

"I don't understand," muttered Wilkinson, once more puffing on his cigar. "Why silent in her presence? What's that to me?"

"It isn't necessary to go over the facts," returned Flomerfelt. "To be brief, you've got a mint of money in her hands. which she knows nothing about. You know where it is, the missus knows, and I know. Some chaps in Vienna know, thirds for us. or tell her. . . ?"

Peter laughed aloud.

"Tell her if you want to," he roared. "But do you suppose she'd give the game away? She! Why, she's the only trump I ever had about me! She'll stick through thick and thin! Tell her and be hanged!"

Flomerfelt held up his hands, saying:

"I must say that you don't know your own daughter."

"You're a fool, Peter!" said his wife, sharply.

"The instant the girl knows, it's all up with you, my friend," went on Flomerfelt. "But she needs managing, watching. It takes more than you to manage, to watch her, too. What is it—thirds for us, or tell her. . . ."

Peter turned his back upon them.

"Tell her and be hanged!" he said.

Flomerfelt's eyes sought those of the lady. "What's the next move?" hers seemed to ask of him. A smile of cunning crossed his face.