

The Careers Development Sketch
by Mark Allen

INT – A CAREERS DEVELOPMENT ADVISOR’S OFFICE - DAY

MR SEARLE IS A CAREER DEVELOPMENT ADVISOR SITTING BEHIND HIS DESK FLICKING THROUGH SOME PAPERS. THERE IS A KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

MR SEARLE Come in.

A SMALL BOY ENTERS DRESSED IN SCHOOL UNIFORM. HE LOOKS NERVOUS.

MR SEARLE (CONT’D): Sit down (BEAT) So Luke, have you any idea of what you want to do when you leave school?

LUKE: I’m not really sure, sir.

MR SEARLE STARTS WRITING ON HIS NOTEPAD.

MR SEARLE: Excellent, excellent... I’ll put down clueless then.

LUKE: Well, I have looked at a couple of things, but I haven’t decided yet.

MR SEARLE: What have you looked at then?

LUKE: I’d quite like to be an actor.

MR SEARLE: That’s not a proper job. It’s a past time for perverts and layabouts. Forget it. Anything else you’ve thought of?

LUKE: I like writing.

MR SEARLE: Writing is a verb, it’s not a profession. (BEAT) Think of a proper job. With wages.

LUKE: Criminal psychology sounds interesting.

MR SEARLE: It might sound interesting, but I’ve got your predicted grades here Luke. (BEAT) You’re far more likely to become a criminal than a psychologist. Anything else?

LUKE: Not really sir.

MR SEARLE: Excellent. (BEAT) Let's see what you should really be then. You've filled out our form on the computer, and it's looked at your weaknesses to come up with a sensible job for you to do. Do want to know what it is?

LUKE: I suppose so.

MR SEARLE: Lifeguard.

THERE IS A LONG, AWKWARD PAUSE.

MR SEARLE (CONT'D): Does that sound like something you'd like to do? (PAUSE) Luke?

LUKE: No sir.

MR SEARLE: Why not Luke? You can swim.

LUKE: I just don't want to.

MR SEARLE: Don't knock it until you've tried it Luke. (BEAT) I think you'd make a very good lifeguard... with your little whistle.

LUKE: It's boring.

MR SEARLE: Every job's boring Luke. That's why they're called jobs and not... funs. (BEAT) You've got to do it – the computer says.

LUKE: There was another job I was thinking of, sir.

MR SEARLE: Go on then Luke, tell me.

LUKE: I want to be a careers development advisor.

THERE IS A PAUSE.

MR SEARLE: Why would you want to do that Luke? (BEAT) It's not all as glamorous as I make it look you know.

LUKE: My Dad says it's easy.

MR SEARLE: Well I can tell you it's not Luke. (BEAT) it can be very challenging.

LUKE: My Dad says you get paid for doing nothing but sit there telling other people what they should be doing and letting your computer come up with suggestions rather than offering practical advice.

THERE IS A PAUSE WHILE MR SEARLE COMPREHENDS THIS.

MR SEARLE: Well, you can tell your father that he underestimates the duties of a career devel...

LUKE: (Interrupting) He says that he bets no career development advisor ever started out wanting to be a career development advisor, so they're the last people in the world that are qualified to give people advice on how to pursue their careers.

THERE IS ANOTHER LONG PAUSE WHILE MR SEARLE REFLECTS ON THIS. HE STARES DOWN AT THE DESK.

LUKE (CONT'D): I think you should be a lifeguard.

THERE IS A LONG, AWKWARD PAUSE AS MR SEARLE LOOKS STRAIGHT AHEAD.

LUKE (CONT'D): Can I go now sir?

MR SEARLE: Yes.

LUKE GETS UP AND LEAVES THE ROOM QUIETLY. MR SEARLE OPENS HIS DESK DRAWER AND TAKES OUT A WHISTLE, PATHETICALLY BLOWING IT BEFORE PUTTING IT BACK IN THE DRAWER AND RESTING HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS.

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