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The Art of Losing

by Miriam Silver

You think it will never happen to you, becoming an addict because that is what I am, an addict, not to drugs, though I have done that too, recreational briefly which lead me to the world where I was sure I was going to make it big, easy money was to be had, as I was early to learn.

I had become an account at my father's bidding, being a good and dutiful son, now I realise he needed someone at hand to help him avoid income tax.

"That's where the money is lad," he never failed to point out, "those successful businessmen couldn't have done it without the likes of you."

And so I became a professional, owning my own firm, creating employment for many and somewhere along the line I became compulsively fixated on making money. Now I've gone too far, told too many lies, lived it up in a world where possession of the latest car, house, equipment proved how successful I was.

Serena, my wife helped me get 'clean' ages ago, only for me to sink so low, took money from her purse, she accepted it was stolen while the two year old had a tantrum in the supermarket, she's going to find out today, the bailiffs are due.

Their worthless, corrupt father is leaving them homeless.

I've stolen from her parents who think I'm a successful accountant, trusting me to repay them, I intimated it would upgrade the house, larger mortgage, they had no doubt I'd repay their hard earned savings.

"This will see you over, don't worry, you'll cope," they said confidently.

I owe the big boys too, that's the real problem, they've given me until tomorrow- or else they have lost patience as have the building society and the auditor is due at my office today. Only went to loan sharks after I had explored every other possible money borrowing source.

I pawned my clothes, watch, Serena's jewellery, even had my so called mates invent a burglary, for a price of course, owe them too.

Now I have nowhere to go, the house will be repossessed, no one knows that yet. I'll try one more time, the betting shop they'll give a bit more time, I'll try, tell them I've something big due in the business line. Remember, careful, they are out there, watching.

They were there of course, bulging pockets, towered over me, pointing threatening publicly, leaving me cowering in the arcade.

"Ok, until this time tomorrow, pay up or else, yer know, alright," they leered, adding, "know where to find you, and yer family."

All of which left me looking down the deep ravine of my non-existent future while reluctantly recognizing the art of losing isn't hard to master. Me, a professional man, up to my neck in debt involved with the criminal underworld.

Now, too late to think about my family who will be made homeless, they'll hate leaving their school, the in-laws will be disappointed, my wife, understandably will divorce such a corrupt worthless man.

Looking back I could see I was seduced into believing that acquisition of material goods had lead me here, greed, stupidity especially as I was living such an agreeable life, loving wife, two children, oh dear god! Cannot see any way out.

What will they do, I'll either be...don't want to think about that...I'll go to the police, perhaps they'll accept me, a loser, albeit a professional ashamed guilty one.

I'll report those threatening criminals, maybe it will count one point towards a definite period of incarceration and include them too.