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**A FOOL AND HIS MONEY**  
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**SYNOPSIS.**  
 John Bellamy Smart, unmarried and heir to a fortune, while abroad with his secretary, Poopendyke, and his valet, Britton, buys a dilapidated old castle on the Danube, in care of the Schmicks, and discovers a mysterious woman inhabiting one of the towers.

Smart falls to batter down a huge door leading to the east wing in search of the fair lady. He interrupts a visit of American relic hunters.

Their amusing attempts to buy some of the castle's ancient furniture result in their discomfiture and hurried departure. Smart catches a glimpse of his fair neighbor's waving hair.

Another visit to the mysterious east wing fails, but later the beautiful stranger strikes up an acquaintance with the new owner through a secret loophole.

She agrees to entertain him at tea. Meanwhile he learns the history of the old castle from the Schmicks and receives a visit from a crowd of tourists.

(Continued from last week.)

"I see, madame, that you do not dismiss your army," I said, blandly sarcastic.

"Oh, you dear old Conrad!" she cried, catching sight of the hitherto submerged Schmicks. The three of them bobbed and scraped and grinned from ear to ear. There could be no mistaking the intensity of their joy. "Don't look so sad, Conrad. I know you are blameless. You poor old dear!"

I have never seen any one who looked less sad than Conrad Schmick. I rather peremptorily ordered him below.

"I will attend to you presently—all of you," said I. They did not move. "Do you hear me?" I snapped angrily. They looked stolidly at the slim young lady.

She smiled, rather proudly, I thought. "You may go, Conrad. I shall not need you. Max, will you fetch up another scuttle of coal?"

They took their orders from her!

"By Jove!" I said, looking after my trusty men servants as they descended. "I like this! Are they my servants or yours?"

"Oh, I suppose they are yours, Mr. Smart," she said carelessly. "Will you come in now and make yourself quite at home?"

"Perhaps I'd better wait for a day or two," said I, wavering. "Your headache, you know. I can wait just as well as—"

"Oh, no! Since you've gone to all the trouble I suppose you ought to have something for your pains."

"Pains?" I murmured, and I declared to heaven I limped as I followed her through the door into a tiny hall.

"You are a most unreasonable man," she said, throwing open a small door at the end of the hall. "I am terribly disappointed in you. You looked to be so nice and sensible and amiable."

"Oh, I'm not such a nincompoop as you might suspect, madame," said I testily, far from complimented.

"And now, Mr. Smart, will you be kind enough to explain this incomprehensible proceeding on your part?" she said, facing me sternly.

But I was dumb. I stood just inside the door of the most remarkable apartment I have ever been my good fortune to look upon. My senses reeled. Was I awake? Was this a part of the bleak, sinister, weather-racked castle in which I was striving so hard to find a comfortable corner?

"Well?" she demanded relentlessly.

"By the Lord Harry!" I began, finding my tongue only to lose it again.

The room was completely furnished, bedecked and rendered habitable by a hundred and one articles that were mysteriously missing from my side of the castle. Rugs, tapestries, curtains of the rarest quality; chairs, couches and cushions; tables, cabinets and chests that would have caused the eyes of the most conservative collector of antiques to bulge with—not wonder, but greed; stands, pedestals, bronzes, bronzes, porcelains—but why enumerate? On the massive oaken center table stood the priceless silver vase we had missed on the second day of our

occupancy, and it was filled with fresh yellow roses.

And so complete had been the rifling of my rooms by the devoted vandals in their efforts to make this lady cozy and comfortable that they did not overlook a silver framed photograph of my dear mother.

I tried to smile. "How—how cozy you are here," I said.

"You couldn't expect me to live in this awful place without some of the comforts and conveniences of life, Mr. Smart," she said defiantly.

"Certainly not," I said promptly. "I am sure that you will excuse me, however, if I gloat. I was afraid we had lost all these things. You've no idea how relieved I am to find them all safe and sound in my—in their proper place. I was beginning to distrust the Schmicks. Now I am convinced of their integrity."

"I suppose you mean to be sarcastic."

"Sarcasm at any price, madame, would be worse than useless, I am sure."

Crossing to the fireplace, I selected a lump of coal from the scuttle and examined it with great care. She watched me curiously.

"Do you recognize it?" she asked.

"I do," said I, looking up. "It has been in our family for generations. My favorite chunk, believe me! Still I part with it cheerfully." Thereupon I tossed it into the fire. "Don't be shocked. I shan't miss it. We have coals to burn, madame."

She looked at me soberly for a moment. There was something hurt and wistful in her dark eyes.

"Of course, Mr. Smart, I shall pay you for everything—down to the smallest trifle—when the time comes for me to leave this place. I have kept strict account of—"

She turned away, with a beaten droop of the proud little head, and again I was ashamed.

"Madame," I said, with considerable feeling. "I have behaved like a downright rotter today. I do not know who you are nor why you are here, but I assure you it is of no real consequence if you will but condescend to overlook my insufferable—"

She turned toward me. The wistful, appealing look still lingered in her eyes. The soft red nether lip seemed a bit tremulous.

"I am an intruder," she interrupted, smiling faintly. "You have every right to put me out of your your home, Mr. Smart. I have been very selfish and childish and inconsiderate. Mr. Smart you see, I'm a spoiled child. I've at ways had my own way in everything. You must look upon me as a very horrid, sneaking, conspiring person, and I— I really think you ought to turn me out."

She came a few steps nearer. Suddenly it was revealed to me that she was the loveliest woman I had ever seen in all my life.

I am afraid that I stared.

"Turn you out?" I cried. "Turn you out of this delightful room after you've had so much trouble getting it into shape? Never!"

"Oh, you don't know how I've imposed upon you!" she cried plaintively. "You don't know how I've robbed you and bothered you!"

"Yes, I do," said I promptly. "I know all about it. You've been stealing my coals, my milk, my ice, my potatoes, my servants, my sleep and— here I gave a comprehensive sweep of my hand—"everything in sight. And you've made us walk on tiptoe to keep from waking the baby, and— I stopped suddenly. "By the way, whose baby is it? Not yours, I'm sure."

To my surprise her eyes filled with tears.

"Yes; she is my baby, Mr. Smart," she said, turning away.

**CHAPTER VIII.**  
 "The count—my husband"

My face fell.

She couldn't have been a day over twenty-two. But she had a baby!

Facing me once more, she said:

"Doubtless you are very much puzzled by my presence in this gloomy old castle. You have been asking yourself a thousand questions about me, and you have been shocked by my outrageous impositions upon your good nature. I am here, Mr. Smart, because it is the last place in the world where my husband would be likely to look for me."

"Your husband? Look for you?"

"Yes, I shall be quite frank with you. My husband and I have separated. A provisional divorce was granted, however, just seven months ago. The final decree cannot be issued for one year."

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"But why should you hide from him?"

"The—the court gave him the custody of our child during the probationary year. I—I have run away with her. They are looking for me everywhere. That is why I came here. Do you understand?"

I was stunned. "Then, I take it, the court granted him the divorce and not you?" I said, experiencing a sudden chill about the heart. "You were deprived of the child, I see. Dear me!"

"You are mistaken," she said, a flash in her eyes. "It was an Austrian court. The count—my husband, I should say—is an Austrian subject. His interests must be protected." She said this with a sneer on her pretty lips.

"You see, my father, knowing him now for what he really is, has refused to pay over to him something like a million dollars, still due for the marriage settlement. The count contends that it is a just and legal debt, and the court supports him to this extent: The child is to be his until the debt is cleared up, or something to that effect. I really don't understand the legal complications involved. Perhaps it were better if I did."

"I see," said I, scornful in spite of myself. "One of those happy international marriages where a bride is thrown in for good measure with a couple of millions. Won't we ever learn?"

"That's it precisely," she said, with the utmost calmness and candor. "American dollars and an American girl in exchange for a title, a lot of debts and a ruined life."

"And they always turn out just this way. What a lot of blithering fools we have in the land of the free and the home of the knave!"

"My father objected to the whole arrangement from the first, so you



"I am not asking for pity."

must not speak of him as a knave," she protested. "He doesn't like counts and such things."

"I don't see that it helps matters. I can hardly substitute the word 'brave' for the one I need," said I, trying to conceal my disgust.

"Please don't misunderstand me, Mr. Smart," she said haughtily. "I am not asking for pity. I made my bed, and I shall lie in it. The only thing I ask of you is—well, kindness."

She seemed to falter again, and once more I was at her feet, figuratively speaking.

"You are in distress, in dread of something, madame!" I cried. "Consider me your friend."

She shook her head ruefully. "You poor man! You don't know what you are in for, I fear. Wait till I have told you everything. Three weeks ago I laid myself liable to imprisonment and heaven knows what else by abducting my little girl. That is really what it comes to—abduction. The court has ordered my arrest, and all sorts of police persons are searching high and low for me. Now don't you see your peril? If they find me here you will be in a dreadful predicament. You will be charged with criminal complicity, or whatever it is called, and— Oh, it will be frightfully unpleasant for you, Mr. Smart!"

My expression must have convicted me. She couldn't help seeing the dismay in my face. So she went on quite humbly:

"Of course you have but to act at once and all may be well for you. I—I will go if you—if you command me to—"

I struck my knee forcibly. "What do you take me for, madame? Hang the consequences! If you feel that you are safe here—that is, comparatively safe—stay!"

"It will be terrible if you get into trouble with the law," she murmured in distress. "I—I really don't know what might happen to you. Indeed, I do not."

Suddenly a horrible thought struck me with stunning force.

"Don't tell me that your—your husband is the man who owned this castle up to a week ago," I cried. "Count James Hohendahl?"

She shook her head. "No. He is not the man." Seeing that I waited for her to go on, she resumed: "I know Count James quite well, however. He

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