

SCENE 1.

FX: A BUSY EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT.

DR. LAW: So Mrs. Kenfield, I've called you in for this meeting as we have serious concerns about your son George and his attitude to his studies.

MRS. KENFIELD: Frankly Dr. Law, I have my own concerns. When George enrolled on this accountancy degree at, what I believed to be, the highly respected Metropolitan Business Academy, I expected him to be taught legal, ethical and above board practices. I did not expect him to undertake a module called "Cooking the Books"!

DR. LAW: Mrs Kenfield, this is exactly the problem. "Cooking the Books" is your son's disparaging term for the module that is actually called "Creative Accountancy".

MRS. KENFIELD: You can call it what you like. Fiddling the figures is wrong. I've brought George up to be a good boy.

DR. LAW: And that's the root of the problem! George's ethical stance will do him nothing but harm in today's workplace. It's certainly a stance which our educational establishment does its best to discourage in our students.

MRS. KENFIELD: That much is becoming apparent. George has always been diligent and hard working . Straight A's all the way through primary and secondary school. Why is he suddenly a problem student?

DR. LAW: Let me give you an example. We recently introduced the concept of augmenting financial data to yield previously non-existent earnings.

MRS. KENFIELD: You'll have to forgive me, I'm just a lay person. How about we try that in English?

DR. LAW: It's a complicated concept. I'm not surprised you have trouble with it. Yet in the class discussion which followed your son stubbornly held to his assertion that it is indeed very simple. He maintained that such a procedure constitutes false accounting and is clearly dishonest. This despite assurances by us to the contrary.

MRS. KENFIELD: George has always been very keen on fair play. It's a cause for celebration at most educational establishments.

DR. LAW: Not at the Metropolitan! Here we're looking for more than just "bean counters". We expect our graduates to practice accountancy with imagination and flair. We're not just "book keepers". We're alchemists, conjuring profits out of thin air, and then hiding them !

MRS. KENFIELD: Not, "cooking the books" at all then.

DR. LAW: I can see where your son gate his attitude from. George gave equally short shift to accelerating revenues by utilising off-balance-sheet items. He claimed that such techniques are immoral, illegal and constitute massive corporate fraud. It's wilfully high-minded, and it's something we take a dim view of here at the Metropolitan. It is with regret that we have to inform you that we feel

unable to let George progress on to the next module, High Yield Junk Bond Derivatives.

MRS. KENFIELD: You know where you can shove your module. Right up along with your augmented financial data.

DR. LAW: There's no need to take that attitude. Should George demonstrate a willingness to let go of out of date dogma and fully get on board with our ethos, we will of course review the situation.

MRS. KENFIELD: That won't be necessary. There is no way George will be coming back to this institution.

DR. LAW: Not everybody is cut out for Creative Accountancy. George is young. He's got time to find a field more suited to his temperament. Does he like sports?

MRS. KENFIELD: He's keen on football.

DR. LAW: Excellent! There's a place going at the Mondo Athletico Sports Academy. One of their boys had to drop out of the Professional Fouling course due to a rather messy shattered shin. I can put a word in for you if you like. The Honorary President is Vinnie Jones.

MRS. KENFIELD: Vinnie Jones you say. That sounds like an excellent suggestion. Thank you so much.

THE END.