Vale, Abe; Quo Vadis, public accounting

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The dawning of critical awareness

Auditor independence under duress

Plural extolations

Not just once in the wilderness

Protecting the public interest

As public accountants should, and public accounting must.

Names now lost:

Penn Central, Leasco, Investors Overseas

Nat. General, Mill Factors, Yale Express?

Lessons not learned:

Enron, WorldCom, Global Crossing?

Memories persist

Of auditors to desist

Corporate advising

With the allure

Of corporate treasure

To entrap those with unaccountable lure.

Too many times have we compromised
The cherished benefits of independence
When we lost our skepticism
You pulled us back from the independence chasm.

We confess at being remiss
In not heeding due care expected of auditors
In your efforts to make us less unaccountable
You pulled us back from the independence abyss.

We now reflect and are now aware
That your relentless glare
Was oft misread by auditors
But not by analysts and investors
In your efforts to make us less unaccountable
You were pulling us back from the independence abyss.

Dear friend we lament our loss
You have shown us the way
To never again from accountability stray
To protect both the profession and the public interest
We must never again teeter on the independence abyss.

Abe, our laments reflect our ethical tenet
To be able to reason without influence
Inspired by your comments.
Your wisdom is the legacy of accountability.