



# I'm a Loser

by Barbara Sehr

Winner of Toastmasters International District 2, Division C Humorous  
Speech Competition, November 4, 2000

In the words of the Publisher's Clearing House, those of you competing against me tonight may already be winners. As for me, I'm probably just a loser.

Again.

A Loser?

It all started in 1961 when I became a Philadelphia Phillies fan - just in time to watch them lose 23 games in a row.

A few years later, I set my career sights on the Philadelphia Bulletin newsroom, only to watch the Bulletin fold just days before my graduation from journalism school.

And yes, I'm the one... the one you heard about. The one who turned down a job at pre-IPO Microsoft in the 80's?

Still, I'm a successful loser.

In the past 21 months, I have lost 100 pounds!

If you're like most people, however, you probably don't want to know how I LOST those 100 pounds... you want to know how I GAINED them in the first place!

Brothers and sisters I admit that I have been held hostage by a CARNIVOROUS CONFECTION!

Yes, I'm being eaten alive by a MARSHMALLOW!

Sure, you say, what could possibly be wrong with an innocent marshmallow? ...the same substance that is tossed innocently at slumber parties like a Barbara Walters interview question....

The same substance that is blessed even at the most devout scouting camp fires as long as they are in a monogamous relationship with a graham cracker and a slice of chocolate. ..

If only it had ended there for me.

No, S'mores were only the beginning. Before long I had graduated to chocolate bunnies. Marshmallow chocolate bunnies.

I know some of you secretly bite the ears off the bunnies. How many of you suck the marshmallow out of the inside?

Marshmallow bunnies just weren't enough.

It could only get worse.

Soon, I discovered Snowballs. Chocolate, Coconut Snowballs...

Before long I found myself in the rear of a 7-11, scavenging through the dumpster for half-eaten Hostess snowballs.

Yes, brothers and sisters, It had come to this. I was MAINLINING Snowballs! For a snowball I would sell my sister into slavery. For a pink snowball I would vote Republican.

I had sacrificed everything I had over to the devil marshmallow., My fortune, my dignity and my natural teeth. Something had to break eventually.

Suddenly it came to me when I snuck into a drive-in theater in the back of a



pick-up truck. As I was heading for the snack bar to hit the marshmallow syrup tap, it came up on the screen...

A religious experience.

It was as electric as being on the receiving end of an Al Gore kiss.

Right there in living color, the Sta-Puft marshmallow man occupied the ENTIRE width of the screen, blowing up ever larger until he was surrounded by military weaponry. It all came to me before Dan Akroyd had fired his first missile. If I kept up my Snowball habit, not even a Twinkie defense would save me.

Bill Murray and Dan Akroyd had saved not only New York from a poltergeist invasion that night. Watching the green slime oozing between the marshmallows it reminded me how blown-up I had become. Long after the death of my last living girdle, Poof, the Marshmallow Magic was gone.

It all came to me in quick succession.

I could CHANGE my life!

I COULD be a REAL loser!

My chances for success were about as good as scoring a Snowball at a Weight Watcher meeting.

But I had to try. After all, I had everything to lose.

Tonight, you can rest assured that there are more chocolate bunnies sitting with their marshmallow insides intact than ever before.

If you head to a 7-11 tonight in search of a Snowball, you can rest assured you'll still find one.

Somewhere, tonight a Camp Fire girl is enjoying a S'more in complete safety.

Because I have the POWER!

The Power to be a Loser!