

(Typing heard; phone rings.)

MISS DIMPLE: Law offices of Flywheel, Shyster, and Flywheel . . . No, Mr. Flywheel isn't in . . . He's over at the Fischer department store, in conference with the owner, Mr. Fischer . . . You want Mr. Flywheel's assistant? . . . No, Mr. Ravelli isn't in either. He's at the Fischer department store too. I think you can get him over there. (Fading out.) Goodbye.

(Fade in phone ringing.)

SECRETARY: Good morning. This is the Fischer department store, Mr. Fischer's office . . . I'll call him. Mr. Fischer!

FISCHER (away): Not now. Now now. Can't you see I'm busy with my lawyers?

SECRETARY: I'm sorry, Mr. Fischer. (Into phone:) Hello. Mr. Fischer can't be disturbed . . . Goodbye.

FISCHER (approaching): Well, Flywheel, what are you going to do about it?

GROUCHO: Fischer, there's a lot of money involved, and I don't want to do anything that I might regret later.

CHICO: Come on, boss, make up your mind.

GROUCHO: Ravelli, I couldn't have gotten where I am today by making hasty decisions.

FISCHER: Oh, come, come, Flywheel, what do you say?

GROUCHO: Don't hurry me. Don't hurry me.

FISCHER: It's about time you made up your mind.

GROUCHO (deliberating): W-e-l-l, all right then, I'll take three cards.

CHICO: Here you are, boss. (Slap of cards.) One . . . two . . . tree.

GROUCHO: Well, Fischer, what have you got?

FISCHER: I've got four kings.

GROUCHO (chuckles): Too bad, Fischer, old boy. I happen to have five aces.

CHICO (chuckles): You lose, boys. Cause I got six aces.

FISCHER (indignant): Mr. Flywheel, what kind of game do you call this. Your assistant deals himself six aces!

GROUCHO: Well, it was his deal, wasn't it? The trouble with you, Fischer, is that you don't trust anybody. You're a bad loser. However, I'd rather play with a bad loser than a good winner.

FISCHER: Well, gentlemen. The game's over. I'm washed up.

GROUCHO: You'd never know it to look at you.

FISCHER: Come, gentlemen, let's forget the game. I want to talk over with you the serious financial difficulties that my store is in.

CHICO: Sure, dat'sa right, Mr. Fischer, but first let me ask you a riddle.

What'sa difference between you and a skunk?

FISCHER: I'm sure I don't know.

CHICO: I don't know, either. Maybe dere ain't no difference. (Laughs.)

Oh, boy, dat's some joke!

FISCHER (annoyed): Please, gentlemen. I brought you here to give me legal advice. Mr. Flywheel, my store has not been doing very well lately. Unless I can pay off my creditors by the fifteenth of the month, I will lose the store.

CHICO: Hey! Dis is a big store. And if you do lose it, you could find it again easy.

FISCHER: No, no, gentlemen. If I do not have the money my creditors will take the store away from me. As my lawyer, what would you advise?

GROUCHO: Fischer, I advise you to take a vacation. Remember, all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. And a duller boy than you, Fischer, I've never seen.

CHICO: You're right, boss. It was da same ting with my wife. She needed a rest, so I got her a job.

FISCHER: She needed a rest and you got her a job?

CHICO: Sure, when she no got a job, she no gets a vacation, so I got her a job washing clothes. And next summer she gets a week's vacation.

GROUCHO: Ravelli, you ought to be ashamed of yourself—an able-bodied man like you letting your wife wash clothes for a living.

CHICO: Well, I don't want her to wash clothes, but dat's de only ting she knows how to do. Dey wanna give her a fine job in de Eagle laundry, but I no let her take it.

FISCHER: No? Why not?

CHICO: Ah! My wife, she don't know nuttin about washin eagles.

FISCHER: Gentlemen, you don't seem to understand the seriousness of the problem. Our business was very good until they opened that big chain store on the next corner.

CHICO: Well, if da chain store isa doing so good, why don't you sell chains, too?

(Angry voices heard outside door.)

FISCHER: What's that racket? (Knock on door.) Come in.

(Door opens.)

CLANCY (approaching): Come on in here, you!

KLEPTOMANIAC: Let go of me! Let go of me!

FISCHER: What's the trouble, Detective Clancy?

CLANCY: Sorry to disturb you, Mr. Fischer, but we just caught a woman.

CHICO: At'sa fine. What you use for bait?

GROUCHO: Say, she looks pretty small. Maybe you better throw her back in the water again.

CLANCY: No, no, I caught this woman shoplifting.

KLEPTOMANIAC: Let me go. I didn't mean to do it, I tell you. I can't help it when I take things. I'm a kleptomaniac.

GROUCHO: Not one of the Boston Kleptomaniacs? Say, do you happen to know the Ginzbergs of old Virginy?

FISCHER: Mr. Flywheel, let me handle this. If it's the last thing I do, I'm going to *stop* stealing in my store.

CHICO: You oughta stop stealing in your store. If you're gonna steal, steal in somebody else's store.

CLANCY: Mr. Fischer, this woman's been trying to get away with silk underwear and—

KLEPTOMANIAC: Oh, please, please, give me another chance!

GROUCHO: Go ahead, Fischer, give her one more chance at the silk underwear, but if she doesn't get away with it next time, let her wear cotton.

FISCHER: Maybe I'll let her go this time, Flywheel. Jail is a pretty bad place.

GROUCHO: Nonsense, Fischer. If jail was good enough for your father, it's good enough for her.

FISCHER: We won't discuss that now, Flywheel. Young woman, I'm going to give you another chance. But don't let it happen again. All right, Clancy, let her go.

KLEPTOMANIAC: Oh, thank you, thank you—

CLANCY (*receding*): Come on, lady.
(*Door opens and closes.*)

FISCHER: See what I'm up against, Flywheel? It isn't enough that the store is losing money; I also have to contend with stealing. Maybe that's where my profits are going. I'll admit I'm at my wit's end.

CHICO: *Wits* end do you mean? (*Laughs.*) Catch on?

GROUCHO: Ravelli, if you'd only wait to speak until you're spoken to, you'd never have to open your mouth.

FISCHER: Gentlemen, I've got to raise five thousand dollars to pay off my creditors, and I don't know what to do. I've exhausted all my resources.

CHICO: Resources? At'sa too bad. Racehorses don't run a very fast whena dey are exhausted.

FISCHER (*annoyed*): I'm talking about financial resources.

GROUCHO: Look here, Fischer, I'm not going to spare your feelings. You've made a botch of things. But as my father used to say—or was it my uncle Charlie?—no, it couldn't be my uncle Charlie because I haven't got an uncle Charlie. *However*, it doesn't matter who said it *because I've forgotten what he said anyway.*

FISCHER: Flywheel, I don't quite see what you're getting at.

GROUCHO: It's all very simple, Fischer. What this store needs is some thing to stimulate business. I suggest a dollar sale.

FISCHER: A dollar sale?

CHICO: Sure, Mr. Fisch. I explain it for you what a dollar sale is. If you sell a dollar for ninety-eight cents, you'd sell 'em like hotcakes.

GROUCHO: Couldn't we save time by just selling the hotcakes?

FISCHER (*confused*): Well . . . in the present condition of my nerves, I'm afraid I can't handle the situation. Perhaps I *do* need a vacation. Flywheel, what I'd like you to do is to take the place over for a couple weeks . . . and maybe Ravelli could be a floorwalker.

CHICO: Sure, I can be a floorwalker. Whata you tink—I walk on *ceiling*?

GROUCHO: Don't worry, Fischer. He'll make a good floorwalker. What you've got to do is supply the baby. As for my running the store, do not worry, I'll put an end to shoplifting. I'll have your business looking before you come back.

FISCHER: You really mean you'll have my business looking up?

GROUCHO: Certainly. It'll have to look up. It'll be flat on its back.
(*Music in strong.*)

(*Buzzing of voices.*)

WOMAN EMPLOYEE: Fellow employees of the Fischer department store, you've all been assembled here to hear a few words from our new manager, that celebrated lawyer and efficiency expert, Waldorf T. Cumseh Flywheel.

(*Applause.*)

GROUCHO: Quiet! Quiet! . . . That's enough applause—We're cutting down on everything. Employees of the Fischer Bon Ton Merchandise Company, I called this meeting today because I want to publicly reward old Joe Feffer for his forty-five years of loyalty to this firm. Stand up, Joe.

OLD JOE (*approaches*): Yes, Mr. Flywheel.

GROUCHO: Shut up, Joe . . . Joe, I want to tell the folks that you're faithful, loyal, model employee. Folks, Joe is a faithful, loyal, model employee. (*Applause.*) In all his forty-five years of service, Joe has never been known to watch the clock. One reason is that he can't tell time. It's now my privilege to do something for Joe. For his forty-five years of loyal service I'm going to present him with this package of canary seeds. I could have bought him a canary, but I'm sure that Joe would rather plant these seeds and raise his own canaries.

OLD JOE: *Thankee, Mr. Flywheel.*