

= Burns Verkaufen der Kraftwerk =

" Burns Verkaufen der Kraftwerk " (German pronunciation : [b?? ? ns f?? ? ?ka? ? f?n de?? ? ?k?aftv?? ? k]) is the eleventh episode of The Simpsons ' third season . It first aired on the Fox network in the United States on December 5 , 1991 . In the episode , Mr. Burns wishes to pursue other interests and therefore decides to sell his power plant to two German investors for \$ 100 million . Safety inspector Homer is immediately fired by the Germans because of his incompetence . Later , Burns realizes that he has lost all his respectability because he can no longer control anyone .

The episode was written by Jon Vitti and directed by Mark Kirkland . Originally , the writers wanted to have Burns sell the plant to the Japanese , but they decided that it would have been too clichéd ; the plot , however , remained the same with the Germans . The title is a literal , but inaccurate German translation of " Burns sells the power plant " , the correct version being Burns verkauft das Kraftwerk .

In its original airing on the Fox network , the episode had a 12 @.@ 6 Nielsen rating , finishing the week ranked 38th . " Burns Verkaufen der Kraftwerk " received generally positive reviews from critics and was praised for several scenes , particularly the " Land of Chocolate " sequence in which Homer dances around in an imaginary land made entirely out of chocolate . The sequence was also remaking cutscenes from the episode in The Simpsons Game .

= = Plot = =

One night , Mr. Burns tells his assistant Waylon Smithers that he is considering selling the Springfield Nuclear Power Plant so he can pursue other interests . Meanwhile , unconfirmed takeover rumors boost the plant 's stock , which rises for the first time in ten years . Homer learns he owns stock in the company and sells his 100 shares for 25 cents apiece to a shady stockbroker , netting \$ 25 , which he spends on beer . Soon after the sale he learns that the value of the stock has shot up to \$ 52 per share . While Homer misses out on the windfall ? he could have made \$ 5 @,@ 200 ? other employees make small fortunes . Two German businessmen , Hans and Fritz , learn that the plant might be for sale . They offer Burns \$ 100 million , which he immediately accepts . Burns leaves , seeking adventure , while Smithers remains an employee at the plant .

The new owners immediately begin a thorough evaluation of the plant and its employees , their more friendly demeanor pleasing all the workers save for Homer , who worries his lax work ethic as safety inspector will cost him his job . When they interview Homer , he is unable to intelligently answer their questions and begins slipping into a fantasy about cavorting through " The Land of Chocolate " . The owners announce shortly after that Homer will be the only employee fired . A depressed Homer hangs around the Simpsons ' house , insisting he is a competent safety @-@ minded worker while the rest of the family makes budget cuts until Homer can find a new job . Meanwhile , Burns is having a good time in retirement and decides to get together with Smithers for a drink . They decide to go to Moe 's Tavern , where Homer has been drinking . Homer lashes out at Burns , calling him greedy ole reptile , asking him about his money and saying nobody loves him . The other bar patrons join in and taunt Burns , including Bart who stamps on Mr. Burns ' foot and starts singing " Na Na Hey Hey Kiss Him Goodbye " where everyone except Smithers joins in . Feeling humiliated , Burns and Smithers walk out of Moe 's . Burns realizes that his former employees no longer fear him , concludes that only his ownership of the plant gave him power over ordinary men , and decides to buy the plant back .

The German investors , meanwhile , discover that the plant is in bad need of repairs and decide to sell before they sink too much money into it . Burns , noting their desperation to sell , offers them \$ 50 million for the plant , and they reluctantly accept half of what they paid him . Now back in charge , Burns orders that Homer be rehired . He tells Smithers " I keep my friends close , and my enemies closer " and vows revenge on Homer at some unspecified point in the future for humiliating him at the bar . The episode ends with Homer cheering to his family that he got his job back .

= = Production = =

The episode was written by Jon Vitti and directed by Mark Kirkland . It features several German elements , including a reference to John F. Kennedy 's " ich bin ein Berliner " speech . The title " Burns Verkaufen der Kraftwerk " is an inaccurate German translation of " Burns sells the power plant " , the correct version being Burns verkauft das Kraftwerk . Originally , the writers decided to have Burns sell the plant to the Japanese , but they decided that it would have been too clichéd ; the plot , however , remained the same with the Germans . The writers and animators based one of the two German buyers on the German character Sergeant Schultz from the American television show Hogan 's Heroes . By coincidence , frequent Simpsons guest star Phil Hartman happened to know a little German so he helped out with the conversations . Hartman also guest @-@ starred in the episode as Horst and the stockbroker .

The writers had a tough time coming up with Bart 's prank call to Moe 's Tavern and Moe 's reply , in which they could not include any foul language . The writer also wanted to include a longer portion of Burns 's sworn vengeance , but had to trim it in the end . In this episode , the producers decided to start stressing the relationship between Smithers and Burns . Originally , there was a two @-@ minute scene involving the two , but the writers cut it down considerably . The producers also noted the constant flux of the Simpsons ' economic state ; one moment Homer appears to have his wallet full of cash , and the next , they do not even have a saving account . The animators also included a character other than Lenny or Homer with a beardline , something the producers did not like . Originally , when The Simpsons shorts aired on The Tracy Ullman Show , all the male characters had beardlines similar to Homer 's ; however , after the Simpsons became their own show , they decided to drop the beardline for the majority of the characters to make Homer unique . After Homer gets fired , Bart feeds his cat a mixture of 88 % ash and 12 % carrots . The gag came from a real @-@ life experience when Vitti tried to feed his cat a mixture of carrots and ash ; however , the cat simply ate and regurgitated it . The sequence with the Frosty Chocolate Milkshakes in which Bart dreams what he would do with the money from the stocks is a reference to The Tracey Ullman Show shorts .

= = = " The Land of Chocolate " = = =

In the original script , the " Land of Chocolate " sequence was absent , though the dialog that set it up was present (Homer complains to his new German bosses about the candy machines not working , to which one of them replies : " We understand , Homer . After all , we are from the land of chocolate ! ") . Executive producer Sam Simon was the one who suggested that they actually do a sequence in which Homer 's mind wanders off into an imaginary land made of chocolate . The sequence was storyboarded by animator Kevin O 'Brien , who designed it to be a parody of The Sound of Music , but supervising director David Silverman suggested that it be more original . Silverman storyboarded the revised sequence , and tried to make Homer " deliriously happy " as he skipped through the town . He later recalled , " I animated that scene frame by frame , I needed to draw the skip I wanted . Homer 's skipping sets the tone for that show . "

In the sequence there was supposed to be a road sign that read " Hershey Highway " (Hershey 's is a chocolate manufacturer , but the term " hershey highway " refers to anal sex) . However , the censors objected and the writers replaced it with " Fudgetown " . The " Land of Chocolate " sequence was set to a song based on music from the film Tucker . Composed by Alf Clausen , the song was later included in the 1999 compilation album Go Simpsonic with The Simpsons . " The Land of Chocolate " was also featured as a level in The Simpsons Game , which was released in 2007 .

= = Reception = =

In its original airing on the Fox network , the episode acquired a 12 @.@ 6 Nielsen rating and was viewed in approximately 11 @.@ 60 million homes . It finished 38th in the ratings for the week of

December 2 ? 8 , 1991 , down from the season 's average rank of 37th . It finished second in its timeslot behind The Cosby Show , which came in at 11th with a 16 @.@ 8 rating . The Simpsons was the highest rated show on Fox that week .

Since airing , " Burns Verkaufen der Kraftwerk " has received generally positive reviews from critics . The authors of the book I Can 't Believe It 's a Bigger and Better Updated Unofficial Simpsons Guide , Warren Martyn and Adrian Wood , praised the episode , most notably " Homer in the land of chocolate and Smithers counselling Mr. Burns with the aid of his sock @-@ puppet friend , Mr. Snappy the Alligator " . Writing for the Star Tribune , Neal Justin rated the episode as one of his ten favorite episodes , commenting that the scene where " Homer dreams about prancing across a literal ' land of chocolate ' [was] perhaps the most outrageous moment in Simpsons history . " In a list of Homer 's best gluttony moments , Herald Sun 's Mikey Cahill ranked " The Land of Chocolate " as number one . The sequence was also named one of the twenty best moments in the history of the show by Daily Record 's Brian McIver . In 2012 , Johnny Dee of The Guardian listed the episode as one of his five favorite episodes in the history of The Simpsons , noting that it was the " Land of Chocolate " segment that " makes this episode such a classic " . Jon Greenberg of ESPN said the episode is one of his favorites , calling it " hardly an average episode " . He commented that " the sarcastic heart of the story comes at the end , when Mr. Burns realizes that wealth and time do not buy him happiness because no one , not even the scourge of Sector 7G [Homer] , is scared of a powerless despot . "

The episode was study material for a sociology course at University of California Berkeley , where it was used to " examine issues of the production and reception of cultural objects , in this case , a satirical cartoon show " , and to figure out what it was " trying to tell audiences about aspects primarily of American society , and , to a lesser extent , about other societies . "