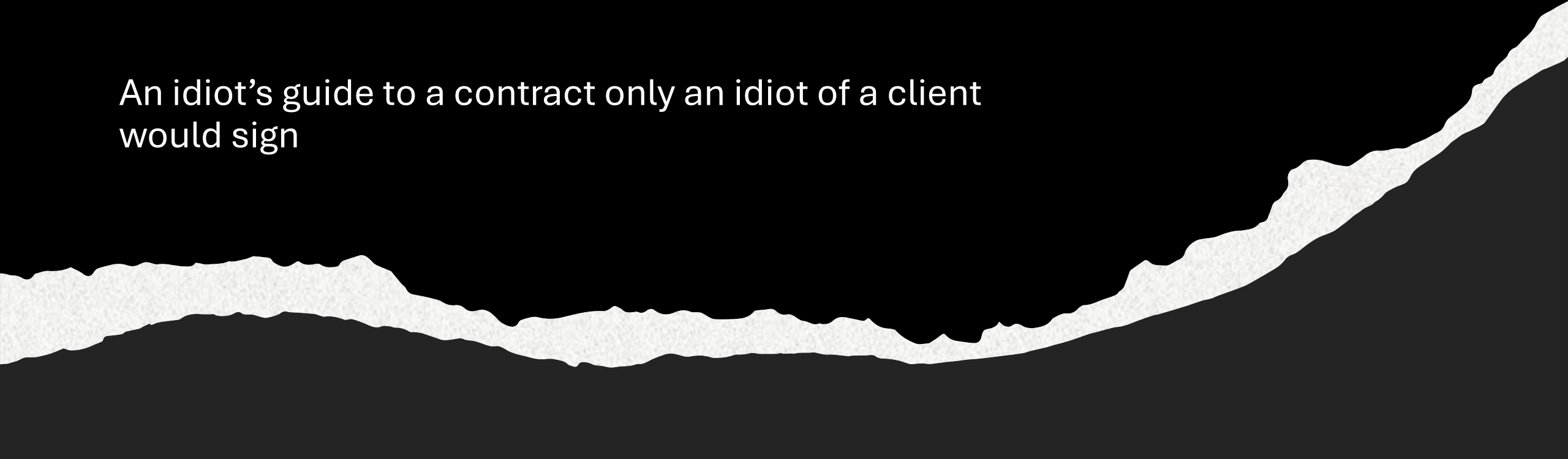


2025 Crime Contract

An idiot's guide to a contract only an idiot of a client
would sign



A history lesson

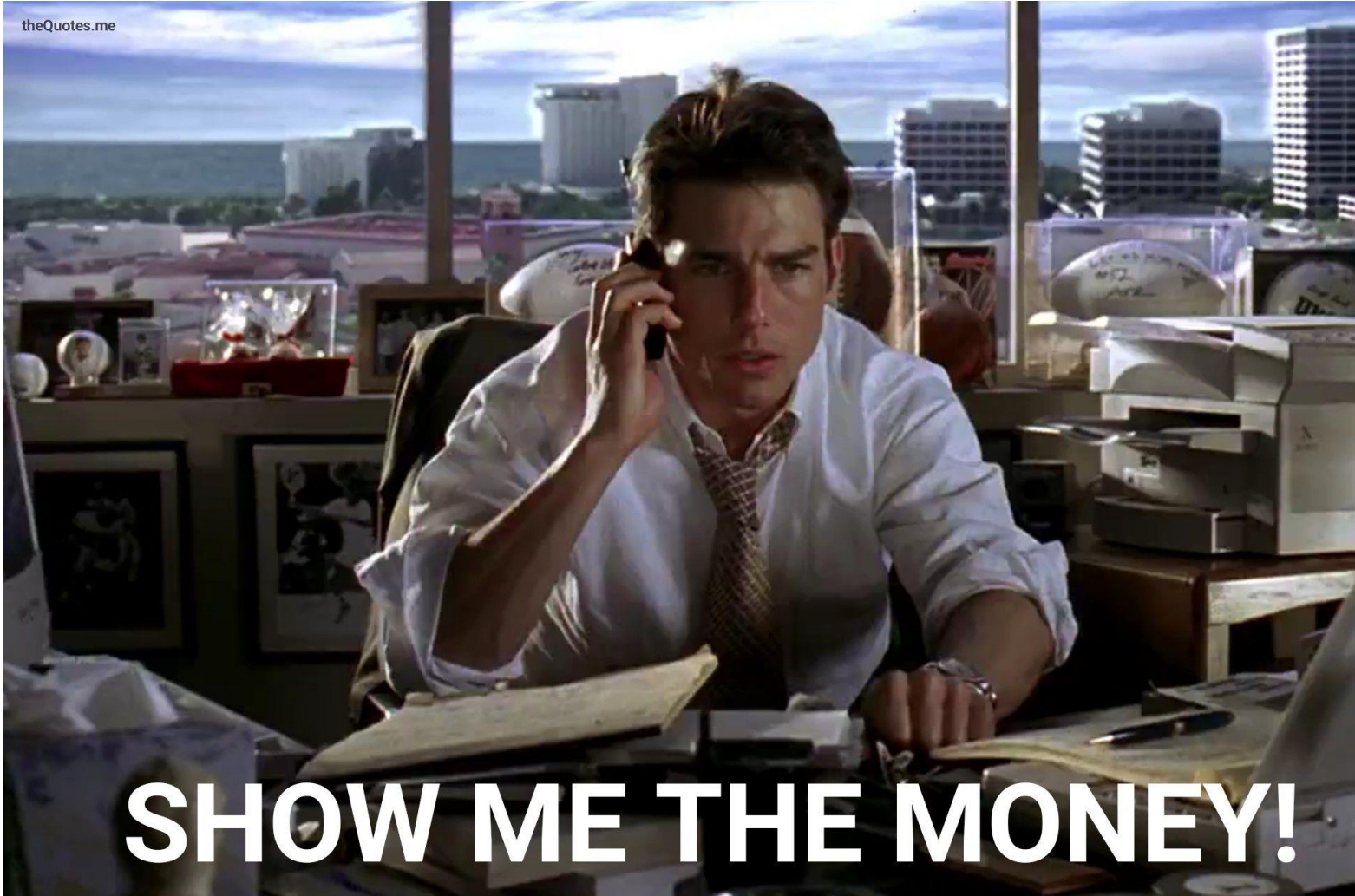
- ▶ 2022 contract was shorter than usual
- ▶ Awaiting Bellamy and potential reform

New contracts : where are we ?

“We are considering suggesting that solicitors do not undertake criminal defence work. There appears to be little future in this practice area unless the government gives solicitors parity with barristers and grants the bare minimum 15% rate increase recommended by its own independent review”

(Law Society, September 2022)

So.....



SHOW ME THE MONEY!

Funding Legal Aid ?

- ▶ CLAIR uplift of 15% is still AWOL
- ▶ Lower Crime Consultation outcome months overdue
- ▶ No sign of a sensible LGFS reform
- ▶ Not even a hint of improved rates

LAA internal document - not for circulation

- ▶ Contract between suppliers and **L**ucifer's **A**bominable **A**gency
- ▶ Surrender your eternal soul
- ▶ 10 years of indentured servitude
- ▶ Deliver up your first born
- ▶ Sign in blood...

Key terms

- ▶ Much the same as the one we have come to know and loath
- ▶ Shorter, simpler contract
- ▶ Key differences
 - ▶ Supervisor Changes
 - ▶ Relaxed Office Requirements
 - ▶ 10 years !!!
 - ▶ ‘Always on’
 - ▶ Overt references to terminating early in the event of reform
 - ▶ Audit changes
 - ▶ Cyber Essentials

Supervisor Changes

- ▶ Remote supervision
- ▶ Removal of 1:4 ratio
- ▶ Supervise more than one firm
- ▶ Possible Supervisor market
- ▶ SRA ?

Office Requirements

- ▶ Office requirement relaxed to 5 hours a day.
- ▶ 8am to 8pm
- ▶ Consultation on Office Requirements/Scheme boundaries in first few years

Term of contract

- ▶ 10 years
- ▶ 'Always on'
- ▶ May be terminated early
- ▶ Consultation on Scheme Boundaries

New Audit rules

- ▶ Peer Review as before
- ▶ SQM - 5 year cycle
- ▶ Lexcel ?
- ▶ Stage 1: 31 January 2025
- ▶ Stage 2: 15 June 2025
- ▶ Stage 3: 3 weeks

2024 Contract - new rates

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Rates cut in real terms



Should you sign ?

- ▶ 40% of firms have left Legal Aid in a decade
- ▶ 45% of Duty Solicitors have left
- ▶ Rates are effectively lower than before - real terms cuts
- ▶ No market stability

Deal or No Deal ?

“No deal is better than a bad deal” ?



Pass ?

- ▶ Phase 1:

- ▶ Closes 22nd October 2024 for October 2025 rota

- ▶ Phase 2:

- ▶ Closes 30th April 2025 for January 2026 rota

- ▶ Phase 3:

- ▶ Always on - not tendering no longer a 'permanent' decision (30 September 2034)
- ▶ join the first available Duty Rota following successful Verification

So.. how was hell?

Or better
the Devil
you know ?



THANK YOU FOR LISTENING



ANY QUESTIONS?

Questions ?