A CONCRETE EXAMPLE

CHARACTERS:

 WORKMAN (W:)

 EXECUTIVE (E:)

2 men at a bar. One in workmen’s clothing – jeans, t-shirt, boots. The other is dressed in a suit and tie. Both are drinking.

W: My wife said she’d leave me. I can’t take that. No way. She’s my life.

E: I know. I know. My wife also threathens me, but I don’t think she can support herself alone. So she’s stuck with me and my salary. Gives us lots of things. I mean, I love her, I do, I do. It’s just that sometimes I feel so smothered. (Takes another large swallow from his drink.)

W: Life sucks.

E: You can say that again.

W: But you know what sucks more?

E: What?

W: Owing money to the banks. First, there’s the mortgage. I bought when interest rates were high. Then I have the credit card bill. My wife loves to spend my money. Then I pay my daughter’s college loan. That really sucks. My wife siaid we weren’t gonna send our only child to a community college, no she had to go to a private college. One of those up near Boston.

E: You’re fucked!

W: You can say that again. I’m working my ass off. Money in. Money out. My wife had to go back to work so we could pay all these debts. We’ll be working till we both retire.

E: You think you’re gonna retire? That’s no in the plan.

W: What do ya mean? The plan?

E: The plan the banks have for us.

W: What plan? What’s the mystery?

E: Listen, it is a mystery. Look, I have a wife, a house, and two cons in college. I don’t have any debt, but I always work. See this cell phone? If my boss calls, you know damn well I’m gonna jump. That job is my lifeline to all I have. I’m just hoping it doesn’t get outsouced to India or… last job went to Peru to three of them for one of us. Dammit. (slams his hand on bar table)

W: Whoa there. (puts arm around E). It’s okay. Don’t worry now.

E: But this country sucks! You don’t know how they have screwed all of us. I’ll never retire, if I can keep a job. All the jobs are going to cheap labor around the world.

W: I know. I haven’t gotten a raise for years. But my debts don’t go away. I still owe them.

E: It’s the money system.

W: Money system?

E: Where our money comes from.

W: I know. I know. I work 60 hours a week to get money, and it all goes to the banks.

E: No, you earn money. But who creates the money?

W: Well, I guess the damn government.

E: No (takes another drink from his glass)

W: Listen. If our government doesn’t create it, who does? Money doesn’t grow on trees.

E: Money doesn’t grow on trees, but it comes out of thin air.

W: (raises hand to bartender Here, let me buy you another drink. I think you need it. I didn’t know you believed in magic. (laughs)

E: Yes, I believe in magic, and hypnosis, and dark dark secrets. (gets a gleam in his eye)

W: Listen, let’s stay real.

E: Okay. Like this. (takes out pen and paper from his coat pocket). How much is your mortgage?

W: Okay (questioning what is happening). 350 thousand.

E: How long?

W: 30 years.

E: Interest rate?

W: 5%

E: Okay. So, the bank gives you 350 thousand dollars today, and you have to pay for 30 years and return to them 700 thousand dollars.

W: Why did my wife have to live in a damn house in the suburbs? Crap. (takes another gulp from his glass)

E: And your credit cards?

W: 10 thousand dollars.

E: Rate?

W: 20%

E: Ouch! Do you pay more than the minimum?

W: That’s all I can afford.

E: (takes out a calculator and types some things). Well, you’ll pay down the credit card in 14 years for a total of 17 thousand dollars.

W: They got me by my balsl!

E: And your kid’s loan?

W: Well, we’re paying it for her since we co-signed and she hasn’t gotten a job yet that even allows her to live away from us. It’s 150 thousand cause she got a partial scholarship, thank God. Bright kid. 3%, but we got a great deal. We only pay a minimum of 3 thousand a month.

E: Wait. (types into his calculator) In 30 years, you will have discharged this debt, and paid back 171 thousand dollars.

W: You’re a whizz at this stuff. You’re not a banker, are you?

E: (laughs) No, I’m a mortgage and credit broker. I sleep this stuff.

W: Jesus, so that’s your black magic?

E: No, no. Not my job. (he waves his arms as he describes the scene). Picture this. One day several years ago, I’m lying on my bed watching my TV. I was fed up with TV for several years but I still watched documentaries. So, I was watching this documentary and the narrator suddenly says, “The U.S. government will print up some bonds using paper and ink. The government then sells 10 thousand dollars worth of bonds to the banks. Then the banks print up some bills with Washington and Hamilton and Lincoln on them. And the banks exchange the money for the bonds, and, presto!, 10 thousand new money has been created. The money supply is now 10 thousand dollars larger!” Well, I was dumbfounded. My mouth was open so wide it hit the fuckin’ floor!

W: But it doesn’t’ mean it’s true.

E: And then the documentary says, “Today, the banks don’t print up dollar bills, they make accounting entries into the account of the U.S. government. Today, money is checking accounts and very little cash circulates.” Well, I started researching. At the time, I was working for a bank. So I started looking around my job too.

W: So?

E: I was dizzy for months. I couldn’t compute that banks create money. Why, whoever had such an idea! I kept saying to myself, “They didn’t teach us this in school.” And that’s what bugged me so. I was an A student all my life. But I had never heard this!

W: I don’t believe it.

E: It’s true. I found other people who had studied this. Written books about it. Were trying to actually change the money system, so the banks couldn’t create money any more. You see, it’s a system that’s been spreading around the world, and it’s all fuckin’ secret. They don’t want us to know anything about it.

W: (takes another drink) Hard to believe.

E: Here, let’s look at you. (looks at his calculator) You owe 350 thousand mortgage, 10 thousand credit card, 150 thousand student loan. That’s (… does some calculation) a total of 510 thousand loan principal.

W: Oh, shit.

E: And you’re paying in interest….. (does more calculations)….350 thousand mortgage, 7 thousand credit card, 21 thouasnd student load. That’s a total of…. (more calculations)… 378 thousand dollars in interest.

W; Oh, shit, shit. (takes another drink)

E: So, the banks have created 510 thousand of new money… out of thin fuckin’ air!

W: Mister, are you sure?

E: But wait…. This is the kicker. It took me years to figure this out. It was too horrible to figure. The 378 thousand of interest is never created by the banks.

W: Well, why would they have to?

E: How are you gonna pay them 378 thousand of interest if it doesn’t exist.

W: I’m really confused. I work and I work and I’ll get it.

E: But it doesn’t exist. You see, the diabolical system they’ve created! We all borrow from the banks – governments, businesses, people – but the system never creates the money for all the interest.

W: Hold on there! Why is our government borrowing from the banks?

E: Ah, now you’re honing in on the core of this system. Yes, yes, yes. You got it! (raises his glass in a toast and takes a gulb). Our government gave the power to create money away to the private banking system.

W: No! What are you talking about?

E: Proof is the 19 trillion dollars in debt our government has.

W: 19 trillion? Trillion?

E: Listen, here’s the key to this fiendish system. Because your 378 thousand in interest is never created, along with all the interest on all our money created by the banks, we all have to keep borrowing and borrowing and borrowing. That’s how we got 19 trillion dollars of debt for the government. Unless we keep borrowing to pay the interest – which remember doesn’t exist – the debts will not be paid and the system will collapse.

W: You mean, like the Great Depression?

E: Yes, but this system has crises every 20 years. We’re on one unstable ship. And our jobs have gone overseas… so how are we all gonna pay our debts?

W: Bartender, fill them up again (holding up his glass).

E: (Holds up his glass) Here’s to black magic!