



Last Chance

By Curtis Jerry Smothers

This was his last chance. He either had to get out of debt and stop gambling—or lose his family. His gambling losses were crippling, and he was in debt to some really rough people who demanded their ten grand by next Monday, or he could look forward to a couple of broken kneecaps or worse.

The problem with being ten grand in debt to the sharks was that the only way to get that much money was to borrow more or win it back in gambling. But that was the problem, he didn't win; or when he won, he got so excited that he turned around and lost whatever he won.

But tonight was different. He was on the roulette table at Caesar's and was about eight grand ahead. The excitement and compulsion were all over him again and he knew he could work the eight grand up past the ten he owed and finally get ahead for one time in his life.

He was about to bet half of his pot on his lucky number 11 when his wife Sheila tapped him on the shoulder.

“I thought you said you were working late tonight! I thought you said you were done gambling! If you don’t come with me right now, we are quits! I mean it. I’ll take the kids and go back to Denver!”

This was his last chance. He could take the eight grand with him and pay down some of his debt and work off the rest, or win everything back. In the former case, his marriage was saved; in the latter, his financial problems were over.

He chose to save his marriage and left with his winnings. He failed to notice on his way out of Caesar's that the next spin of the wheel came up lucky 11.

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