florida.

Time: the present

ACT I

Scene 1 The Malcolm residence

Time: A pleasant Wednesday morning in June

Scene 2 The same

Thursday of the same week

ACT II

Scene 1 The same

Friday morning

Scene 2 The same

Monday afternoon

ACT I

Scene 1

The Malcolm residence, Wednesday morning. The living room is furnished in a traditional and costly manner, with much dark wood, but touches of wicker, floral patterns in cloth and glass, and the view to the patio indicate a tropical setting appropriate to Boca Raton. The "woody" den is l. Main entrance, r; exit to patio, r. c. Partial stairway to upstairs and exit to kitchen, l. c.

AT RISE, Ted Malcolm -- a trim, tanned, still-handsome businessman in his 70s, dressed in yellow leisure slacks, a blue shirt, and white loafers -- is standing in his den with the remote control of his television set gripped in his hand. The Wall Street Journal is folded under his arm. The news is on.

TELEVISION NEWSCASTER

And now for a recap of this morning's financial news. Stocks closed up on the Tokyo exchange, in a day of heavy trading. The Nikkei index rose sharply on arbitrage-related buy programs, somewhat ahead of the broader market. The London Exchange is down 16 points, while trading in New York is off to a sluggish start. Investor attention on Wall Street continues to be focused on the MDI corporation. That stock has already jumped an additional 9 points, to 78, and now stands at nearly three times its value just over a week ago. The activity is, of course, prompted by American and Japanese efforts to acquire the giant corporation, which has of late experienced financial difficulties. We'll be right back after ...

(TED shuts off the TV with a vengeance. HE sits down in an easy chair and tries to read The Wall Street Journal but soon sighs and puts it aside, as his wife, ANNE MALCOLM -- an attractive and stylish woman in her late fifties -- ENTERS)

ANNE

Poor baby, why such a big sigh?

TED

The damn stock is up nine more points.

ANNE

Ted, I told you -- no matter how upsetting the situation is, you have to keep it in perspective. The sun is out, you've got a wife who loves you, and you know what Dr. Barton said about stress.

TED

I appreciate your concern, Anne. But the stock is darn near at 80 now!

ANNE

I know you don't want to hear this, sweetheart. But there is a positive side to that.

TED

Nothing that can compare with the downside. I feel like I'm losing control of the company.

ANNE

I know, but --

TED

-- with the price where it is now, the other shareholders will be hard as hell to control. And what if Roy votes his stock the wrong way?

ANNE

I don't think he'd go that far. He owes you too much.

TED

Let's hope not. I didn't spend my life building up the company to sell it to the Japanese.

ANNE

He should be here soon. Just make sure he knows where you stand.

TED

How many times do I have to tell him, Anne? I put him where he is; you'd think he'd have some appreciation. Is a little gratitude too much to ask for?

ANNE

He's always listened to you before, Ted. I'm sure he's just under a lot a pressure.

TED

He should be. He's the one who got us into this fix. Who would've imagined he could be so reckless? He's the brightest financial guy I ever met -- a real whiz. And you'd think he would have shown more restraint. But all he's done is acquire, acquire, acquire. And now look at us -- up to our eyeballs in debt and at the mercy of the banks and all these outsiders!

ANNE

I don't think I'll ever forgive him. It's terrible, just terrible.

(DOORBELL RINGS)

TED

(looks at watch)
There's the son of a bitch now.

(HE and ANNE move toward the living room, as JUANITA, the Cuban housekeeper, ENTERS from kitchen)

JUANITA

I will get it. How was your walk on the beach?

ANNE

We weren't up to it today, Juanita.
(to TED)

Now, just stick to your guns, and I'm sure everything will be all right.

TED

Don't worry about that. I'm as flexible on this as the concrete wall we've got outside to hold back the ocean.

ANNE

But promise me you won't get too upset.

TED

I'll be all right.

ANNE

And, remember, darling, we're scheduled for golf at 2.

TED

I'll see what I can do.

(JUANITA opens door)

JUANITA

Ah, Mr. Evans. *Buenos dias.* Mr. Malcolm is expecting you.

ROY

Thank you, Juanita.

(ROY EVANS ENTERS. HE'S a handsome but nervous businessman in his forties, who's attempt at stylishness has won an uneasy victory over his natural studiousness)

JUANITA

How is New York?

ROY

The same as usual -- impossible to live in, impossible to leave. What's the latest from Castro country?

JUANITA

Oh, my cousin, Paco, just arrived here safely.

ROY

By boat?

JUANITA

No, inner tube.

(SHE closes door; as THEY cross the room)

He trusted the big spring tide, and the sharks did not get him.

ROY

He's got more guts than I do.

JUANITA

Do you care for coffee?

ROY

No, thanks. I'm all "coffeed" out.

(HE sees TED and moves toward him, hand out, as
JUANITA EXITS)

Good to see you, Ted.

(shakes; nods to ANNE)

Anne.

(to TED)

Sorry I'm a little behind schedule. Today, there's no such thing
as a flight that arrives on time. How are ya?

TED

Good as a body my age can manage, given the circumstances.
How's the wife and kids?

ROY

Carole's holding up pretty well, considering I haven't let her
buy a painting for six months. My daughter, Sue, just got
accepted by the University of Pennsylvania.

TED

Is that so? What's she gonna study?

ROY

Marketing.

TED

Good, good. I sometimes think that's the best career of all.
Puts you more in touch with what the consumer wants. How's your
son?

ROY

He's spending the summer in Montana, guiding trout fishermen on
the Yellowstone River.

TED

You always told me he liked fly fishing.

ROY

Yeah, too much, I'm afraid. Now, he wants to make a career out
of it. Can you beat that? Gets his MBA from Wharton and heads
straight for the wilderness!

TED

If things keep going the way they are, I may join him.

(to ANNE)

Will you excuse us, dear?

ANNE

All right, darling. But, please, remember what I said.

TED

I'll be all right.

ANNE

(to ROY)

I don't want you to upset him. Listen to what he has to say.

ROY

Don't worry, Anne. You know I love the guy.

ANNE

Then why haven't you been a whole lot smarter?

(to TED)

I'll be on the patio if you want me.

TED

Yes, dear.

(SHE EXITS)

ROY

I'm sorry she's upset, Ted.

TED

Well, you can hardly blame her, can you? She's just what I need at my age.

ROY

Protective as hell, I'll tell you that.

TED

Lucky I found her. After my wife passed away, I thought I was gonna be alone forever. Then one day, I sit down at a card table here in Boca Raton, and there she is, sittin' across from me, with those big brown eyes. Helluva golfer, too.

ROY

The last time I was down, she managed to hit the ball a lot better than I did.

TED

That's right. Remember what I told you then? If you ever made up a list of 100 careers to choose from, just be glad one of them was not pro golf.

ROY

Yeah, I remember that particular compliment.

TED

(holds out The Wall Street Journals, points to cover)
Roy, I don't like what's going on one bit -- the pressures we're coming under to make a deal, all the publicity.

ROY

I understand, Ted. But the stock's way the hell up, isn't it? Can you argue with that?

TED

You know perfectly well that's not what I mean.

ROY

But the cloud does have a silver lining?

TED

You mean, a yellow lining, don't you?

ROY

Not nice, Ted.

TED

If you lost a brother in World War II, you'd understand how I feel. I'm sickened by the whole thing. I tell you, I'm sickened to death.

ROY

Ted, I'm sorry, but --

TED

-- When I put you in charge, I placed my trust in you.

ROY

I realize that, Ted. And I'll never forget how you took me under your wing. Doing the right thing in terms of your best interests has always been top of mind with me.

TED

Is the situation you've gotten us into the right thing for me -- havin' the family business, the business my father founded, the business I put my own life into, out on the goddam auction block, for anybody who's got enough cash to come along and grab hold of it?

ROY

It's not what I had in mind. But, Ted, you have to admit -- I have grown the company.

TED

Oh, sure you have. And now we're so damn big we can't afford to stay in business. I left you with one sweet company -- maybe not a giant company, by today's standards, but a solid company, a company that made a good product and turned a handsome profit every year. It was good for its employees, good for its stockholders.

ROY

I know all that, Ted.

TED

Then why couldn't you just stay the course?

ROY

We've had that talk. You don't grow, you die.

TED

You could've grown enough, just by mindin' the store. But making major appliances wasn't enough for you. You had to diversify. First, into small appliances. Okay, that's related to what we do, so I endorsed the decision, even though I don't know a damn thing about how to make a toaster oven. Washing machines and clothes dryers, refrigerators and freezers -- that's what I'm comfortable with. But we made some bucks out of that --

ROY

-- A lot of bucks.

TED

You're right about that. But, as a result, you got carried away -- and went on a most ill-considered acquisitions' binge.

ROY

But, Ted, I cleared every single purchase with you.

TED

And I expressed my reservations to you time and time again about the speed you were moving at -- and the bank loans you had to take to finance all those deals. Didn't I? Now, come on, tell me -- didn't I?

ROY

That's true. But you still went along with every deal.

TED

Reluctantly. Very damn reluctantly. And why? Because I trusted you. My mistake, as it turns out.

ROY

I'm very sorry you feel that way.

TED

You should be. Well, sometimes I kick myself, too. I should have stopped you when you went after the auto-parts company. But I didn't want to get in your way. And I guess I got caught up in the acquisitions' fever that seemed to be everywhere just then.

How else could I have let you go farther and farther afield -- the chain of Mexican restaurants: who can even eat the spicy shit they serve? The corporate parks and then the hotels! Who do you think you are, anyway, Conrad Hilton?

ROY

You liked the sporting-goods company. Aren't you the one who said you wanted your name on their golf clubs?

TED

Yes, I admit that. And I do get an uncontrollable amount pleasure out of playin' with 'em and seeing other people enjoy 'em. I guess that's what sucked me into letting you purchase the worst damn baseball team in the national league.

ROY

You're right. They're not very good.

TED

No damn good at all. Why, I've never seen a team that bad. I mean, Roy, it's one thing to live in a town and not be a fan of the local ball club. But I'm not a fan, and I own the damn team!

ROY

You know I've been trying to sell off the club for over a year. I just can't find a buyer.

TED

Is it any wonder? How numerous do you suppose people are who have millions to invest and no goddam brains at all?

ROY

Not very.

TED

Well, I know at least one, and I'm lookin' right at him. Roy, how could you let all this happen? You seemed like a brilliant, a brilliant and a prudent, young man. Not just a bean counter, but a financial genius, for God's sake. And I made you my heir apparent! My golden boy! And you always assured me that you were a numbers man, sharp and risk averse. You told me if you were in charge, you'd manage a tight ship, maximize profits, and, most important of all, you told me you'd make sure I got to relax and enjoy my retirement. Didn't you? Didn't you promise me that?

ROY

Yes, I did. And I meant every word.

TED

But look at what you did! No sooner do I let you out of the back room than you decide that prudent management with controlled growth isn't exciting enough for you. No, you have distinguish yourself. You have to think big, for which you have only a limited aptitude.

ROY

Ted, that's not --

TED

-- Not your strong point. At least, we can say that, can't we?

ROY

Come on, I made --

TED

-- A lot of big goddam mistakes!

ROY

Don't make me sound like a complete idiot. Every acquisition I made seemed promising at the time.

TED

Some much more promising than others.

ROY

Nevertheless, I have taken us from being a medium-sized, one-product-line manufacturer to a diversified corporate giant. Think of it, Ted. In just five years, I've guided us to a fivefold increase in the size of our holdings.

TED

But where are the fat profit margins you promised? For God's sake, we're swimming in red ink.

ROY

Ted, you know as well as I do that most of that is due to the downturn in the economy.

TED

Oh, come on, Roy. Any businessman, any true businessman, knows there will always be a downturn.

ROY

Nobody could have foreseen one this bad. Not a downturn across the board. Who knew retail would die, real estate would die --

TED

-- It's not a matter of knowing what will die. It's a matter of being prepared for the worst, instead of leaving yourself hanging out there. What the hell do you think business is, all ups?

ROY

You know better than that. But everybody got caught by this.

TED

Then why the hell isn't everybody in the same damn boat we're in? Did everybody leverage himself to death to finance a shit-load of acquisitions? Did everybody accumulate loans he can't even pay the interest on without taking more loans and more loans? Don't you know if there's anybody you don't want to be in business with, it's a banker. They jump ship when the first dark cloud shows up on the horizon. And you can't blame them. Their asses are on the line. They need to get back the money they've rented you? And that's all they do is rent money. When the lease is up, they want it back. So there you sit, with all the damn banks that financed your spending spree, holding a knife to your throat. We make a quick deal, or they move in.

ROY

Oh, I admit it. Right now we do need cash.

TED

Because, as even the guy who runs the corner candy store knows, you have to pay the piper.

ROY

But once the cash flow comes in from the sale, the banks will be out of the picture. We'll be able to service the debt, we'll have enough cash left to upgrade at least our key product lines, and we'll be pretty solidly poised for the future.

TED

Except for one very important matter. We'll no longer own the company.

ROY

What do you mean? You'll have as much stock as you do now, and it'll be worth far more than it ever was. Far more.

TED

I meant, we'll lose control.

ROY

You lost control when you decided to take the company public thirty-five years ago.

TED

That was a good, sensible move. At the time, it provided me with the capital I needed to take the appliances into national distribution.

ROY

But it still cost you a measure of control.

TED

A *measure* of control. That's the key word. And I don't have any problem whatsoever with limited public ownership of the stock. That sort of thing is what lets the average Joe have a say in the conduct of this country's business -- at least, it used to, before all the big corporate players and the manipulators took over the lion's share of the trading. At the very least, it helps the private sector balance the power of the government. But let's get down to brass tacks. You know perfectly well what I'm referring to -- I mean, there's a real possibility here of a foreign buyer.

ROY

You mean, a Japanese buyer?

TED

If you want to call a spade a spade -- yes, that's exactly right. Are all the sealed bids in yet?

ROY
All we're going to see. We should review them together.

TED
Who came in the highest?

ROY
The Japanese -- 79 dollars a share. Or 3.8 billion for 51% of the stock.

TED
Any of the other bids close?

ROY
One's at least somewhat in the ballpark.

TED
Clyde Talbot's group?

ROY
Yeah.

TED
How close?

ROY
67 a share.

TED
What's the cash portion?

ROY
The Japanese deal is all cash.

TED
What about Clyde's?

ROY
He's got a lot of paper involved.

TED
How much?

ROY
40 percent.

TED
Shit! How did that English fella finally settle out?

ROY

He decided to drop out.

TED

When the Japanese entered the picture?

ROY

Shortly thereafter.

TED

Can't say I blame him. They throw money around like it's water.

ROY

Look, Ted, I understand. I want you to know I understand.

TED

You understand nothing.

ROY

Of course, I do.

(goes to armoire and takes out photograph)

You told me about your brother the first time I was here. Do you think I'd forget something like that?

(takes folded flag from armoire)

I remember everything you told me.

TED

(goes to ROY and takes the items from him)

Please, you have no right to touch these things.

(as HE puts them back)

Nothing, you remember nothing.

ROY

Ted, you're wrong. But face it: this is a new century. It's a different world out there. And sooner or later you have to come to terms with the fact.

TED

I'd rather be dead.

ROY

-- But --

TED

-- I could never agree to what you want. Never. Aside from my own personal feelings, I've taken a prominent stand on the issue. I'm a nationally known "Buy American" advocate, and I don't wish to compromise my position.

ROY

Oh, come on, Ted. I'm as patriotic as anybody, and it's fine to advocate that sort of stuff. But the facts are the facts. Today, the biggest customers the Japanese have are not American consumers. They're American corporations.

TED

A sad state of affairs, if you ask me. And that's got to change. We can't let the manufacturing base of this country go to hell in a handbasket.

ROY

I don't think we're doing that. It's been making somewhat of a comeback lately.

TED

It better make a giant comeback. I laugh my ass off every time I hear these so-called experts telling us American business is going to turn into a service business. You know what the service business is, don't you? You have clients you have to please. Or they fire you. I'll tell you what the service business comes down to -- being as dictatorial as you can be on your knees. On your goddam knees! And you tell me -- how the hell are we supposed to stay the most powerful nation on earth when we're in the service business. There's a question for all these damnable experts!

ROY

That's not the issue here. Let's just keep our eyes on the ball, okay? I'm talking business with the Japanese.

TED

You're the one who's talking about that. Not me.

ROY

And not anybody else. The talking stage was over a long time ago. Today, American companies are competing to form alliances with them. Competing to do it! Even the Russians are getting into the picture. And why? Because everybody knows that the companies that form the best alliances will be in the strongest position to dominate the international marketplace. Like it or not, that's reality. And I wish you could come to terms with it.

Ted, what's before us isn't really a problem. It's an opportunity. And I wish you could see it that way.

TED

No, thank you.

ROY

But, Ted --

TED

-- My ass! You tell me you understand. Maybe up here.

(points to head; then to heart)

But not down here. Not enough to feel it right here.

(nervously takes photo from armoire again)

Don't you understand? This was my brother! My kid brother, Danny, the young man I grew up with. He was a swell kid. He looked up to me. I was in the air force. He decided on the navy. I went down with him the day he signed up. And this is all that's left of him, because on December the 7th, 1941, he happened to be at Pearl Harbor.

ROY

I'm sorry.

TED

Well, sorry's not enough, kid. Now, you listen to me. My father founded the company we're talking about. And because of this goddam disaster ...

(points to picture)

... I had to watch him cry every day of his life, till he ate his heart and soul out, got Parkinson's from all the damn stress, and died from it. And I had to watch my mother give up on this life, just walk out on it while she was still alive, because she was a good Catholic who believed, with a kind of terminal sorrow, that when she died she'd rejoin my brother in heaven. I had to live with that year after year -- my entire family shattered, like a diamond that's been hit the wrong way. And you want me to agree to sell a big chunk of the company, the company my father trusted to me, as if this dastardly thing had never happened.

(puts the photograph and flag back in the armoire)

You understand nothing.

ROY

I'm sorry, Ted. I said I'm sorry.

TED

(closes armoire)

Do me a favor and don't touch this stuff anymore.

ROY

Of course. Okay, so that's it. We'll reject the Japanese offer. We'll fight the other stockholders on it. And, if worse comes to worse, we'll let the banks come in and do whatever they please. That's what you want, I agree to it. But keep certain things in mind. The stockholders could outvote us, and you know as well as I do that they've called an emergency meeting for Friday morning. That's the day after tomorrow.

TED

I can control that, if we stick together.

ROY

All right, we'll do that. But if we let the banks move in, there's nothing to stop them from taking the Japanese offer themselves. And if that doesn't work out for some reason or other, and they decide to sell us off in pieces, let me remind you -- the total debt exceeds the company's estimated worth by a few hundred million. So when everything's said and done, we could still be in debt up to our ears.

TED

Find another buyer.

ROY

I've done everything in my power to do that, Ted.

TED

Then you tell First Boston to get some more bids in.

ROY

I've pushed them as hard as I can. Their position right now is, they've done a great job, and there's an outstanding offer on the table. So what more do we want?

TED

Then find another investment bank.

ROY

There's no time to even consider that. This is Wednesday, for Christ's sake. And, you know as well as I do, if we don't agree to a deal by noon on Friday, the banks will make their move.

TED

That's a long way off. If you can't make some calls, I will.

ROY

Ted, Friday is staring us right in the face. It's too late in the game to start over.

TED

Then we've got to open a discussion with Clyde. Maybe we can get him to sweeten his offer.

ROY

You can all but forget Clyde. He told me he's maxed out.

TED

I know that boy very well. He's just playing hardball. I'll give him a call.

ROY

Go right ahead. But it's very unlikely that you'll be able to redo a deal with Clyde before Friday.

TED

I can try like hell.

ROY

But suppose for a minute that you can't get him up all the way to bright. What deal do you think the shareholders are going to want?

TED

I don't give a damn what they want. I still control 23% of the voting stock. My wife's got five. And you hold another ten. I'll make some calls. I can control any situation that develops.

ROY

Maybe you can. Then what about the banks? No deal by Friday, they move in to protect their interests. I'm pretty certain they'll take the Japanese deal.

TED

Not with my votes, they won't -- or with yours! You'd never vote your stock against my wishes, would you?

ROY

I can't say that for sure now, Ted.

TED

What the hell do you mean, you can't say that for sure?

ROY

I mean I also have to think about what's best for the company.

TED

What's best for the company is whatever the hell I want!

ROY

Is it?

TED

Your darn right it is! That's the way it's always been -- and that's the way it's gonna stay.

ROY

Ted, listen to me. Think about Anne and the rest of your family? Is a complete financial disaster best for them?

TED

I'll make that call.

ROY

Fine. And I have to make mine. Remember, I have a wife and kids to think about.

TED

You mean to stand there and tell me you'd vote against my wishes?

ROY

You've kind of got me between a rock and a hard place, don't you, Ted?

TED

Roy, look at me. You have to know who you're talking to. You have to understand. Every December I take a trip to Hawaii. Not to enjoy the sun. I've got more of that than I need right here in Boca Raton. I go to visit Pearl Harbor. I go to the naval base and sit on the pier, and I look at the Arizona, lyin' there under the green water, covered with rust. My kid brother, Danny, died in that ship -- sunk right down with it, and he's still down there. I go and I pace up and down the dock, from bow to stern of that sunken ship. These last few years, Anne and I have even taken a helicopter ride that's for tourists, because it flies over the wreck. I can see the whole outline of it that way. But mostly I just sit on the pier and watch. It's how I visit my brother. I feel closer to him when I'm there. And I always think, so this is where the blow occurred that destroyed my family, destroyed it like a diamond struck the wrong way and shattered into a hundred pieces. Do you understand me, son? Do you understand the trouble I'm havin' with what you want?

ROY

Yeah, I understand. I mean, what's left to say? You call the shot.

TED

I knew you wouldn't let me down. I'll phone up Clyde now.

ROY

Go ahead. But there's no way in hell he'll outdo the Japanese bid.

TED

I'd rather go bust.

(DOORBELL RINGS)

TED

Who could that be?

(JUANITA ENTERS)

JUANITA

I'm on my way.

(heads for door; opens it)

May I help you?

YOSHI

(off, Japanese accent)

Yes, we're looking for Mr. Roy Evans.

JUANITA

Oh.

(YOSHI TENAKA ENTERS, followed by MIRO AYOTO. YOSHI is a stylish Japanese businessman in his forties; MIRO is a plainer man who is slightly older)

YOSHI

Is he here?

TED

(overhears; to ROY)

Who the hell is that?

ROY

Oh, my, God! I forgot all about them! Don't worry. I'll take care of it.

TED

Well, I'd like to know who's at my door.

(attempts to move toward door)

ROY

(tries to hold him back)

Believe me, Ted, I'll take care of it.

TED

Excuse me.

(goes past him and crosses to door; sees them)
Pardon me, gentlemen. May I ask who you are?

YOSHI

(smiles)

Yes. I am Yoshi Tenaka, the executive vice president of Osaka Industries.

(puts out hand)

And this is Miro Ayota, our chief financial officer.

MIRO

(smiles; puts out hand)

Nice to meet you.

YOSHI

We flew down from New York with Roy Evans.

TED

Roy?

ROY

Yes, Ted?

TED

There are a couple of gentleman here to see you.

ROY

Yes, Ted.

(crosses to them)

YOSHI

(to ROY)

Roy, we've been waiting out in the limo a long time.

ROY

I'm terribly sorry about that, Yoshi. We should go now.

YOSHI

Go? I don't understand.

MIRO

Aren't we meeting with Mr. Malcolm?

ROY

Well, that was the game plan, but there's been a change.

TED

(to ROY)
You invited these gentlemen to meet with me?

ROY

Yes, I did, but --

TED

-- Don't you think you should have told me what you had in mind?

ROY

I wanted to, but I thought --

YOSHI

-- Excuse me, are you Mr. Malcolm?

TED

As a matter of fact, I am.

YOSHI

(puts out hand again)
Nice to meet you.

MIRO

(puts out hand)
A real pleasure.

TED

(declines handshake)
You should talk with Mr. Evans here.

YOSHI

But we have important matters to discuss with you.

MIRO

Many details to work out.

TED

He knows where I stand on everything.

ROY

Yes, I do. As I said, there's been a change in plans.

YOSHI

What change? We came to make a deal.

MIRO

Many things yet to be settled. Face to face is best.

TED

Talk with your friend here, Mr. Evans. Now, if you'll excuse me,
I have to see my wife about something.
(turns to leave)

YOSHI

Is something wrong?

TED

(to YOSHI; indicating ROY)
He'll fill you in.
(to JUANITA)
I believe you have work in the kitchen.

JUANITA

Si, Mr. Malcolm.

TED

Good day, gentlemen.

(JUANITA heads for the kitchen door and EXITS. HE EXITS to
the patio and slides the door closed behind him)

TOSHI

What's the problem, Roy?

ROY

He just wants some time to think about the deal.

TOSHI

What's to think about? We made the best offer.

MIRO

79 a share. All cash.

ROY

Trust me, I haven't forgotten.

YOSHI

Tell him we made an offer only the Japanese would be foolish
enough to make.

MIRO

Much more than company is worth, at this time.

ROY

Oh, it's a very generous offer. I know that. And he appreciates
that. But what can I tell you? The man has his ways.

MIRO

But yes or no?

YOSHI

Do we have a deal or don't we? I will write a check now, and you can deposit it the day we finalize the agreement.

ROY

You'll write a check now -- for 3.8 billion?

YOSHI

No problem. I have the authority. Do we have a deal?

ROY

There is still some possibility of that, yes.

YOSHI

What's the objection? Let me speak with him.

ROY

If you'll sit down a minute, I'll go out and have a few words with him.

YOSHI

Good. We like MDI. It's a great fit with our company.

MIRO

We can do much together.

ROY

You're preaching to the choir, guys. I like the deal. Please, have a seat.

YOSHI

Thank you, but I'd rather stand. I've been sitting ever since we left New York.

ROY

Care for a drink?

YOSHI

After we make some progress.

ROY

I'll be right back.

YOSHI

Good.

MIRO

Thank you very much.

(ROY EXITS to patio)

What do you think?

YOSHI

I smell a rat.

MIRO

So do I. These Americans are never happy. Think they know everything.

YOSHI

If we don't like what happens, we should take the money and pick up the resort in California.

MIRO

Good idea. Resort does good business. And it has a great golf course. But we'll have to clear change of plans with your father.

YOSHI

He'll listen to me.

MIRO

Yes, if he listen to anybody.

YOSHI

I'm the expert on deals in the U. S. America is not his favorite subject.

(goes to bar and pours himself a Perrier)

Like one?

MIRO

Thank you.

(heads for bar)

(YOSHI hands him a Perrier. Then HE begins to look over the room. HE comes to the armoire and notices the photograph of TED'S brother. HE opens the cabinet, takes it out, and looks at it, as TED enters from the patio, followed by ROY)

TED

Well, if you won't, I will.

ROY

Now, Ted --

TED

(notices YOSHI with photograph; stops)
-- May I ask what you're doing with that?

YOSHI

Just looking. You as a young man?

TED

Nothing of the kind.
(crosses to him)
It's of my younger brother.

YOSHI

Which war?

TED

The big one, "W,W, Two."
(puts out hand)
I'll take that.

YOSHI

As you wish.
(hands it to him)
Were you in the service?

TED

United States Air Force. I was a bomber pilot.

YOSHI

(smiles)
I was not born at the time.

TED

No, I guess you weren't.
(puts photo back)

YOSHI

My father, the chairman of our company, also served -- but, naturally, on the other side. He, too, was a pilot.

TED

Is that so? Well, that makes two of us who are more fortunate than my brother. He was killed in the war.

YOSHI

I regret to hear that.

MIRO

Very sad. I am sorry.

YOSHI

Does that explain the difficulty?

TED

You might say that, yes.

YOSHI

Many Japanese also died.

TED

You started it, and we finished it. You ask your father. He'll tell you all about it.

YOSHI

He has, many times. You see, he is from Hiroshima.

TED

Hiroshima?

YOSHI

Yes. His family was still living there at the time your side dropped the bomb. He lost his father, his mother, and his sister.

TED

I'm terribly sorry to hear that.

YOSHI

There are many scars on both sides. But today Japan and America are friends. And this is business. We have made an offer.

TED

I'm very familiar with it.

YOSHI

Well, do we have a deal or don't we? As I told Roy, I'm ready to write a check today for the full purchase price of 51% of the stock -- a controlling interest, as proposed.

TED

Roy has told me that. Very impressive.

YOSHI

Well? You can't do better.

TED

I realize that. But, you see, Mr. Tenaka, there are some things that, at least to me, are more important than money, like our memories. Money cannot pry some of us away from them. Some of us are stuck with them, and we prefer it that way. Of course, you might not understand that. As far as I've been able to tell, to you and most Japanese these days money is everything.

YOSHI

Well, you know what they say. Money talks, bullshit walks.

MIRO

We prefer to overlook certain things. It's the best way. Most people do.

TED

I guess they do. Sorry, I'm not one of them.

MIRO

Our companies are a great fit.

YOSHI

(takes checkbook from breast pocket)

I will write check right now -- for the whole amount. We make a deal? It's better to agree, before banks take everything.

TED

(to ROY)

A bit insulting, isn't he?

YOSHI

Not an insult. The truth. Or maybe we'll just wait and deal directly with your banks. We can perhaps do better with them.

TED

You'll wait till the cows come home. In case you haven't heard, we do have another offer.

MIRO

But not as good as ours.

YOSHI

We know that.

TED

It's not bad, gentlemen. Not bad at all.

YOSHI

You don't want to make a deal, let me know now. When one has cash to invest, other opportunities are not a problem.

TED

I realize that. So let me be very honest with you. I for one am not at all interested in the deal. Not in the least. And no amount of money will alter my decision. So you can put your damn checkbook away. That's my final word on the subject. No deal. Not now, not tomorrow, not ever. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have other things to attend to.

(to ROY)

I want talk with you after they're gone.

ROY

Yes, sir.

(TED EXITS to patio; to YOSHI)

I'm sorry I brought you down here. I didn't know things would go like this. I thought if I could talk to him first --

YOSHI

No problem. He has the brain of an old man.

MIRO

Yoshi knows from experience. His father, Akiro Tenaka --

Yoshi

-- Enough of that!

(to ROY)

My father wants the deal. You've talked with him by phone.

ROY

Oh, he seems to want it very much.

YOSHI

We'll see.

(to MIRO)

Time to go.

MIRO

Ready.

(to ROY)

We know you tried.

ROY

To say the least. Now, don't give up on this.

YOSHI

I'm not encouraged, Roy. I need to call Tokyo.

ROY

You can do it from the hotel.

YOSHI

I've decided not to stay in Florida tonight. There's an art auction at Sotheby's. I've got my eye on a Van Gogh that's up for sale.

ROY

They've been selling for incredible prices. My wife's always talking about it. She's a collector, in the 50 to \$100,000 range.

YOSHI

I might be able to pick up this particular painting up for about 50 million.

ROY

Too rich for my blood.

YOSHI

That's nothing, really. I'll consider it a bargain.

(checks wristwatch)

We'll call Japan from the airport.

(to MIRO)

Let's go.

(THEY head for front door)

ROY

I'll ride out in the limo with you.

YOSHI

Not necessary.

ROY

Maybe we can work out a strategy.

YOSHI

I'll be at the Waldorf. You've got your hands full, if you still have hopes for the deal.

(sticks out hand)

Good-bye. Talk to you.

ROY

(shakes)
Keep the faith.

YOSHI

Frankly, I do not have much hope.

MIRO

See you.

(THEY EXIT)

(ROY crosses to couch and plops down; TED
peeks out from the patio door)

TED

Gone, are they?

ROY

Yes, they left.

TED

Good. Didn't like them -- especially that Yoshi fella -- a bit.
Too damn arrogant, if you ask me.

ROY

He can afford to be.

TED

New money, no taste -- it's an old story. How could you invite
them here without asking me?

ROY

I guess I'm an optimist.

TED

Asshole is more like it. Did you hear what he said? His father,
the chairman of the goddam company, was a Japanese pilot. For all
I know, he dropped the bomb that killed my brother.

ROY

Come on, give me a break.

TED

You give me a break. But so much for them. You and I have a lot
to do, if we're gonna pull this out of the fire in time.

(pours himself a scotch)

I'll call Clyde. Then I'll rustle up some support from the other
stockholders I know I can count on. If you need me to, I'll call
the banks, too.

ROY

No point in that now.

TED

Oh, come on. I can take care of a bunch of bankers any day.

ROY

Not these bankers.

TED

What about Dan Slatkin and Arnie Aldrich? I go back a long way with both of them. And they represent two of the biggest banks in the country.

ROY

They're tapped out on good will. Trust me.

TED

Not Arnie. He's always been there for me.

ROY

He's the first one who threatened to call the loans.

TED

Aldrich? Arnie Aldrich?

ROY

That's the only one I know of.

TED

I can't believe that. I'll call him and do some fence mending.

ROY

His mind's made up.

TED

We'll see about that. Got Clyde's number handy?

ROY

I can get it from my secretary.

TED

No problem. I've got it right here.

(takes smartphone from pocket)

Anne gave it to me for my 74th birthday. She said she put my entire Rolodex in it.

ROY

Not made in Japan, is it?

TED

(looks it over)

South Korea. Now, that's the goddam problem. If we could stop buying all these TVs, CD players, and other gizmoids from the Asians, they wouldn't have so much damn cash to throw around.

(looks over smartphone)

You'll have to be a little patient. I've had a VCR for over a year, and I still can't figure out how to copy a damn TV show.

(presses button)

That's got it -- "Contacts." Now, what the hell do I do?

(holds it out)

ROY

(looks on)

Tap on it. Now enter his name in Search.

TED

Okay, let me try that. I can't even hit these damn little fake keys one at a time. My fingers are Occidental.

(hits keys; instrument makes beep)

What's that mean?

ROY

It means we made a mistake.

TED

I'm gettin' a headache from this.

(calls)

Anne, could you come in here?

(to ROY)

I'll ask Clyde to come down here tomorrow and discuss his offer.

ROY

Down here?

TED

Sure. We can roll our sleeves up and really get some work done. You'll stay the night, and we'll make this place operations central until we've got a deal we like. We'll duke the whole thing out right from here.

(ANNE ENTERS)

ROY

I have to get back to New York to meet with Robbins. I've got him working on the bankruptcy option.

TED

I don't have much heart for that. How about you?

ROY

None at all. You're the one who asked me to look into it.

TED

I was just groping for a way to protect us from our creditors.

ROY

Well, you know, it doesn't make a helluva lot of sense. The stock is going through the roof, and our VP of legal is looking into declaring Chapter 11.

TED

You get Mike down here. We'll try to give him something better to think about.

ANNE

Did you call me, darling?

TED

Yes. Show me how to get a phone number out of this goddam thing.

ANNE

If I can remember. Whose do you want?

TED

Clyde Talbot.
(gives it to her)

ROY

Ted, let's talk about tonight. I've been on the road two and three nights a week for the last month. It's time to give the wife a break.

TED

Invite her down here. We've got plenty of space, don't we, Anne?

ANNE

Yes, and she can enjoy the pool and the beach while you work.

TED

I need you here, Roy.

ROY

But I've already done everything I possibly can with Clyde.

TED

You know what they say, boy? Two heads are better than one.

ROY

All right. I'll see what I can do.

TED

Good. And have her bring some casual clothes for you. You've been cooped up in New York too long. You need some fresh air and good Florida sunshine. Maybe we can even slip in a few rounds of golf. You should see this new tee I bought. It's a big plastic affair, and when you hit the ball, it compresses. Then it expands and drives the ball ten, twelve yards farther than normal. What do you think of that?

ROY

Not made in Japan by any chance, is it?

TED

No, as a matter of fact, it isn't. It was dreamed up by some local fellow. And stop badgering me that way. I've had enough.

ANNE

Here, Ted. See. I've got it.
(points to window)
"Talbot, C.," with the number.

TED

Thanks. Great gadget. The battery dies, and my life disappears.

(to ROY)

By the way, how much do we owe Arnie's bank?

(picks up PHONE)

ROY

1.4 billion.

TED

Shit, and I remember when a million dollars was something.

BLACKOUT

END OF ACT I

Scene 1

ACT I

Scene 2

Thursday morning. TED is on the
PHONE in the den.

TED

Now, come on, Arnie, I need you to rethink your position on this.... Will you, at least, give it some thought?... Arnie, come on, for old time's sake?... All right, Arnie.... But you do that to the company tomorrow and your bank no longer handles a single penny of the family trust.... Good-bye.

(HE puts down PHONE, as ROY ENTERS from patio, with a cup of coffee. HE'S dressed in a shirt and slacks. MIKE ROBBINS -- a somewhat huskier man in a gray suit, white shirt and a maroon, loosened tie -- is with him; HE has THE WALL STREET JOURNAL under his arm. TED tosses his electronic diary onto the desk and ENTERS the living room)

ROY

How'd you do with Arnie?

TED

Forget about him for now.

(looks at watch)

Talbot will be here any minute. Did you two have enough for breakfast?

ROY

Too much.

MIKE

Yes, thank you, Ted.

TED

(to ROY)

Sure your wife doesn't want anything to eat?

ROY

She got in too late. She'll be down for lunch.

TED

Young woman like her needs her beauty sleep. I've already gotten all I need.

(to MIKE)

Mike, tell me, how many banks are threatening to make a move on us?

MIKE

Eight. Three American, two in the UK, one Italian, a European consortium with a major French player, and one Japanese bank.

TED

Quite a laundry list. Do we owe them all big time?

MIKE

Yeah. That's why they're nervous.

ROY

We wouldn't be the company we are without them.

TED

Obviously. How much do we owe our friends, the Japanese?

MIKE

About a billion-six.

TED

All right. If it comes down to the deadline, this is how we'll work it. I'll take on the American banks.

(to ROY)

You'll deal with the European ones.

(to MIKE)

And you'll work on the Japanese.

ROY

You just heard on the phone for yourself, didn't you? The banks won't budge. They want us to take the Japanese deal.

MIKE

He's just telling it like it is.

TED

I expect more resourcefulness from both of you.

MIKE

Ted, I've been on the phone with them and their attorneys practically every day.

TED

That's no reason to call it quits.

MIKE

Whatever you say. But I think it's a waste of time.

TED

Don't be so damn negative.

MIKE

Hey, I get paid to be honest. You want me to lie, I'll tell you anything you want to hear.

TED

Roy here tells me it's too late to call First Boston and try to get some more bids in.

MIKE

Of course, it is. And you have to look at the situation from their point of view. If we make the deal, they make millions. Where do you think that puts them?

TED

Damn, this is one helluva sticky wicket.

ROY

(looks at watch)
Talbot's late.

TED

He'll be here any minute.

(to MIKE)

What's your honest opinion of the bankruptcy ploy?

MIKE

You want my honest opinion?

TED

I wouldn't ask if I didn't.

MIKE

It's a ridiculous waste of time --

(holds up The Wall Street Journal)

-- when you've got front-page articles about your stock going through the roof.

TED

All right. Let's say that option's out. Now, come on, fellas. What about all the tactics other companies dream up to protect themselves from a hostile takeover? Can't you two geniuses pull something out of the hat?

MIKE

First, let's state the case properly. You can't really call the takeover hostile.

TED

I do.

MIKE

Suit yourself. But the facts are the facts. We went looking for an investor, because we need the money.

TED

Don't blame me for that.

MIKE

Ted, I'm not blaming you. But the fact remains. If we didn't have an offer or two, we'd have to go begging.

TED

I've heard enough about our financial ailments. Now, let's talk tactics.

MIKE

There are lots of ways to make yourself look less attractive.

TED

Like what?

MIKE

You can sell off some profitable assets.

ROY
But there's no time for that now.

MIKE
And not many profitable assets.

TED
What else?

MIKE
Assume more debt.

TED
I think we have enough of that, don't you?

MIKE
Yeah. We're well supplied there. And other potential lenders
aren't exactly lining up.
(looks at watch)
Are you certain Talbot is coming?

TED
Yes, yes -- he'd call if he wasn't.

(DOORBELL RINGS)

That could be him now.
(calls)
Juanita, can you get the door?

(JUANITA ENTERS from patio, wiping her hands)

JUANITA
I heard it, Mr. Malcolm. I can't go any faster.
(heads for door)

TED
All right, now, remember. Be cool. We can't let him know we
need him.

MIKE
He might've guessed as much.

ROY
(straightens MIKE'S tie)
Relax. Maybe we've got a chance with this guy.

MIKE

Anything's worth a shot at this point.

(JUANITA opens the door)

JUANITA

Good morning. Aren't you Mr. Loomis?

LOOMIS

(off)

That's right. You have a good memory. Juanita, isn't it?

JUANITA

Yes, Mr. Loomis.

ROY

Loomis? What's he doing here?

TED

He called up and said he wanted to drop by.

ROY

I wish you had told me. He has no place here, now. This is a management meeting.

MIKE

We finally got him off the board.

TED

And I'm the one who put him there. It's only natural for labor to want to have a voice in this.

(JUANITA ENTERS)

JUANITA

It's Mr. Loomis.

TED

Please, tell him to come in.

(to ROY and MIKE)

I think you'll be very glad he's here.

(JUANITA crosses to door)

JUANITA

Please, come in.

(BILL LOOMIS, a heavy-set man in his sixties,
ENTERS. JUANITA leads him into the living room.
HE sees the others and moves toward TED with
a smile)

BILL

Ted, how are ya, buddy?

TED

(shakes)

Fine, Bill, fine. Good to see you. And you?

BILL

Good as a guy of our vintage can be.

(to ROY and MIKE)

Mornin', Roy. Mike.

(shakes their hands)

BILL

Talbot's not here yet?

TED

On his way.

BILL

Good. Sorry I'm a bit behind myself. Got held up makin' my
connection through O'Hare.

ROY

Bill, the question is, why are you here at all?

BILL

I heard Talbot's comin' here to bargain. Like everybody else, I
have to learn from the TV and newspapers.

ROY

This is purely a management affair.

BILL

Says you! The future of thousands of workers is at stake -- and
the union has no place? You gotta be kidding.

TED

Tell them what you told me, Bill.

BILL

I just wanna assure Talbot that, if he goes for the deal, he can expect the full cooperation of labor.

ROY

Well, that's not bad.

MIKE

(to ROY)

He could be helpful, for a change.

BILL

Come on, you guys. I'm never that hard on you.

TED

Bill and I go back a long way. He wants to see an American deal as much as I do.

BILL

You got it. Two vets like Ted and me, we think alike.

TED

Let Talbot hear the good news straight from him.

ROY

All right, you're welcome to stay. But after you've made your point, you should let us carry on without you.

BILL

Come on, guy. You're decidin' the future of a lot of union members. I owe 'em bein' here -- and doin' everything I can to make the deal good for them.

MIKE

Bill, listen. We've got terrible time pressures here. The best way you can get what you want is to say what's on your mind and then leave, so we can get right down to the nitty-gritty.

BILL

Why? So you can screw my boys. No thanks.

TED

Nobody's gonna put the screws to your boys, Bill. Not me, and not them.

BILL

I hear ya, Ted. But when push comes to shove, I'd like to be here. You always understood -- you treat labor right, you get something in return.

TED

All right. Stay.

MIKE

But --

ROY

-- No big deal. Let him stay. If we decide to screw you, we'll do it to your face.

BILL

What a sweetheart! Hey, is this man a sweetheart or isn't he?

(DOORBELL RINGS)

TED

That'll be Clyde.

(calls)

Juanita!

(to others)

Now, remember, we don't need him.

BILL

(jokes)

Right, who the hell needs that ball buster?

TED

(calls again)

Juanita!

(JUANITA ENTERS and crosses to door hurriedly)

Juanita, slow down.

JUANITA

Yes, Mr. Malcolm. Muy rapido but not too rapido.

(JUANITA opens door. Clyde Talbot, a well-dressed, flamboyant, and yet unpredictably somber, man in his late fifties is there)

JUANITA

Mr. Talbot?

TALBOT

That's the name.

JUANITA

Come in, please. Mr. Malcolm is expecting you.

TALBOT

Thank you kindly.

(HE ENTERS. SHE leads him into living room)

TED

(coming toward him)

Clyde, thanks for comin' down. How are you?

CLYDE

What can I say? You buy a private jet to get away from the incompetence of the big airline companies. And then as often as not you have to circle the same damn overcrowded airports. What I need now are my own airports.

(shakes each person's hand)

Roy, Mike.

TED

You know Bill Loomis.

CLYDE

Everybody knows Bill. Whose chops are you breakin' this week?

BILL

You guys, you don't know how good to you I am.

CLYDE

(to TED)

He's the only man I know who can take out your gold fillings while you're talking to him.

BILL

You'll like what I have to say at this meeting. You'll kiss my toes when you hear it.

CLYDE

Sorry, I can't sink that low.

BILL

(to others)

Nice guy, huh?

TED

Can I get you anything to drink, Clyde?

CLYDE

Tanqueray on the rocks would sure hit the spot.

TED

(to JUANITA)

I'll have the usual.

(to others)

How about you fellas?

ROY

Perrier with lime.

MIKE

Diet Coke.

BILL

A nice tall glass of milk. Today, it's labor that gets the real ulcers, huh, guys?

JUANITA

Si. I get everything.

(goes to bar at back of living room)

CLYDE

(looks at watch)

Can we move right along? I've got a 2 o'clock back in Houston.

TED

Sure, Clyde, sure. Have a seat.

(THEY all sit down)

As I told you, Clyde, when I called, I want to go over your offer and see what we can do to make it more competitive.

CLYDE

That's okay with me. But, like I said, it seems to me that I'm out of the running. No way I can outdo the Japanese on this one. Wouldn't even try.

TED

Nobody's asking for that, Clyde. But I need you to get closer.

CLYDE

What's the problem with the Japanese offer? It's generous to the point of foolishness.

ROY

Ask Ted. He's the one with the problem.

TED

That's correct. Just between you and me, I'd rather keep the company American.

BILL

My sentiments exactly.

CLYDE

Your call. But internationalism is a fact of life. Sooner or later, every American is going to have to get used to that.

TED

I'm afraid it goes a bit deeper than that.

BILL

Ted and I, we're vets of the big one. Got it?

CLYDE

Yeah, I got it. I'm a quick study. But how much is that worth?

TED

Quite a bit, actually. My brother was killed at Pearl Harbor.

BILL

Hear that -- his brother. And I got a Purple Heart at Iwo. Shot right in the shoulder. Here, I'll show you.

(unbuttons shirt and pulls it back)

See. I coulda been killed.

TED

A few more inches and they would have gotten you in the ticker, Bill.

BILL

Yeah. But, thank God, they didn't.

(closes shirt)

Aren't you guys glad they missed?

ROY

Oh, delighted.

MIKE

Every week I light candles.

CLYDE

Can we move along?

TED

Sure, Clyde, let's go to it.

CLYDE

How much can I do for you? The stock is terrifically overvalued right now.

TED

Can you, at least, match the Japanese offer?

CLYDE

No way, gentlemen.

ROY

(to TED)

Did I tell you?

TED

Please. I'd like to see if we can come to some sort of middle ground.

(JUANITA arrives with the drinks)

Thanks, Juanita.

CLYDE

Thank ya.

(takes drink)

Cheers!

TED

Cheers to you.

CLYDE

Ah, sure hits the spot.

TED

Yes, it does. Nothin' like a Manhattan to smooth out the day.

CLYDE

Now, let me understand your last point. You'd take less than the Japanese offer?

TED

A bit, yeah.

(JUANITA exits)

ROY

Let's keep in mind that any deal would have to be good enough to sell the stockholders and the banks.

CLYDE

Got ya.

ROY

So you'd have to come close.

CLYDE

I don't know if I can come any higher at all. Christ, when my banks heard the Japanese offer, they threw up their arms.

BILL

I'll tell ya something that'll get them to put them back down real quick -- and into their pockets.

CLYDE

Always willin' to listen.

BILL

You make a deal, a fair deal for everybody, and I can guarantee you the full cooperation of labor.

CLYDE

Exactly what does that mean, Bill?

(to others)

You have to be careful with this wily son of a bitch.

ROY

We've all learned that lesson.

BILL

I'm sayin' that we'll work with you. You have my word.

CLYDE

Can you put a number on that?

BILL

Yeah. I'll let you "exploit" us for five years from the date of purchase. No raises, no increases in benefits.

CLYDE

Shit, I guess you want the deal pretty bad, old boy.

BILL

You could say that, yeah.

TED

Look, Ted. You offered 67 a share. They're at 79. Can you come up to 75?

CLYDE

You think you can sell that?

TED

If you can increase the cash portion, it'd be easier. You've got almost 40% of the voting stock sittin' right in this room --I mean, countin' my wife's shares.

CLYDE

I appreciate your flexibility. But I don't think I can give you what you want.

TED

Why not? A big, famous corporate raider like you? Come on, Clyde, you've amassed --

CLYDE

-- the same damn thing you have. A helluva lot of bank debt.

TED

But you've got blue-chip companies up the kazoo.

CLYDE

Doesn't make a damn bit of difference. I'm still leveraged to hell and back.

TED

You young guys are all the same. Spend, spend, spend -- with no thought of the consequences.

ROY

He's offering you a damn good deal.

CLYDE

Would you like to try to convince my banks? They thought 67 is too high -- way too high, given your recent track record and fiscal problems.

TED

Well, they're full of it.

CLYDE

Are they? Have you taken a look at your goddam debt?

MIKE

What about yours?

CLYDE

That's what I mean. This is a case where one plus one equals minus 2.

ROY

You mean, your debt plus our debt?

CLYDE

Yeah. The combined number's enough to make most of the bankers I know shit their pants.

ROY

These days they're afraid of their own shadow.

CLYDE

In this case, you can hardly blame them. You and I both know that the majority of your assets suck.

ROY

Not exactly true, my friend. With the proper funding, every one of them can turn the corner within a year or two.

CLYDE

Yeah? What about that wonderful baseball team you own?

BILL

Yeah, even I admit that. Those guys are fuckin' hopeless. Even my brother, who lives in the goddam town, can't stand 'em.

ROY

Thanks, Bill. I appreciate your help here.

MIKE

You can dump the ball club.

CLYDE

I'm not sure I'd do that. I'd rather look for a manager who can go in there and kick some ass. I'm more concerned about some of the other businesses you're in.

TED

Not the core business? It's sound as a rock, always has been.

CLYDE

Well, Ted, I have to be honest. The line could stand an upgrade. Those damn machines look and work like they're from the fifties.

TED

I have Roy here to thank for that. He wasn't keepin' his eye on home base.

CLYDE

Be that as it may. I have much deeper concerns.

ROY

Like what? The small appliances are putting in a pretty good performance.

CLYDE

One rose does not a garden make. Let's take a look at the taco joints. The fast-food market is saturated. There's not gonna be a lot of new growth there.

TED

You might find some internationally. Look at McDonalds in Moscow, for God's sake. Who would've ever dreamed of that, huh?

CLYDE

That's true, Ted. But have you tested the waters for Mexican appeal?

ROY

No, not yet.

CLYDE

Then for all you know, you give the Russians a taco, and they could throw up.

TED

Well, there's always Spain. The damn things have got to sell there.

CLYDE

All right. Let's assume there's probably some kind of opportunity there. Now let's get to the real ball buster -- I mean, the real estate holdings. You even mention real estate to a banker today, you gotta call 911. He's on the floor, in cardiac arrest.

ROY
What about the sporting goods company?

CLYDE
What about it?

ROY
It's holding its own.

CLYDE
It's limping along.

TED
All right, Clyde. Given that there are some problems that have to be worked on, let me ask you this. Can you come up at all?

CLYDE
There's some possibility.

TED
How much?

CLYDE
A few points, maybe.

TED
Can you get close to 75?

CLYDE
No way.

TED
What are you thinkin'?

CLYDE
Maybe I can get up past 70.

TED
To 73 or 4?

CLYDE
More like 70, period.

ROY
We can't sell that.

MIKE
No way.

CLYDE

Then, gentlemen, I'm wastin' my time.
(starts to rise)

TED

Now, hold on a minute, Clyde. Can you do less paper and more cash?

CLYDE

Doubt it. Maybe a couple of million.

TED

But you've got 40 percent paper in the deal now. A couple of million's not more than a drop in the bucket.

CLYDE

Well, it's the best this old rainmaker can manage.

BILL

Come on, bud, do better. I'll make it up to you.

CLYDE

Oh, I don't mind givin' it a shot. But I've got to convince my buddies with the bucks.

TED

Then go for it, Clyde. I wanna do business with you. We all do. Isn't that right, men?

CLYDE

You don't have to convince me of that. I know the score.

BILL

Then come on.

(leans back)

Take advantage of me. Opportunities like this don't come along too often.

CLYDE

Not with you, they don't.

TED

You get the price up a bit over 70 and the cash portion up to 50% or so, and I'll swing the deal your way.

CLYDE

I'll see what I can manage. But, I'll tell you now, if I do make the deal, I'll want a free hand.

ROY

How free?

CLYDE

You and Mike can stay on if you want to. But you'll have to execute my plan.

MIKE

Which is?

CLYDE

I'll need a quick pay back. And there's only one way to get it out of this deal. I'd break up the assets and sell them off.

TED

Not the appliance division.

CLYDE

Everything.

TED

But that's still a good, solid moneymaker.

CLYDE

And one of the most attractive aspects of the deal. I can count on it to fetch a good price. You'll make a handsome profit yourself.

TED

I know that, Clyde. But it's been a family business for close to sixty years.

CLYDE

Then go for the Japanese deal. They usually take a pretty hands-off approach. Although in this case, I hear it'll be pretty hands-on.

(to ROY)

They say whether or not they'll keep you?

ROY

Yeah. Actually, they think I'm an asset.

CLYDE

(to MIKE)

Your ass on the line?

MIKE

Nope. As long as Roy's there, my position is secure.

BILL

You'd work for them?

(to ROY)

Just wait till you come face to face with Japanese management techniques. You can forget your home life. You'll be in the office from morning till night.

ROY

I already am.

BILL

(to MIKE)

What about you, buddy?

MIKE

I can work anybody under the table.

BILL

Sure, you can.

MIKE

Hey, I don't like it, I'll walk. Maybe Roy and I can introduce them to the pleasures of life.

ROY

No thanks. That's your department.

BILL

You can do all the jokin' you want. But when they're in control, you ain't gonna be happy. I promise you that. The union's got experience. They work ya too damn hard.

CLYDE

Make a nice change, won't it?

BILL

Fuck you, buddy. Nobody's bringin' back slavery in my work places. My men do good work, but they got as much right as anybody to a sane work environment. The unions fought a long time for the right, and we ain't about to backtrack.

(smiles; to CLYDE)

Except for you, good buddy. For you we'll stand still for five years. So will you get off it and make a deal?

CLYDE

I said I'd try. I just wanted to put my plan on the table, so there are no hard feelings later.

ROY

You know, of course, that the Japanese plan to keep the company together? They're looking at the upside -- of the whole corporation.

TED

I wish you'd do that, too, Clyde.

CLYDE

I will make you one deal, just between us. It goes no further.

TED

What's that?

CLYDE

I'll guarantee you American buyers.

ROY

You know, Clyde, you have a way of stooping that's hard to beat.

TED

I'd want you to stick by that.

CLYDE

You have my word on it.

TED

All right, then, see what you can do.

CLYDE

I'll do my best.

(stands)

I'll be in touch.

TED

We need to hear from you by tomorrow morning, as early as possible.

CLYDE

I know your bank deadline. I'll do what I can. I'd like to do a deal.

TED

You come back with something we can live with, and I'll do my part for you.

CLYDE

Thanks, Ted. I know it's a tough time for you.

(turns to others; puts out hand)

Gentlemen.

(THEY shake)

TED

Let me call you a car.

CLYDE

No need to. Limo's waitin'.

(HE heads for the door; TED follows)

TED

Thanks for comin' down, Clyde.

CLYDE

Glad to oblige you, Ted. You'll hear from me, one way or the other.

TED

Look forward to it. And give those bankers of yours all kinds of hell.

CLYDE

As much as I can manage.

(THEY SHAKE. HE EXITS. TED closes DOOR)

BILL

Nice as hell, ain't he?

ROY

Oh, yeah, he's a real sweetheart.

TED

What do you expect? You fall out of bed, the floor is hard.

ROY

Ted, listen to me. All other considerations aside, the price he's talkin' about won't fly -- not with the stockholders, not with the banks, not with anybody.

TED

It'll fly with me.

ROY

And it doesn't bug you that he'll sell off the pieces?

TED

You know that rubs me the wrong way.

ROY

What about you, Bill?

BILL

No contest. I'll take American buyers any day.

MIKE

Even if you don't know who the hell you'll be working for in the end?

BILL

I know as much as I have to.

MIKE

Ted, you heard him. He plans to sell off the appliance division.

TED

Yeah, I heard.

ROY

So?

TED

It about kills me. But what choice have you left me?

MIKE

With the Japanese, we keep it.

TED

No, thanks.

MIKE

Why?

TED

I'm certain Roy has explained my position to you.

MIKE

Yeah, but --

TED

-- I don't wish to discuss the matter further.

(to ROY)

Maybe I can reason with Clyde about major appliances.

ROY

Don't bet on it.

(PHONE rings; TED picks up)

TED

(on PHONE)

Ted Malcolm... Yes, he is, Dolores. Hold on.

(holds receiver out to ROY)

It's your secretary.

ROY

(crosses and takes PHONE)

Yes, dear?...

(turns to TED)

She's conferencing me with Akiro Tenaka in Tokyo.

LOOMIS

That's the head guy, right?

MIKE

The chairman.

LOOMIS

(to TED)

Some of their head guys are about our age. Wonder if he was one of the banzai boys?

ROY

(on PHONE)

Mr. Tenaka, how are you?... Fine, thank you.... Yes.... I'm afraid so.... I understand that.... Well, that's very generous, Mr. Tenaka.... I know that.... Yes, I will.... Thank you.

(hangs up)

I have some bad news. I mean, I think it's good. But you'll probably think it's the worst thing that could happen.

TED

Well, what is it?

ROY

The Japanese just raised their offer.

MIKE

To what?

ROY

85 a share.

MIKE

Up six dollars?

ROY
That's correct.

TED
Damn, that's not good.

LOOMIS
You can say that again. Where's that leave Clyde?

TED
He'll just have to try harder.

(ROY'S WIFE, CAROLE, ENTERS; SHE'S a good-looking woman
of about 35)

CAROLE
Good morning everybody.

ROY
Good morning, dear.

TED
Good morning, Carole.

CAROLE
How's everything going?

THE CURTAIN FALLS

END OF ACT I

ACT II

Scene 1

Friday morning. Roy is sitting in the living room, with a half-read newspaper on his lap. MIKE is sitting at the glass-and-wicker table, with papers spread about and his portable computer open, but HE'S simply resting his chin on his hand.

TED is sitting at his desk in the den. ANNE stands beside him, her hand on his shoulder. LOOMIS is sitting on the edge of the desk. The financial news is on television.

NEWSCASTER

Now, turning to the financial news. Today is D-Day for MDI. This morning, creditor banks joined stockholders in publicly urging the company to accept the latest Japanese offer, now at 85 dollars a share, to acquire a controlling interest in the giant corporation. Meanwhile, key executives continue to huddle at the Florida home of Theodore Malcolm, whose family founded the corporation. The Malcolm family, which still controls nearly 30% of the stock, is understood to be holding out for a beefed-up offer from Clyde Talbot, the Texas financier. This morning, stockholders are scheduled to meet and vote on whether or not to accept the Japanese offer. If a deal is not struck by noon today, bank executives have stated that they intend to call their 6.4 billion in defaulted loans, a step which would force MDI to accept one of the offers or perhaps try to seek protection under the Chapter 11 bankruptcy act. We'll keep you updated as events develop.

MIKE

How many times can he listen to that horseshit?

ROY

What can I tell you? He's a glutton for punishment.

(CAROLE ENTERS from the patio, drying her hair with a beach towel)

ROY

Did you have a nice swim, dear?

CAROLE

A wonderful swim, thank you for asking. But the water is too salty.

ROY

What else would it be, Carole? It's the ocean.

CAROLE

Can I help it? I think it's too salty.

ROY

I'm sorry. I'll take care of it right away.

CAROLE

You can joke all you want. I just prefer the pool. Have you heard anything?

ROY

Yeah. Ted is gloating. He's made his calls. And we don't have to worry that much about the stockholder meeting.

CAROLE

That's no big surprise, as long as you go along with him. Has Clyde Talbot called yet?

ROY

No, he hasn't. My guess is he's scrambling to come up with a viable offer.

MIKE

If he's scrambling at all, given the new number from the Japanese.

ROY

Oh, I think he'll at least give something a try. He knows Ted will almost give the company to him -- I mean, comparatively speaking.

CAROLE

But it's getting late, isn't it? It's 11:15.

ROY

We know that, darling.

CAROLE

You don't have to be sarcastic about it. Is the deadline the banks gave you still 12 o'clock?

ROY

Even our friend, Ted, can't change that, unless, of course, something unexpected develops.

CAROLE

Like what?

ROY

Don't ask me. I haven't got a clue.

MIKE

We've had all the extensions on the debt we'll ever get -- and then some. So we have to hear from Talbot soon.

ROY

No kidding, bub.

CAROLE

I don't understand how you can just sit there and take everything so calmly.

ROY

Excuse me. Do I look calm?

(raises voice)

Haven't you noticed that my voice has gone up substantially in past couple of days?

MIKE

(rises)

I think I'll take a walk in the garden. If anything happens, give me a hoot.

ROY

Sure thing, buddy.

(MIKE EXITS)

CAROLE

Roy, darling, you can't just sit there and let the minutes waste away. You have too much to lose. We all do.

ROY

I know that.

CAROLE

Have you tried to talk to him about the Japanese offer again?

ROY

I told you he won't listen.

CAROLE

But, sweetheart, you promised me you'd try.

ROY

That's right. And I will. But I'll do it when the time is right.

CAROLE

What are you waiting for? You know if Talbot wins, he'll make your life miserable. He's a complete egomaniac, and you'll just be in his way.

ROY

Don't you think I know that, for Christ's sake?

CAROLE

And what if the banks take over? Where will you be then?

ROY

I know everything you're saying, dear. Believe me. But it still doesn't alter the problem. Ted's just not flexible on this.

CAROLE

He will be, if you tell him you're going to vote for the Japanese offer.

(looks at watch)

It's still not too late. The meeting in New York didn't start till 10:30.

ROY

I know perfectly well what time it is.

CAROLE

Then, for God's sake, do something. Maybe Clyde Talbot can save the day for Ted. But he can't do anything for you.

ROY

I realize that. But I may be willing to put up with Clyde.

CAROLE

And all the consequences?

ROY

I owe Ted a lot, Carole.

CAROLE

Don't you think he owes you something?

ROY

That's for him to decide. I can only speak for myself. How about you? Don't you think we owe him a lot?

CAROLE

Yes, but --

ROY

-- There's your answer.

CAROLE

You're too nice. Just too nice.

ROY

Maybe that's why you love me.

CAROLE

All right. You want to be a sacrificial lamb, there's nothing I can do about it.

ROY

Thank you.

CAROLE

But, darling, I don't even think you're being honest with yourself about that.

ROY

I don't know what you're saying.

CAROLE

You know how much higher the Japanese offer is now. I'm surprised Talbot hasn't called and said he's giving up.

ROY

Frankly, so am I. But he hasn't, and he undoubtedly knows about it.

CAROLE

Roy, I appreciate the way you feel about Ted. I like him a lot, too. But when he's wrong, he's wrong. And you have to have the courage to stand up for the only thing that makes sense. Do you want to just sit there and risk losing everything we have?

ROY

Not especially. Let's take the worst possible case. The banks move in. I'm out of a job, in debt us to my eyeballs, and broke.

CAROLE

We can always sell some paintings.

ROY

Exactly. I appreciate that.

CAROLE

But you told me the banks might even confiscate them. Or force us to sell them to pay off our debts.

ROY

That's a possibility.

CAROLE

Then what will we do?

ROY

Don't ask me. Maybe I'll become a homeless person and camp out in front of corporate headquarters.

CAROLE

Do you always have to make light of everything? I want to have a serious discussion with you.

ROY

What do you call what we're having?

CAROLE

You never take me seriously.

ROY

You're wrong about that.

CAROLE

Then listen to me. You've worked too hard. And you're not a kid anymore. You can't start over. Like it or not, I think you have to talk to Ted. Maybe he'll listen now. He knows how late it's getting as well as we do. Roy, now is the time. Soon, it will be too late. Do you want me to talk to him?

ROY

No way.

CAROLE

Then you do it. Roy, the vote could be taking place right now. And it'll be noon before you know it. If you're going to do anything, you have to do it now -- right now.

ROY

All right. I'll give it one more shot.

CAROLE

Thank you, sweetheart. And don't let him play on your feelings the way you always do. Be really firm with him.

ROY

Look, I'll do my best. I can't do more than that.

CAROLE

All right, sweetie. But if he doesn't listen to you, I'll get on his case. No way I'm going to let this silly, and totally unnecessary, thing happen to him or us. No way!

ROY

Baby, you are a bitch on wheels. You know that?

CAROLE

I don't like when you call me things like that. I'm the best thing that ever happened to you.
(kisses him)

ROY

I know. But what does that say about the rest of my life?

(TED, ANNE, and LOOMIS ENTER from the den)

TED

(smiles; rubs hands together)

We know something CNN doesn't. I've got 51, maybe even 52 or 53 percent of the vote locked up, including my wife's. Right, dear?

ANNE

Yes, darling.

TED

Meanwhile, I wonder what's doing with Clyde. I sure wish he'd call with something.

LOOMIS

You aren't the only one. This waitin' could drive ya nuts.

(to TED)

You want me to give him a call?

TED

Not a good strategy. Let him come to us. I'm sure he's trying to get his ducks in a line.

LOOMIS

Yeah, but how much longer can we take this? I'd rather have the Japs putting bamboo shoots under my fingernails.

TED

You're right. Waiting like this is pure torture. I'd prefer being up to my ass in a sand trap.

ANNE

Now, don't any of you worry about this too much. I just know Mr. Talbot will call with good news. I can feel it in my bones.

TED

Well, I sure hope your bones are right this time.

ANNE

They're hardly ever wrong, and you know it.

(to CAROLE)

Did you enjoy the beach?

CAROLE

Yes, Anne, thank you.

(to TED)

Roy has something to say to you.

TED
He does?
 (to ROY)
What's up, son?

ROY
It's nothing, really.

TED
Now, come on, let's hear it.

CAROLE
If you won't tell him, I will.

LOOMIS
 (to ROY)
Hey, the wife has lots of spunk.

TED
She always was a firecracker. Isn't that right, Roy?

ROY
That's one word for it.

TED
Well, what's on your mind?

ROY
Have you looked at the clock recently?

TED
Yes, I have.

LOOMIS
Every ten seconds.

ROY
What do we do if Talbot doesn't call by noon?

TED
He knows what our deadline is. He'll be calling any minute.

ROY
What if he does? I don't like his deal anyway.

TED
But you haven't even heard it yet.

ROY

I've heard enough. I don't like any parts of it.

TED

I believe we've already had that discussion.

ROY

Then let's stick to the main point. He'll never be able to match the Japanese offer now.

TED

I'll settle for close enough.

ROY

If you can get it out of him. Are you really ready to accept the plans he has for the company?

TED

Who the hell is? But I'm hoping we'll be able to work that out later.

ROY

He was very candid about his intentions. My feeling is he'll come in like a bull in a china shop.

TED

I won't permit that.

ROY

You won't have a say. He'll be in control. Of you, me --

TED

-- So that's what's got you going? I told you, I'll make a strong case for you.

ROY

Don't waste your time. I've thought about it. And there's no way I'd work for him.

TED

You'd rather work for --

LOOMIS

-- the Japs?

ROY

At least, they plan to keep the company together.

LOOMIS

Roy, my boy, they're just tellin' you that right now. What'll you do if they change their minds?

ROY

I'll cross that bridge when I come to it. My opinion, for what's it's worth, is, given the choices we have, the Japanese offer is far and away the best one on the table.

TED

Roy, what are you saying? We have an agreement, don't we?

ROY

We had one.

TED

Roy, don't betray my trust in you now. You know how I feel.

ROY

I'm very sensitive to your feelings, Ted. You can believe that or not. But there comes a time --

TED

-- when you double-cross me?

ROY

You can call it whatever you want to. But --

TED

-- I don't want to hear anymore about it. We have an agreement, and that's that. The Japanese deal is out.

ROY

I think you should reconsider.

TED

What, and sell out?

ANNE

Ted, please.

(to ROY)

Don't you upset him anymore.

TED

Stay out of this, Anne. I'm all right. What do you expect me to do, Roy -- go back on everybody and everything I believe in, for the so-called almighty dollar? Well, let me tell you -- I've done some pretty skunky things in my life, but I'm not going to give on this one. No, sir.

LOOMIS

I'm right there with ya, Ted. We got principles at stake here.

ROY

Principles? Like what? Lasting hate? Hate that never dies?

TED

Memories, Roy. Memories. A brother killed, a family destroyed.

ROY

Ted, I'm sorry, it's time to put the past behind you.

TED

I simply can't do that.

ROY

At least, do it enough to let you think straight about this.

TED

I don't need any help in that department. This old brain can still sort things out pretty well -- and call a spade a spade.

LOOMIS

You mean, a Nip a Nip?

ROY

You two guys sound like you're in an old World War II movie. What is this, The Sands of Iwo Jima, starring John Wayne? Come on, snap out of it. The past was a long time ago.

LOOMIS

To you, maybe. You didn't have to go through what we went through.

ROY

I was in Vietnam. That's enough for me. But it's behind me, see. I'm a free man. Just like Martin Luther King, I am "Free at last! Thank God almighty, I am free at last!"

LOOMIS

In my state, we don't yet recognize that man's holiday.

ROY

Have you told your black union members how proud you are of that? I'm sorry, but I'm different. I only see two kinds of people -- nice ones and nasty ones. And I don't give a damn what color they are. They can be chartreuse, for all I care. Ted, listen to me. This is the last thing I wanted to say to you. Before I put us at the mercy of the banks, I'm calling the shareholders meeting and voting for the Japanese deal.

TED

You wouldn't dare! Not after all I've done for you!

ANNE

Roy, how can you even say such a thing to him?

LOOMIS

To Ted -- to the man who made you everything you are?

ROY

Well, Bill, I've had a little to do with that myself. But I'm sorry, men. Somebody's gotta have some common sense around here.
(heads for PHONE)

LOOMIS

That ain't common sense, kid. That's some kind of snake oil.

TED

Roy, don't you dare pick up that phone. I forbid it!

ROY

I'm sorry, Ted. I'm doing the best thing for all of us.
(picks up PHONE)

TED

Why, you ungrateful son of a bitch!

CAROLE

He is not. He's just trying to do the only sensible thing.

TED

You stay out of this, Carole. Do you hear me? Now, Roy, you listen to me --

ROY

-- No, you listen to me. You may not like the Japanese deal one bit. But we're still better off taking it. Because if we don't, our ass is grass.

TED

I don't give a damn! There's more at stake here than money.
Don't you understand that?

ROY

I'm calling.
(starts to dial)

LOOMIS

You know something, kid. You are a slime ball. A real slime ball. I knew it the first time I laid eyes on you across the bargaining table. I always knew it.

CAROLE

Don't you dare talk to my husband that way.

LOOMIS

Hey, sorry, lady. But the truth is the truth, even if it's a bitter pill to swallow.

ROY

Lay off her, will you?

CAROLE

(to BILL)
Talk about slime balls? I'll tell you who the real one is -- you!

TED

Can you two stop it?
(goes to ROY)
Now, look, Roy, you're wrong to do this to me. Now, hang up that phone!

ROY

You want me to call from the corner drug store, I'll do that.

BILL

(to CAROLE)
And you call me the slime ball?

CAROLE

Oh, plug in your brain -- or shut up!

ANNE

Carole, please.

CAROLE

I'm sorry, Anne. But he deserves it.

TED

Roy, please, don't do this to me.

ROY

(on PHONE)

Hello, Dolores.... Hold on.

(puts hand over receiver)

I told you, I'd go along with the Talbot deal, even though he and I mix like oil and water. Face it! He's in, I'm out.

TED

You are not.

ROY

(on PHONE)

I'll be right with you, sweetheart.

(to TED)

Well, let's just assume that I know who I can work for. Now, I owe you that much. You put me in the job; I'll put myself out of it. But Talbot has still not called -- and the bank deadline is less than a half-hour away now.

TED

Give him another ten minutes.

ROY

I don't have another ten minutes to spare.

TED

Then give me time to call him, for God's sake.

ROY

You really want to do that?

TED

No, but if you force my hand.

ROY

If you consider saving the company from our creditor banks forcing your hand, so be it.

(on PHONE)

Dolores, I need to get a message to the shareholders meeting.

TED

You go ahead and do that. And I'll get on the phone right now and sway enough votes my way to win, despite what you do.

ROY

Sure, you will -- in the next ten or twenty minutes.

ANNE

Roy, you can't do this to Ted. He's not supposed to be put under pressure.

ROY

If I could avoid it, I would. But he's the one who's being stubborn.

TED

You call my allegiance to my dead brother and my parents stubbornness? I'd say it's something much finer than that.

ANNE

Roy, you owe it to Ted to stand by him, no matter what happens.

ROY

What I owe him is my best judgement.

LOOMIS

Yeah, and what do you owe your workers? What about the thousands of guys who've sweated their butts off year after year, to turn a profit for you, so you could turn them over to the Japs?

ROY

I'm doing what's best for them in the long run.

LOOMIS

Like hell you are!

ROY

Butt out, will you? This is a management decision.

LOOMIS

Management, my ass. We're all in this together.

ROY

Are we? What the hell do you care if Talbot breaks up the company? You and your union members will still be employed. And what do you care if the banks move in? The things they do probably won't change the course of events for your men at all.

LOOMIS

What if the banks fuck up the whole damn company? What about all the jobs then?

ROY

Do you think they'll shoot themselves in the foot? Even they aren't that stupid. They'll probably take the Japanese deal themselves.

(on PHONE)

I'm sorry, Dolores. I'll be right with you.

LOOMIS

Jesus! There's something wrong here when a man -- when thousands of men can't call their own shot.

(to TED)

The son of a bitch is probably right.

ROY

Thanks for the compliment, Bill. At least, you see my point. We'll have the worst of all possible worlds. We lose control. And your friends from Tokyo move in.

LOOMIS

I'd fight the banks on that the same way I'm fightin' you on it.

ROY

Do you think they'll listen?

LOOMIS

The son of a bitches better. Or we'll close 'em down.

ROY

That's cuttin' off your own nose to spite yourself. You mean you'd do that, rather than work with the Japanese?

LOOMIS

For the Japanese.

ROY

The company will still be 49% American.

LOOMIS

You can have it. That's not for me. No way is it for me. I can't stand those fuckin' Nips.

ROY

Nice talk, guy. Why don't you face facts? It may be the best you'll get.

LOOMIS

Says you.

ROY

I've had enough of this conversation.
(one PHONE)
Hello, Dolores.

TED

Bill, I've got to hop on the other phone right away. After he's done his dirty work, you listen for Clyde's call.

ROY

I'll listen for his call.

TED

Sorry, son. I've lost my trust in you. I regret the day I met you.

BILL

Don't worry, Ted. You can count on me. I'll let you know when he calls.

TED

Thank you, Bill. I appreciate that.
(heads for den)

ROY

(calls)
Go ahead and make your calls. But don't forget. You had to break your chops to get together the votes you did. Practically everybody wants the Japanese deal but you and Loomis here.

TED

I'm no quitter. I'll make the calls I can.

ROY

You already went through everybody you know.

ANNE

He's right, Ted. If he wants to vote against you, there's nothing you or anybody else can do now. So you might as well relax.

TED

Damn, how could such a thing happen to me?

ANNE

Please, Ted, sit down.

TED

No, I'm not in the mood to sit down. What I want to know is, why does a man have to live long enough to face times like this?

I thought I was just gonna be able to slip off into the grave without anymore big upheavals in my life.

ANNE

Don't you talk that way. You're going to live a long time.

TED

Not like this I'm not.

ROY

If you'd make the right damn decision, I'm sure you'll live a very long time.

TED

Yeah, and at perfect peace with myself. I mean, am I askin' too much after a lifetime of hard work, just to be able to enjoy a peaceful retirement? Can't a man ever just play golf until he drops? Is that too damn much to ask?

ROY

You can play all the golf you want, if you listen to me.

TED

But my brother --

ROY

-- Your brother would not want you to hurt yourself, Ted. He knows you love him, believe me. If he knows anything, he knows that.

TED

(goes to cabinet and takes out photo; looks at it;
takes out flag and looks at it; starts to cry)
Excuse me, I --

ANNE

(goes to him)
Please, dear, don't.
(to ROY)
See what you've done to this dear man.

ROY
I'm sorry. All right. I take it back. I won't vote for the Japanese deal.

CAROLE
Roy --

ROY
-- You heard me.
(on PHONE)
Forget it, Dolores.
(hangs up)

CAROLE
Roy, how could you --

ROY
-- Oh, shut your fuckin' mouth!

CAROLE
How dare you talk to me like that! I'm your wife.

ROY
Then behave like one and try to understand what's going on here. What are you, made of stone? Remember, people don't judge you by how you treat them as much as they judge you by how you treat other people, especially the helpless ones.

TED
I am not helpless!

ROY
I wasn't referring to you at all. I was talking in general terms.
(to CAROLE)
Case closed. I don't give a damn what happens anymore. Ted's feelings have to come first. No matter how much we disagree with them, we owe him that.

CAROLE
Fine, great. All right. So that's it. I agree. We'll all go broke together.

ROY
Thank you.

TED

(puts photo and flag back; turns to ROY)
All right, Roy. You came my way. I'll go yours. I'll at least talk with the Japanese.

LOOMIS

Hey, Ted, good buddy. Why? That's not necessary.

ROY

You mean that?

TED

Yeah. I'm not promising anything. But I'll talk. You get 'em down here. Now, if you'll excuse me...
(turns to leave)

ROY

Thanks, Ted.

LOOMIS

Now, hold on here. Ted, listen to me. This ain't at all necessary.

TED

I've made up my mind. I'll talk.

LOOMIS

Well, dammit, I haven't. Now, I don't want to talk to you this way, Ted. But you're sellin' us out.

TED

I'm just doing what I think is best for the company, Bill.

LOOMIS

I hate to say this, but that's the problem. When it comes right down to it, you management types are all alike.
(to TED)

Well, you can count me out. My boys don't work for no goddam Japs.

ROY

Then maybe they don't work.

LOOMIS

Don't try to make the situation sound worse than it actually is.

That won't work on yours truly. Now, get this and get it straight. My members aren't slaves. They're dignified American working men. They don't fit into, or deserve, so-called Japanese management techniques and their fuckin' dehumanizin' herd mentality. Those things are for people who don't have anything else on their minds but work. Here we got individuals, highly developed individual Americans. Now, they've done a lot of things right for you guys over the years --

ROY

-- and we've paid them for it.

LOOMIS

Thanks, kid. You don't know your ass from a hole in the ground.

ROY

I don't? Have we gotten a fair return for the kind of wages and benefits we've paid and continue to pay?

LOOMIS

Your darn right you have. And remember -- there haven't been that many increases lately, especially compared to workers overseas. Our sacrifices are helpin' to make you profitable.

ROY

To an extent, that's true. But let me ask you this. Can you honestly say we've gotten the kind of quality out of them that the Japanese get from their workers?

LOOMIS

You got what you deserve. Look, you gotta use my boys right. You gotta use their strengths, not their weaknesses. Sure, you ask 'em to screw some teeny-weeny screw in better than the Japanese with those little hands of theirs, and I'll be honest. There are times when you ain't gonna get it. But you give 'em a better way to do it -- or something interesting to do, something to build besides some second-rate, me-too product, and they'll go for it. You'll have more quality than you need.

ROY

Every way we work can't be better, and every product we make can't be new.

LOOMIS

We know that. And in lots of cases, my men break their chops to make ordinary kinds of junk salable. But a lot more of the machinery we work with and the products we make could at least be state-of-the-art! And it's you management brick-brains not investin' enough in constantly ...

LOOMIS (CONT'D)

... improvin' the work place and comin' up with new products your fellow Americans truly want that's takin' my guys out of their element. Imagine that! You got people who know hardly anything about us -- and you do such a bad job of plannin' that they can build products we want more than the ones we build for ourselves. There's somethin' wrong there. Damn wrong! And I'll tell you the principal reason. You're too busy grandstandin' for the stockholders, instead of puttin' the bucks where they belong -- back into the company. For Christ-sake, this country has even had a head start in area after area, and you assholes have blown about all of them. And you know why? Because deep down you're cynical -- you're cynical about investin' in tomorrow. Pay dividends and acquire, acquire, acquire -- that's all the hell you know! Well, just because you don't know what the hell you're doin' my men don't have to eat shit.

TED

Bill, I don't think you have to lecture us.

LOOMIS

Not you, Ted. Him.

ROY

We invest millions of dollars every year in research.

LOOMIS

Yeah, just enough to play catch-up. In the meantime, don't use my boys as a cheap excuse. In my humble opinion, you management types only have one excuse for livin' -- and that's to keep the little people gainfully employed. You blow that, you're not for shit.

ROY

I've done the best I can.

LOOMIS

Are you doin' it now, with this deal you're pushin'?

ROY

I think so.

LOOMIS

Horseshit! Just don't try to get it past me. It's time to draw the line on all this slavin' accordin' to Japanese ideas. And the union's drawin' it here!

ROY

Look, you can grandstand for your members all you want. But let's face it. You've got other reasons.

LOOMIS

You're right, kid. It's called "Made in America." That means, made in America by Americans for Americans. Got it?

ROY

Who made your TV, Bill? Come on, what's the brand name -- Sony?

LOOMIS

What's that got to do with it?

ROY

There comes a time when the past belongs behind us all.

LOOMIS

Speak for yourself.

ROY

Okay, then, what I want you to do is remember everything.

LOOMIS

Whaddaya mean?

ROY

Everything! That means, first of all, that you get one of Ted's golf clubs and go out in the garage and beat the hell out of his Mercedes. It's German, isn't it? We fought them in World War II, didn't we?

LOOMIS

What he owns is his business. I own a nice American-made Buick.

ROY

Then don't drink anymore English tea.

LOOMIS

What the hell does English tea have to do with anything?

ROY

Remember the Revolutionary War?

LOOMIS

Come off it, kid. Don't fuck with my memories. The past is a sacred item to me -- and to everybody who lived it. And that ain't gonna change as long as guys like me are around.

ROY

Come on, Bill. If the English deal would've come through, how would you have felt? The big English players are no picnic to work for, either. They want their money out.

LOOMIS

They're nothin' like the Japs. At least, the English were our allies in the big one. Right, Ted?

TED

Yes, they were.

ROY

But, there you go, forgetting the Revolutionary War again.

TED

Now, Roy, that really was a long time ago.

ROY

So was World War II.

TED

Not nearly so long ago.

LOOMIS

We've still got first-hand experience there.

ROY

Then let me ask you this. When you go into an Italian restaurant, and the maitre 'd greets you with a smile, do you remember what side the Italians were on?

LOOMIS

Excuse me. The Italians are not takin' over the whole goddam world.

ROY

Who is, Bill?

LOOMIS

You know damn well who is.

ROY

Come on, let's get with it. American is the really big player here. You have to trust that.

LOOMIS

While we let them make saps out of us.

ROY

We do need to pressure them on fair trade; sooner or later, they'll realize their best interests will be served by dropping the barriers. Maybe we'll have to get a bit rough to teach them that. If so, I'm sure we will. But something else is already happening over there that will finally tell the tale. The Japanese worker is starting to realize that there's more to life than work -- that success should have its rewards. In time, they'll become as demanding of the comforts of life as we are. They're only human. They want the good life, too.

LOOMIS

You like these people, huh?

ROY

A Chinese fellow once told me the Japanese are the nicest Asians there are.

LOOMIS

(to TED)

He shoulda been on Iwo. Banzai!

ROY

I'm talking about now. Every country goes off the track from time to time.

LOOMIS

Not this one.

ROY

No? What about the Civil War? You call brother shooting brother being on the track? Now, let's face it. The Japanese are our sincerest flatterers. They've imitated us as completely as any country can imitate another one. And they've become peaceful, hard-working people.

LOOMIS

They're gonna put us out of business someday.

ROY

Get real, Bill. The two richest countries in the world don't have to worry about such things, and that's what America and Japan are. I'll tell you something else. Right now, America and Japan are the two most likely countries on earth to bring the benefits of modern life to the rest of the world. Do you have any idea how many jobs there could be in that one?

LOOMIS

Try and sell them on it. They ain't got your ideals, boy. All they think about is money, money, money -- and stickin' it to us for winnin' the war.

ROY

You can think what you want to about that last delightful comment of yours. But let's address the first one. Money didn't get them where they are. Hard work did. And that's something for your boys to think about.

LOOMIS

Go to hell.

TED

Come on, you two. I said I'd talk to them. Let's just leave it there.

ROY

Okay by me. I'll call Yoshi and set it up.

TED

I don't ever want to see that fellow again.

ROY

But --

TED

-- You heard me.

(to LOOMIS)

Most arrogant son of a bitch I ever came across. I'm sure he thinks we're all a bunch on assholes. We've got the most successful nation in history here, and he has no doubt that we're all assholes. I'll tell you what that sort of thinkin' amounts to. That's the way he gets back at us for having to imitate us.

Seems about the hardest thing for people to do is feel simple gratitude for help rendered.

ROY

But, Ted, who else is there to talk to? He's the president of the goddam company. The chairman, you wanna talk to the chairman, the goddam World War II pilot?

TED

I was one of those goddam pilots myself. Might as well get the worst over with now.

ROY

Jesus. But there's no time to get him over here. He's in Tokyo. It takes two days to fly here.

TED

You work it out.

ROY

What about the banks?

TED

I said, work it out.

(PHONE rings)

Or maybe you won't have to. This could be Clyde with some good news..

(picks up PHONE)

Ted Malcolm here.

(smiles)

Well, hello, Clyde. Good to hear from you. How'd you do?.... I know all about their latest offer. But you can deal with that, can't you, Clyde?.... I understand. So what's the best you've been able to do? 68. And 2% more on the cash portion -- that's now 38% paper. .. Well, that's a bit improved, Clyde. But I was hoping you could do better.... I know. But can you do a little better? Maybe we can still work something.... Okay, but you gotta move.... All right. And do your best, dammit!

(hangs up)

Up a dollar a share!

ROY

That much, huh?

TED

What can I say? The man is trying.

ROY

I'll tell you what he's really trying to do. Steal the company, by playing on your feelings.

CAROLE

I don't understand why you're even interested in his offer anymore.

TED

An old man is like an old piece of wood, Carole. We've got a lot of grain in us, and nobody else is bent quite the way we are.

CAROLE

I understand. But you should be more concerned about Roy's future.

TED

I said I'd talk to the Japanese. You can't ask for more than that.

ANNE

It's a lot, Carole. More than he should have to do.

(PHONE rings; TED picks up again)

TED

(on PHONE)

Ted Malcolm.... Yes, he is.

(to ROY)

It's that smart-alecky Japanese fellow. Wants to talk with you.

ROY

(takes PHONE)

Good morning, Yoshi.... Really?

(looks at TED; smiles)

That's excellent.... Of course, he will.... See you soon.

(hangs up)

Well, you don't have to talk to Yoshi.

TED

Why not?

ROY

Because his father wants to talk with you.

TED

Is that so?

ROY

That's it. He's flying in from Japan.

(looks at watch)

LOOMIS

Ted, you don't really want to talk to that guy, do you?

ROY

He said he preferred that to meeting with his son.

TED

I'll tell you this much. Right now, I am not a happy camper.

LOOMIS

Who the hell is?

(MIKE enters from the patio)

MIKE

Did Talbot call yet? We're damn near out of time.

ROY

Yeah, just now.

MIKE

So?

ROY

68.

MIKE

Up one dollar?

ROY

And 2% more cash.

MIKE

Jesus Christ. So much for the great white hope.

TED

Don't write him off just yet. He's still working on it.

ROY

(to MIKE)

Come on. We've got more important things to do than stand around and whine about Talbot. Ted has agreed to talk with the Japanese.

MIKE

You shittin' me.

ROY

Would I kid you at a time like this?

MIKE

What about the bank deadline?

ROY

We have to go for another extension.

MIKE

How the hell are we supposed to manage that? They said, "No more extensions whatsoever."

ROY

I'm painfully aware of that. But Akiro Tenaka is flying in from Japan to talk with Ted about the deal.

MIKE

That's big. He's not known for making trips to this country.

ROY

Let's hope it's big enough. We'll need the weekend just to allow time for his flight to get here.

(looks at watch)

Well, let's give it a shot. Maybe things are finally starting to fall in line.

MIKE

At least, there's a chance. Maybe I should take more walks in the garden.

ROY

Come on! Let's get on the horn! We'll need Monday morning for the meeting.

BLACKOUT

END OF ACT II

Scene 1

ACT II

Scene 2

Monday afternoon. TED and ANNE
are standing in the living room.
LOOMIS is sitting on a chair. MIKE
is on the phone.

MIKE

(on the PHONE)

Arnie, I realize Monday morning is almost over. But you know as well as I do that it takes two days just to fly in from Japan....

I'm telling you, they're on their way from the airport right now.... Yeah, they'll be here any minute. Roy went out to meet them.... Thanks.... Yeah, give it to me....

(writes down number)

I'll let you know.

(hangs up; to TED)

Son of a bitch made me take his home phone number. But I got the afternoon.

TED

Let me know when they're here. I'll be in the den.

MIKE

Sure, Ted.

TED

Bill, I'll want to talk with Mr. Tenaka alone.

BILL

But --

TED

I could have asked you leave much earlier. I can still do that.

BILL

(rises)

All right. I'll be in the guest house.

(takes TED'S arms)

Remember your brother. Remember everything. And don't forget, Clyde could still call.

TED

Thanks, Bill. I'll let you know how things go.

BILL

(to MIKE, as HE leaves)

I want to know if Talbot calls. I want to know as soon as anything happens.

MIKE

You heard what he said. Just be glad you're here at all.

BILL

Thanks, partner.

(BILL EXITS)

TED

(to MIKE)

After they arrive, I'd like you out of here, too.

MIKE

Whatever you say, Ted.

TED

Come on, Anne.

(HE takes her arm and THEY walk to the den and ENTER it. TED closes the door behind them. MIKE goes to the front window and watches)

TED

This is the worst damn day I ever faced. Here I am, 74 years old and about ready to jump into the grave with peace of mind, when this damn thing snags me by the ankle.

ANNE

I don't like it when you talk that way, Ted.

TED

I'm sorry, Anne. But it's how I feel. A man can't help the way he feels.

ANNE

You're the man I love. That's all I know.

TED

I just wish I knew what to do about all this.

ANNE

I'm sure you'll make the best decision.

TED

Will I? Anne, let me ask you something. Am I making this hard on myself for nothing? Am I standing up for the right thing?

ANNE

Of course, you are, darling.

TED

Am I? What's better -- to live according to your memories and the principles you've believed in for so long, or just to go with the flow and stay up-to-date? Maybe I'm just an old fuddy-duddy who'd do the world a great service by stepping aside.

ANNE

There's nothing wrong with memories and principles, Ted.

TED

You've always been sentimental -- the most sentimental person I ever met. I never saw anybody who'd sit for hours like you and look at old photos.

ANNE

Look who's talking.

TED

Yeah, me, the original sentimental sap. Well, I know what my gut is on this one. Even when I begin to question how I feel, I hate myself.

ANNE

What on earth for? You're allowed to think.

TED

But is what I'm hearing inside myself the first rumblings of a cheap excuse? Or is being able to think of the options just part of the decision process?

ANNE

Of course, it is. How else could you make an intelligent choice?

TED

I guess. Why is it that, when it comes to the hardest decisions in life, we always have more questions than answers? I'll tell you, there's no school in the world that prepares you to be a grown-up. Remember, mathematics, geography? That was easy. I wish someone would have at least warned me about how tough it is to take that one big step from the cradle to the grave.

ANNE

You were smart enough to pick me. And I was smart enough to pick you. As long as we're together, everything else is a detail.

TED

A detail?

ANNE

I'm sorry, sweetheart. I was just thinking about us.

TED

You know what. I don't have a fucking clue what to say to this Japanese fellow. How's this? "You killed my brother and all but destroyed the rest of my family, but let's forgive and forget and go into business together?"

ANNE

Why don't you wait to see what he has to say first?

TED

I already know what his intention is -- to close the deal. He isn't flying in from Japan for nothing. The rest is pretty predictable. He wants to find some way to get around the only obstacle to the sale, which is your rather tired and aged husband. I tell you, Roy should've been smarter than to get me into a situation like this. It's not what I deserve, not by a long shot.

ANNE

I know, dear. I know.

(MIKE notices something out the window)

MIKE

(calls)

They're here.

(crosses room to door of den; KNOCKS; TED opens it)
They're pulling into the driveway.

TED

All right. But I'll warn you again -- I don't want that smart-alecky son of his in the meeting. I won't give on that.

MIKE

We'll make sure he's not in attendance.

TED

Thank you. There are limits, you know.

ANNE

(to TED)

Let me make certain that everything is the way you want it to be.
You go relax, dear.

TED

Are you sure?

ANNE

Yes. I'll come and get you.

TED

(gives her a kiss)

You're my sweetheart. I'll be upstairs.

(HE EXITS)

(DOORBELL rings; JUANITA ENTERS and crosses to door)

ANNE

That will be the Japanese gentlemen.

JUANITA

(crosses self)

Jesus Christos! Yo tengo el dolor de la cabeza.

(to ANNE)

That's Spanish for "Jesus Christ. I have a headache."

(SHE opens the door. ROY ENTERS)

ROY

Thank you, Juanita.
(turns back)
Please, come in.

(AKIRO TENAKA ENTERS; HE'S a small, well-groomed gentleman with gray-hair. HE pauses to allow CAROLE to pass before him. YOSHI and MIRO follow. JUANITA closes the door)

CAROLE

Thank you.

AKIRO

(smiles)
The pleasure is mine.
(to JUANITA)
How are you today?

JUANITA

Estoy muy feliz! Very happy.

AKIRO

Good.

ROY

Come right this way. Mr. Tenaka, this is Anne Malcolm, Ted's wife.

AKIRO

Pleased to meet you.

ANNE

(shakes his hand)
Very nice to meet you.

ROY

And this is Mike Robbins. I believe you've talked with him on the phone.

AKIRO

Yes, a few times. Good to meet you.

MIKE

(shakes)
The pleasure's mine.

AKIRO

Of course, you know my son, Yoshi, and Mr. Ayoto?

MIKE

Of course. Good to see you again.

YOSHI

Nice to see you, Mike.

MIRO

Thank you.

ROY

(to ANNE)
Where's Ted?

ANNE

Just relaxing. May I speak with you a moment?

ROY

Sure.

(to AKIRO)
Please, have a seat.

AKIRO

Thank you very much.

(The JAPANESE take their seats, as ANNE and ROY
move away a bit)

CAROLE

(including JUANITA)
Can we get you anything to drink.

AKIRO

No, thank you. I never indulge before dinner.

CAROLE

How about a Perrier?

AKIRO

Nothing, thank you.

CAROLE

I think I'll have one.
(to JUANITA)
That's okay. I can get it.
(crosses to the bar)

JUANITA

Excuse me.

(SHE EXITS)

(ANNE speaks softly to ROY)

ROY

I know that. I'll work it out.

(THEY cross back to the Japanese)

ROY

Yoshi, may I ask you something?

YOSHI

Sure, Roy.

(gets up and goes to him; ROY speaks quietly with him; YOSHI raises his voice)

Why? I'm part of the decision-making process.

ROY

Just let them have their first talk that way.

YOSHI

Is he definite about this?

ROY

Trust me. Nothing will happen any other way.

YOSHI

All right. If that's the way it has to be.

ROY

Thanks.

(THEY cross back)

YOSHI

(to AKIRO)

Malcolm wants to talk with you alone.

AKIRO

I prefer it that way myself.

(smiles; to ROY)

Where is he?

ANNE

Thank you for understanding. I'll get him.

AKIRO

(to YOSHI and MIRO)

Why don't you two dynamos take a few moments to enjoy the beautiful weather.

YOSHI

Yes, father. But if any changes are to be made, I would like to be consulted.

AKIRO

I will call you at the proper time.

(to ROY and MIKE)

Perhaps, you should join them.

ROY

My plan exactly.

(to YOSHI)

How about a walk on the beach?

CAROLE

Mind if I come along?

YOSHI

Please do.

AKIRO

Don't go far. I may want you.

YOSHI

We won't.

ROY

We'll be straight down from the house.

(to OTHERS)

Shall we go?

(YOSHI, MIRO, MIKE, CAROLE, and ROY EXIT through the the patio door)

ANNE

I'll get him for you now.

AKIRO

Thank you very much.

(SHE EXITS to upstairs. HE sits a moment and then rises. HE begins to look over the room and comes to the armoire. HE stops and looks at the photo of TED's brother and at the folded flag. Then he goes back and resumes his seat. TED ENTERS)

TED

Mr. Tenaka.
(HE turns and sees him; stands)
I'm Theodore Malcolm.

AKIRO

Akiro Tenaka.
(THEY stare at each other)

AKIRO

A pleasure to meet you.

TED

Thank you for flying in. Long trip, is it?

AKIRO

Not when the journey is for an important reason. Very nice home.

TED

Thank you. Not bad for an old American businessman.

AKIRO

Age seems to have landed on both our doorsteps.

TED

An unwelcome package, I can assure you.

AKIRO

Too many ailments.

TED

And assorted inconveniences.

AKIRO

Many. But here we are. We have business to discuss.

TED

That's what they tell me.

AKIRO

I have thought about you many times.

TED

You have?

AKIRO

Since my son informed me of your conversation with him.

TED

Oh. He's an arrogant rascal. You should teach him better manners.

AKIRO

He is young. Time will trim his sails.

TED

Yes, it has a way of doing that, doesn't it?

AKIRO

I still keep very active.

TED

So do I. But mostly on the golf course.

AKIRO

You like golf?

TED

Very much.

AKIRO

So do I.

TED

Is that a fact?

AKIRO

Oh, the Japanese are crazy for golf. What is the name of your country club?

TED

Can't tell ya. I'm afraid you'll buy it.

AKIRO

(smiles)

Good, very good. You must understand. In Japan, land is at a premium. Many families live in apartments much smaller than this room.

TED

So I hear. But I'm sure you didn't come all the way here to talk about golf.

AKIRO

No. I like your company.

TED

Thank you. So do I.

AKIRO

A joint venture would open up many new markets, for both of us. That is the positive aspect for us. On the other hand, your company has debt taller than Uncle Sam. Nevertheless, we have made an offer -- an offer that is more than generous. Some call it foolish. Yet you object.

TED

There is one other offer that's still alive.

AKIRO

But only because you object to ours. Why?

TED

No need to go into that.

AKIRO

You know I, too, raised objections, when I learned who you are.

TED

Who I am?

AKIRO

I, too, have a memory.

TED

Oh, yes. I can understand that. Your son tells me you were a pilot.

AKIRO

That is correct. In the Japanese navy. And you?

TED

Bomber Pilot, U. S. Air Force. Stationed in Midway.

AKIRO

(with regret)

Ah, what a time. I suppose you made many bombing runs?

TED

Yes, I did.

AKIRO

Over the Japanese mainland?

Quite a few. TED

Tokyo? AKIRO

I did my duty. TED

So did I. My son told you about my family? AKIRO

Yes. Did he tell you about my brother? TED

He said you lost a brother, yes. Where? AKIRO

Pearl Harbor. You didn't by any chance participate in that raid? TED

I have nothing to hide. I was assigned to one of the Japanese battleships in the area. AKIRO

You participated in the attack on Pearl Harbor? TED

I was very young at the time. AKIRO

Let me understand this. You flew one of the planes that attacked Pearl Harbor on December 1, 1941? On a day that shall forever live in infamy? TED

I was ordered to do so. AKIRO

You were just following orders? TED

More than that. At the time, I thought I was doing the right thing. That thought saddens me very much. AKIRO

TED

Saddens you? What do you think it did to my brother? For all I know, you're the man who killed him.

AKIRO

There is perhaps a chance of that.

TED

I suggest you get out of here before I kill you.

AKIRO

Can you bring my father and mother and sister back to life?

TED

That's not my job. Now, if you'll please leave.

AKIRO

It was an American bomber pilot who killed them. Was it by any chance you?

TED

I was not selected for the missions over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But I wanted to be. You have no idea how much I wanted to be.

AKIRO

Yes, I would have felt the same way. My whole family was incinerated. Do you know what that means? Incinerated!

TED

In a way, yes, I do. My family was also destroyed.

AKIRO

And how is that?

TED

By my brother's death. It hit my family like a hammer blow against fine china. My father and my mother were never the same afterward. They cried till they died.

(goes to armoire and takes out photo)

Do you see this? He was my brother. And you might've killed him.

AKIRO

The likelihood --

TED

-- I don't care about "likelihood."

AKIRO

But --

TED

-- No, I blame you. I'm supposed to be courteous to you today, but you'll have to excuse me. I can't help myself. I blame all the Japanese. And I will not forget! I wear the scar of my brother's death as if it had been my own. I would rather it had been my own.

(puts back photo)

AKIRO

Am I to blame all American pilots for the incineration of my family?

(reaches for pocket)

Would you like to see their pictures? I have brought them.

(takes leather folder from breast pocket)

TED

Why?

AKIRO

Because I want you to see how easily I could hate you.

(holds out photos)

Here. Do you see? This was my father. His name was Hamura.

He was fifty-two when he was killed. This was my mother, Mitsu; she was 49. And this was my sister. Her name was Neeko. She was, as you can see, my younger sister -- 12 years of age. I lost them all -- because of what an American pilot did.

TED

It ended a war you dragged us into. It had to be done to save American lives.

AKIRO

Did it have to be done? Was the measure not excessive?

TED

It saved American lives. And your so-called emperor didn't even quit the war then. Three days later we had to bomb Nagasaki. Then he quit. You bet he quit the war then.

AKIRO

Yes, he did. But let me ask you a question. Do you think that American lives are the only ones worthy of being saved?

TED

I didn't say that.

AKIRO

The war was a great mistake for Japan.

TED

Yes, it was. Now, tell me, how is it possible that the Japanese could have been dumb enough to attack Pearl Harbor?

AKIRO

We thought we would win the war.

TED

Assholes!

AKIRO

Oh, I agree. But a nation may lose its way.

TED

This nation never did?

AKIRO

Is that really true?

TED

We have been unusually sober in most of our decisions.

AKIRO

Yes, I agree. In most of them. But a nation, any nation, may lose its way for a time. The great thing is when a nation finds its way, and the way is peaceful. Japan has found its way. I only regret that sanity seems to come to nations slowly -- often more slowly than it comes to individuals.

TED

You think your nation is sane now? Working like a goddam horde of slaves every day with visions of wreaking, no doubt, vengeance on the United States for the defeat you suffered, by some sort of economic victory -- you call that sane?

AKIRO

No. But I would call it a better idea.

TED

Well, don't expect me to help you along. Not with a company my father founded and I put my life into!

AKIRO

When the offer was made to purchase an interest in the company, I did not know of you. And I did not know that the poison in my heart is in your heart.

TED

Well, now you know. And certainly you can appreciate the impossibility of my doing business with you?

AKIRO

It is not a one-sided impossibility. I do not even like to visit this country.

TED

Then why did you do it?

AKIRO

I wanted to confront the enemy.

TED

You Japs are crazy as hell! Did you bring a sword, too?

AKIRO

Not really. I have lived so long with my own deep sorrow, and I have pushed it aside for so long to build up my company and to help rebuild my country, that I wanted -- how can I say this? -- I wanted after all these years to confront --

TED

-- a man who fought on the other side.

AKIRO

No, much worse than that. I wanted to confront a man who still felt the old hatred for us. Because I wanted to feel the hatred again myself. Why, you ask? Perhaps to feel closer again to the time when I lost my family and, as a result, to feel closer to them. Tell me, how does it feel to have the man who may have killed your brother in your home?

TED

I have an old army rifle upstairs. And I'll be perfectly willing to bring it down and shoot you right between the eyes. I mean it.

AKIRO

Please, if you would like to. I have no fear. I would rejoin my family.

TED

You'll be doing that soon, anyway.

AKIRO

That time is not far off for either of us. Was your brother on a ship?

TED

The Arizona.

AKIRO

I saw it docked at the pier. And I saw it in flames.

TED

Did you strike it? Did you?

AKIRO

If I said yes, would the hate you feel bring back your brother?

TED

Tell me. I want to know.

AKIRO

No, my target was the West Virginia. But, if it had been the Arizona, I would have attacked it. I would have attacked it with great hatred and all I skill I had.

TED

Why, you --

AKIRO

-- No, I did not kill your brother. But my intention killed him -- the intention that was in my brain that day, the same intention I shared with the other Japanese pilots -- that is what killed him. Just as the intention, the hatred, you had in your brain during the war was in the brain of the men who actually dropped the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We all shared the same intentions, the same hatreds, and I believe the two of us still do.

TED

I shall never forget.

AKIRO

No, we are not the type. One thinks that business will make the hatred go away. But under the surface -- under all the smiles and the deals -- there is, to some extent, the hatred. Yet, I must confess, even for me it is sometimes mixed with the confusing question of forgiveness. The young generation does not seem to have as deep a problem. My son, Yoshi, remembers what he has learned about it, but he is first a businessman. He likes to make money. To him the war was a mistake we older men made.

TED

I don't believe your opinion of him entirely. I believe he carries a certain amount of the same hate -- and thirst for vengeance.

AKIRO

Perhaps. The river we call time seems to cleanse very slowly. Are the young men who run your company stained by memory as hopelessly as we are? I suspect they are more like Yoshi.

TED

I'll tell you this. They don't remember nearly as well as I'd like them to. No, they don't. But I do believe they will not forget. How can the world ever forget?

AKIRO

It won't. We human beings like to tear at our old wounds, as if reliving the pain over and over is the only way to remember the lessons we are supposed to have learned. Perhaps we should be more concerned about whether we tear at them too much.

TED

Not with these fellas.

AKIRO

I meant us. The real veterans. Do we have to keep tearing open the wounds to remember?

TED

It's the memories that tear open the wounds, isn't it?

AKIRO

Yes, you are right. I hadn't thought of it that way. It is the memories that tear open the wounds. And we will always have our memories. So let me ask you. What hope is there for us?

TED

Not much, I'd say.

AKIRO

Our memories have filled our hearts with hatred. And we will always have our memories. So we will always hate each other. Can that be?

TED

I'm not about to forget.

AKIRO

But I wonder? It seems so hopeless.

TED

What?

AKIRO

I wonder if it is possible to remember and put another value above the hatred. Because we remember, must we hate?

TED

I don't know any way around it.

AKIRO

There is only one hope. We must understand.

TED

Understand what?

AKIRO

That we are all fallible human beings. Fallible human beings, struggling as best we can to make the right choices. All of us, vulnerable partners on this transistor-sized planet. Perhaps, that understanding can let us have our memories without hatred.

TED

Memories of that war?

AKIRO

Maybe not for us. For us it will always be very hard. But one day perhaps it will lead to forgiveness.

TED

Forgiveness? That's a pretty big word.

AKIRO

Very big. No doubt the task will be hard for both sides, and you and I will not live to see it. But maybe one day, with the help of time, there will be enough understanding for our two countries to experience cooperation and friendship, without any undertone of hatred or vengeance. For many perhaps that has already happened. But to me it seems far away. Maybe the only thing we can do today is force ourselves to work together -- the way we often do right now. Perhaps that is the only way to make progress. You hate me and I hate you, but together we make money.

TED

You have no objection to that?

AKIRO

Yes. But somehow I do it every day. It was only when my son told me about you that I was troubled by it. Let me tell you a little about Japan.

TED

No need to go into it.

AKIRO

A few words, before I leave. People talk about tradition. But for many centuries we took almost everything of significance from China. In my opinion, all we have ever had ourselves is the civilization of the samurai -- of the man who kills and then kills himself. Now, however, we have filled the void in a new way. We have adopted the ways of the victor. And perhaps part of our intention is to beat you at your own game. The important thing to understand is that we have very little to fall back on.

Your ways have become our only imaginable way. Oh, I suppose one day we will grow beyond this all-consuming imitation of you.

Perhaps one day our wealth and hard work will lead to the flowering of our own civilization. After all, how much deep satisfaction can we find in Western civilization. We are looking at people who do not look like us or think like us and making them our heroes. Perhaps, we have a civilization of our own, as yet largely undiscovered, that we will one day find. Our only contribution to the general fund of human knowledge cannot be improvements in mass production, miniaturization, and other forms of advanced technology. But we have not yet reached that point.

Or perhaps I am deluding myself. While our own ways may evolve, perhaps the world has become so small that we will always find a large part of ourselves in a worldwide civilization. Perhaps, we will all find a large part of ourselves in such a civilization and make contributions to it. It's a puzzle to try one's brain.

At any rate, perhaps I have overstayed my welcome.

TED

Well, I'll tell you -- you don't seem like a bad sort at all.

AKIRO

I don't?

TED

No, dammit, and I wish you did. Now, don't tell me there are a lot of other Japanese folks like you. My impression is that all you want to do is make money -- and don't know what the hell to do with it once you get it.

AKIRO

Yes, many Japanese only value money. But so do many fools of all nationalities. But it has never been the many who were wise and good. Yet sometimes the few have somehow changed the many. I must be honest. I came here today without the best of intentions. I came to stir up old hatred and, at best, to bargain hard. But now that we have talked, I have lost all interest in that. A small voice in me that I do not understand is whispering a word I cannot yet accept.

TED

What word is that?

AKIRO

It is hard for me to say. It is the big word we mentioned earlier. "Forgiveness."

TED

I'm not about to bow down to that word -- or any words. No, sir, not just yet. But I'll tell ya -- you're a damn hard man to hate. Damn hard, I mean in person.

AKIRO

Nor are you quite the villain I made you out to be. Let me ask you a question. Do you think two old war horses like us could ever embark on a joint venture?

TED

I wouldn't have thought so, no.

AKIRO

Let me make a contribution toward the effort. In the past, when we've acquired a company, I've always demanded a controlling interest -- at least, 51%.

TED

You'd never get that here.

AKIRO

I no longer have any wish for it. To try to put a little lotion on old wounds, I'll make you an offer. Fifty-fifty.

TED

Thanks. But I don't think that's right, either. You invest in a foreign country, you should always take less than 50%. That way people won't hate you so much.

AKIRO

What do you want me to take -- 49%?

TED

At the most.

AKIRO

Now, let me understand this. I am in a position to buy and sell just about any American company that comes on the market -- with cash. And you want to bargain with me?

TED

You'll be lucky if I do. Let me give you some free advice. It's something I learned as a young man.

AKIRO

What is that?

TED

You throw your money around, and even the nicest people hate you.

AKIRO

I don't call offering you a fifty-fifty deal throwing money around. What do you say we make the deal an experiment in cooperation between men who can never forget?

(puts out hand)

Let's bury the hatchet. Come on, fifty-fifty. We know how to hate each other. Let's give something else a try.

TED

(sticks out hand)

I never thought it would come to this. You got a deal, my friend.

(HE puts his arm around him, and AKIRO does the same to him)

But how the hell can I explain it?

AKIRO

Perhaps, you can begin with my son. To him fifty-fifty will be like a sword in the stomach. Do you suppose it would be beyond our capacities to celebrate the deal?

TED

What do you mean?

AKIRO

Can we have a drink?

TED

I'll tell you -- I could use one.

AKIRO

So could I. And I never indulge before dinner.

(THEY cross to bar)

TED

What would you like?

AKIRO

I suppose champagne is out of the question. We're not allowed to feel that good, are we?

TED

Who the hell says so? Champagne it is!
(HE takes a bottle out of the refrigerator
and begins to open it)
Just don't ever make me regret this deal.

AKIRO

I will do my best, and I hope you will do yours.

TED

All right. That's a deal.

AKIRO

Then I would say that regret will not be reasonable, even if it comes to us in the night, when we are alone with our memories.

TED

I just hope it doesn't come.
(takes down glasses and pours the champagne;
puts down bottle, and THEY hold up glasses)

AKIRO

Theodore --

TED

-- Call me "Ted."

AKIRO

Ted, may our two companies have a great future together.

TED

So be it, Akiro.

(THEY drink, as ROY, CAROLE, MIKE, YOSHI, and MIRO appear at the patio door and notice the toast; THEY enter)

ROY

(to MIKE)

Will you get a load of this?

MIKE

I can't believe it. Maybe they're poisoning each other.

YOSHI

Father, what has happened?

AKIRO

We have made a deal, my son.

YOSHI

What kind of deal?

(BILL enters and sees the champagne)

BILL

Ted, can you explain this?

TED

No, I don't think I can. But I'll try.

BILL

Save your breath! I can see for myself. I wouldn't have believed it, Ted. Not you.

TED

I can't believe it either, Bill. But if you'll have some champagne, I'll try to explain.

BILL

Skip the bubbles. Give me the facts.

TED

I can only tell you this. We'll make it good for you and the unions. I promise you that.

AKIRO

We have made a fifty-fifty deal. So we can't do anything without each other's agreement.

YOSHI

Fifty-fifty?

AKIRO

Yes, my son. I am sorry.

YOSHI

But, Father --

AKIRO

-- Enough, Yoshi. This is not the first time such a thing has happened between the Japanese and the Americans, and it will not be the last.

BILL

Well, I can tell you right now. When you talk about labor practices, you're gonna have to talk to me.

AKIRO

(to TED)
A union man, no doubt?

TED

Yes, and the best there is. You'll like him, if you can stand him long enough to get to know the old cuss. He's a vet, too.

AKIRO

Oh, I see. Well, then, we will all have to be doubly nice to each other. That is the new way. Ted and I have decided.

BILL

Just so you don't try to take advantage of my men. You do that, and --

TED

-- Don't worry, Bill. Remember, it's a fifty-fifty deal. I promise to be there for you as much as an old coot like me can promise anything. Now, have a drink, will you?

BILL

All right. But not too much of the stuff. I'm still pissed off.

(ANNE ENTERS)

TED

Anne, sweetheart, come here.

ANNE

Ted, what's going on -- a celebration?

TED

(to AKIRO)

You tell her.

AKIRO

After all these years, your husband and I have made peace. We will work together without any of the old hatred. At least, we will try.

ANNE

And you're happy about this, Ted?

TED

Let's just say I feel satisfied with it. Strangely, but unquestionably, satisfied.

ANNE

And what about you, Roy?

ROY

Hey, let's face it. I like the deal.

(PHONE RINGS; TED picks up)

TED

(on PHONE)

Ted Malcolm here.... Clyde, how are you?... Sure, let's hear it.... That's your final offer?... I know that, Clyde. But, to be perfectly honest, having you break up the company and sell it off in pieces to any buyers, be they American or not, just doesn't have as much appeal to me as it used to.... No, the fact is, I've decided to go ahead with the Japanese deal.... I assure you, I'm as surprised as you are.... Thank you. And let me thank you for all your efforts.... Good-bye, Clyde.

(hangs up)

Well, so much for good old Clyde.

(raises glass)

Gentlemen, to a great future together.

AKIRO

A great future together.

ALL

(raise glasses)

Cheers!

(THEY drink. TED takes a few steps to the armoire and looks at the photo of his brother. HE raises his glass of champagne)

TED

I love ya, kid! You know that.

THE CURTAIN FALLS

END OF THE PLAY