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Guilt

by Miriam Silver

After many months of investigation, enquiries, dead end leads and questioning all possible persons who had been near in or around when it had been stolen our efforts had come to nothing.

There were no obvious clues such as finger or foot prints and the very large window which had been removed so carefully that not even a pane of glass had been broken.

No locals had heard anything, the alarm had been not only disabled but destroyed. The owners were away on holiday. It was last seen at closing time on Sunday and at lock-up time when the

routine patrol was carried out by security team every day. All of whom have been questioned, none having been found to have a criminal record.

That brought us to investigating every one who had been involved with either its creation, removal to the exhibition, installation, the owners, insurance, management and public relations, advertising agents and the alarm people, anyone and everyone who had any involvement with an artwork whose value was impossible to conceal and must have been obvious to each and every one of them. A sitting duck for who exactly?

It weighed over 40 tons, was securely plumbed into the waste system, under 24 hour surveillance and only worth that which could be arranged or organised with or by only those with the expertise to not only lift, carry and transport, but to cut up and melt down.

From the CCTV coverage of people who not only visited the exhibition previously and had actually paid money to use it to have a golden pee, the manager of the exhibition recognised a guy who had been in the delivery van. He remembered because they had to be hefty guys if they were to lift 20-30 plus tons of gold.

From that we were able to trace, through our informers, their connection to the gang whose business it was to steal valuable artwork, money or jewellery in transit.

It transpired, one of these guys had not received what he considered owing to him for his knowledge and expertise in reducing the item into concealable pieces which he assured us had been done by now. Either buried or melted down into golden nuggets already on their way out of the country.

He did lead us to others involved, the plumbers, exhibition organisers, even the insurers, not because he felt guilty at destroying a work of art but because he wanted revenge and vowed that he'd find them, those guys who had cheated him.

It is understood that the artist has promised to make a replacement installation but doubts he'll work again in gold or make a lavatory fit only for those guilt free millionaires who wish to sit on a golden throne while they plan what to do with their next billion.



