

INT. PROFESSOR'S OFFICE

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON, 50, types away on his laptop.

A knock at the door. CRAWFORD, 22, leans in.

CRAWFORD  
You wanted to see me?

Professor looks up momentarily and goes back to his laptop.

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON  
Crawford! Yes... come in. Sit down.

He types.

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON (CONT'D)  
Aw, dammit. You ever play Castle  
Warlord?

CRAWFORD  
Um, no sir. I haven't.

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON  
Good for you. It's addicting. I  
can't get past the iron knight.  
He's guarding a bridge, it's  
impossible to get past him.

CRAWFORD  
Sounds challenging.

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON  
So.

Crawford is not sure how to react.

CRAWFORD  
So?

The Professor looks at him awaiting a response.

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON  
So... you wanna tell me anything?

CRAWFORD  
Sir, you called me in for this  
meeting.

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON  
I did. And you have something to  
tell me.

Crawford looks confused.

CRAWFORD

Professor Livingston, I don't have any idea what you're expecting me to say. I don't have anything to tell you. I've enjoyed your class.

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON

Well that's good. Enjoying your other classes as well?

CRAWFORD

I am. I particularly like Professor Griffin's class. She helped me to get my internship.

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON

I'm aware of the internship, yes.

Crawford knows this.

CRAWFORD

Of course, you uh... you signed off on it. You're well aware.

Professor Livingston takes his time.

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON

I am. I'm aware of your class load, your workload, and your commute. You're shouldering quite the burden.

CRAWFORD

I'm sure other students are doing the same.

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON

You taking any shortcuts? Sure there's not anything you'd like to share with me?

Crawford ponders.

CRAWFORD

No sir, I... no sir.

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON

Going once, going twice, going--

CRAWFORD

Sir, I have no idea what you're trying to get out of me.

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON  
Your essay regarding how you  
would've made your argument in this  
week's hypothetical case.

Crawford slumps in his chair.

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON (CONT'D)  
Mmm hmm. There's at least one  
student per semester who tries to  
get away with something purchased  
from the underground... clever  
answers to tough scenarios. Hadn't  
used this case in fifteen years  
though. Had no idea that Luke's  
answer was still floating around  
out there... or that it was for  
sale.

CRAWFORD  
I am so sorry. I have been burning  
the candle at five ends if that's  
possible. Yes, I took a shortcut.

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON  
Luke Iverson was one of my  
brightest students and we stay in  
touch... he has a thriving practice  
in Seattle. He'll be amused to hear  
that someone tried to pass his work  
off as their own. And then he'll be  
disgusted. Like I am.

CRAWFORD  
I would say that I have no excuse,  
but let me try to explain.

Crawford waits for Livingston's approval. He gives it.

CRAWFORD (CONT'D)  
In addition to my internship, class  
load, and the commute to both  
locations, I am trying to help my  
sister with her kids and hold down  
another job.

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON  
That's not wise, Crawford. Are you  
getting any assistance? Grants or  
loans for school?

CRAWFORD

That's part of why I have the real job, part-time, is to uh, help pay back a family member who loaned me money for my undergraduate. Things are... it's just one of those times in life when everything that can go wrong, is going wrong. I didn't pay anything for the answer that I used... I found it... online.

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON

Where?

CRAWFORD

In a law forum that has those sort of things. I'm not proud of it.

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON

Well of course not. Didn't bring you in here to gauge your pride on your cheating. Cheating... sounds really awful doesn't it? Especially in an ethics class.

CRAWFORD

Yes, sir. It does, and I realize what could happen because of--

Livingston interrupts.

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON

--I consider myself to be a pretty good judge of character, and I can see this is outside of yours. I'm not going to have you expelled. But I'm going to let someone else decide whether or not you should be allowed to continue at Bradford. Call this number.

Livingston hands him a card.

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON (CONT'D)

And ask for Luke Iverson. Tell him what you told me. Apologize. He'll decide.

Crawford inspects the card.

CRAWFORD

This is the same... the guy? He's the one who was your student?

Livingston nods his head affirmatively.

CRAWFORD (CONT'D)  
Shit. I mean, thank you. I'm so  
sorry that--

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON  
Save your apology for Mr. Iverson.  
If he decides you get to stay, then  
you're in.

CRAWFORD  
I hope he does. Thank you.

Crawford gets up to go, turns and starts to walk away.

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON  
And Crawford... email me the phone  
number of the relative that you owe  
money for your undergrad. I wanna  
help.

CRAWFORD  
Wow. Thank you... but... what if  
Mr. Iverson doesn't forgive me?

PROFESSOR LIVINGSTON  
Luke's tough, but he's fair. And  
the law needs you... I told him  
that myself. Listen to every word  
he has for you. Get your shit  
together, son.

CRAWFORD  
Yes, sir. Thank you, sir.

Livingston nods. Crawford exits. Livingston ponders.

END SCENE