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## Rule 1: Fin

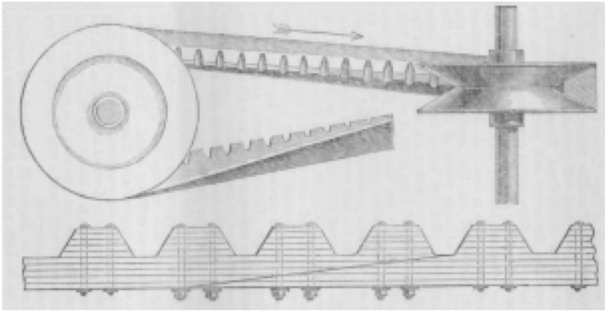


Image 02: Improved Belting

Simple: Survival depends on not being a victim. Life is full of predators, learn to spot them.

Always, always, always, wherever you are, whatever you are doing, whoever you are engaging with, always check for fin. That is rule number one and once you forget this rule then you are just a bleeding corpse drifting around aimlessly in the ocean of life.

When you are a child there is the tooth fairy, Santa Claus, the noble knights of the realm and heaven where good people go once they die. The world is a place filled with people who are basically good, treat others honourably and like to be good neighbours. The Hollywood film industry for the whole of its history has told stories of the honest lawyer, the journalist defending the truth and the common humanity of the heroes of politics and war. Then you grow up.

The problem with growing up and entering the adult world is if you arrive there believing there are laws, standards of behaviour and fairness for all. Laws are for the rich and powerful to use against everyone else.

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Standards of behaviour are a conspiracy against the humble and fairness for all is a cruel trick of the mind played on the gullible. We are animals fighting for survival in a dangerous world and if you do not understand that then you are already seeping blood into the water.

**Text Note 01:** *In observing the natural world we see that all of life is dependent on death. Everything is eating everything else. Life is a food source and nothing eats rock! In this natural world there are those that eat and those that are eaten. That you are a new born Gnu is of no importance when a Lion snatches you with your umbilical cord still dragging the afterbirth. Justice and mercy are human ideas we impose on a world without rules.*

Obviously this is a very cynical view of the world of human beings. Clearly some people obey laws, some have standards of behaviour and some even try to live life believing in and acting in fairness. These we call and know as noble men. However, if you enter the world of adults believing this is a benchmark for how your life will play out then you are just drifting aimlessly around. As with all rotting carcasses in the ocean, it will only be a matter of time before you attract a shark. If you are smiling a lot, believing that integrity and honesty is everywhere, then your corpse is a particularly smelly one and you could be attracting a feeding frenzy.

The aim of this rule, as with all of the rules, is to provide a vivid metaphor, one you can remember. A mental image which will come to mind whenever you are in a new situation. You will suddenly see the fin and remember Rule 1.

Perhaps you will have foolishly allowed a salesman into your home, made him a cup of tea, sat him on your favourite couch and are then listening to how utterly wonderful his home improvements company is. As he gets out the contract, which he says gives you a brilliant deal, suddenly you see a stirring in the water. A small tip breaks the surface.

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He's going to offer you a discount. He's going to offer you affordable monthly payments. He's going to offer you cast iron guarantees and a solid gold money back promise [Rule 7.].

Suddenly you realise there's a huge fin sticking out of his back and you and your bank account are on his menu. If you don't get out of the water quickly you will end up working two days a month for ten years to pay for this shark's annual holidays in the sun.

The lesson here is to look very closely for the evidence of fin. Sometimes it is blindingly obvious, for example, any involvement with lawyers always involves a substantial fin factor one way or another. But other times it is not quite so obvious, like the man who marries the woman of his dreams only to find he has legally tied his finances to a professional asset stripper. Sharks come in all genders.

As much as we would like to think differently, this world is about survival of the fittest. We are part of nature no matter how much we would like to protest our superiority over the earth. Once we understand that then we have to understand that life exists, survives and thrives on death. In most cases in nature the victim is eaten alive. They simply don't see the fin coming.

Always, always, always, check for fin. It is Rule 1.

Remember though, just because the water is full of sharks you do not have to be one. As a man you can act with honour, be possessed of integrity and live with dignity [Rule 9.] but there is no need to be a victim.

Be alert, remain aware, if something looks like a situation in which all the advantage comes to you then look again.

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**Text Note 02:** *The advertising industry is mostly nothing but fin. Almost every face of every advertisement is about people smiling, people being happy and every advantage being to the customer whenever they buy whatever service or product is being offered. In advertising they never say, "We exist to make huge sums of money for ourselves and our clients by getting money from people who buy anything we push at them.". They use language to disguise false statements in a way that allows them to retain legality. They make claims [Rule 7] which are always conditioned by unseen terms and conditions. If you want to apply Rule 1 then there is no better place to start than by applying it to the advertising you consume daily.*

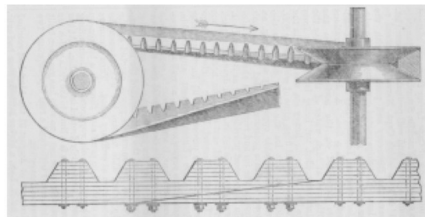
**Check for fin.** If a situation is presented to you by another and that other is asking for your trust, then look again.

**Check for fin.** If you find that you are in a situation where favours are on offer then look again.

**Check for fin.** If you find that you are being offered something for free! Nothing is ever for free and that word 'free' can turn out to be very expensive.

**Check for fin.** You cannot say this often enough or loud enough.

Rule 1 requires a belt and braces approach. Look not at what you are getting out of a situation but look in detail at what others are getting out of you.



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### Dealing with Fin.

1. Always be alert to promises of honesty and integrity. People who are honest never feel the need to promote their honesty. "I swear on my children's life." is the sort of alarm bell which warns of the lowest sort of crooked deceiver. Be alert to the language of promises.
2. Always look in all situations at what the exchange is. Check who is getting what. If it appears that you are getting more out of an exchange than the other person then be very suspicious, check everything again. Make sure you have looked at every detail.
3. In all matters of business make sure everything is written down and contracted. The need for trust is only required by those who are suspect and fundamentally dishonest. If you accept a position on trust alone then you are placing your life and your family's life in the hands of another person.
4. Remember that even family can contain Fin.
5. Remember emotional relationships can contain Fin.