



Tradition and 'stereotype' have it that accountants are rather dull men who wear conservative suits and Clarks' shoes from the Cornish Pasty School of Design...

...but they are guilty of far more terrible and dark things than crimes against fashion...

Accountants kill fairy tales.

You want proof?

Take Jack and the Beanstalk.

He swaps his family's one and only
cow for a handful of beans...

... Jack's Mother is understandably furious. She can't possibly afford to chuck the beans, so she takes them to Ann the account-ant for appraisal...

Fairy tales are traditionally fixed in 'a' Middle Ages, and animals and insects not only talk but are invariably far wiser than their human counterparts.

... Ann being both professional bean-counter and career grain carrier wants to know *exactly* how many?

What comprises 'a handful' precisely?

Any sniggering about the term 'handful' may be coffee grounds for sexual harassment!

Jack's Mother scolds him for having such 'small hands' (and later tells him he will be short-changed throughout life, especially when ordering in 'spans').

Unable to identify 'a handful' as an amount or measurement in the Middle Ages Handbook of Arbitrary Anatomical Amounts & Measurements, Ann makes the default management decision.

She'll let someone else decide.

By the 20th century the "Carry On... Measuring" handbook had a very good grasp of 'a handful' (more commonly known in the Eastend as 'a Barbara')

She insists on an independent audit.

The auditor who is not an ant, doesn't want to carry the can.
He asks to see provenance for the beans.

Jack's mother, whose Christian name was never ever given
(due to a spat that the Brothers Grimm were having with Hans)
has no proof of ownership.

She's about to plant them on someone else... *in* someone else
...where the sun don't shine...

Pending the audit, the beans are placed in a crow...

What were you expecting escrow? This is a fairy tale!

Jack doesn't have his cow or his beans, and goes to bed hungry. He wakes depressed having dreamt that he's been denied his destiny.

In his dream the Microsoft™ window of opportunity has closed; as the Giant's kingdom was only overhead for the first two-thirds of this fairy tale.

So... it's safe to say that only the crow is full of beans.

Unable to provide a bill of sale Jack is accused of stealing the beans.

He can't, or won't, tell them who now has the Brown Cow... or how.

Jack's Mother becomes bored with dry cereal for breakfast, and rather than hire a lawyer to defend Jack, she buys a new cow from the new cow company.

If I were to use Shrek tactics that firm would have to be Nabiscow

How could Martha afford a new cow? Jack realises that his mother was holding out on him; in a fit of rage he steals the Woodman's axe and kills her.

Axe-stealing is punishable by death - but as Jack has stolen the sole axe in the kingdom, he is now by default both Woodman, and er, executioner.

Although he's never heard the phrase judge, jury and executioner, Jack decides to take the law into his own, rather tiny, hands.

He goes 'postal'. Unsure as to which author pinned this Fairy Tale on him, he elects to kill the Brothers Grimm, Charles Perrault *and* Hans Christian Andersen.

I know what you're thinking... I had to Google Charles Perrault too.

That's why there are no modern fairy tales.
Hans' only son Arthur decided to play it safe and became an
auditor - and the rest is history - and so are Arthur Andersen.

Even today the surviving consultancy arm speaks with an
Austrian Accenture - that's right a German speaking arm!

Look it's a bloody fairy tale
(especially with Jack on the loose with the axe).

And for those doubting Thomases out there - look in your
cupboard - most beans are called Heinz.

There we have it; undeniable proof that accountants kill fairy tales
(allegedly).

The morals of this tale?

Accountants aren't necessarily people you can count on

and

Sometimes it does pay to spill the beans!