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## The Stash

by Rosalind May

I've always fantasised about finding a stash of cash. Not a few hundred quid but a proper suitcase filled with money. A million pounds, a police friend told me, can be put in a small trunk. Perhaps a large picnic hamper. How beautiful would it be, to turn up at the appointed grassy knoll to open the whicker lid expecting to find wilted lettuce sandwiches and warm wine only instead to find wads of crisp fifty-pound notes. Now that's a picnic I'd be happy to attend, and I'd even go so far as to say I'd be more than willing to put up with the runny nose, swollen eyes and itchy throat of the great outdoors. What're a few sneezes when you're looking at your dreamed of fortune.

Naturally, I would have to consider the moral implications of such a find. I would wrestle with the dilemma of whether to hand it in to the local police station for all of sixty seconds, perhaps even a minute and a half before realising that the universe had bestowed upon me a gift. Who needs reasons why, I'm not one to ask questions. After all, I may not like the answer.

I would slowly close the lid, rise and leave before any friends arrived. Feigning a sudden migraine.

Hoarding my find out of sight from prying neighbours and greedy relatives in the bottom of a locked cupboard would be easy. And, whenever I needed a cheap thrill, I would indulge myself in the extended fantasy of affluence by lifting the wads of notes from their hamper to inhale the smell of wealth, letting the rich aroma infuse into every cell of my body before carefully returning the stashed cash to the safety of its store until the next time I needed an infusion of prosperity.

Not being able to spend the cash would be a small price to pay for I would have the quiet satisfaction nay smugness of walking down the high street smiling greetings to strangers while all the time knowing I was far wealthier then they would ever be.

If I saw fit, on occasion, I might even slip the homeless man who sleeps at night inside the bank doorway with his mangy dog the loose change from my coat pocket, or a fiver on special like birthdays or Christmas. The act of giving filling me with a warm glow of endorphin released happiness.

I would ignore the shadows that crept along the seems of my life as merely clouds crossing the sun. The man with the hat who watched me night after night close the curtains to my living room or the disappearance of the cat as coincidence.

In time I would stop going out altogether, instead preferring to stay entombed delighting in a daily roll call.

The house would become unkempt, the roof would begin to leak, and finally, I would meld into the very fabric of the room and the box and the money.