

# Secrets and Piles of Money

by Gita M. Smith

Money is hidden throughout this house, *piles* of it.

This house is *full* of secrets.

I know. I put them there.

Look in the bottom of the dog food bag, under the onions in the crisper, behind the painting of the blues musician, in the twisted coil of maidenhair fern on the patio. Hundreds of bills, thousands of coins, a myriad whispers, the lists of my lovers, all right there for the finding.

But first, you have to get inside: no cakewalk, my friend. You have to slip past the gargoyles, front and back.

The dog awakens at the sound of a petal falling, sure that barbarians are at the gate. She opens wide her yellow teeth.

And I am armed: knives above the doorframes, a crossbow under the pillow. The game is rigged. You stand no chance.

Go home, shake off your larceny, watch TV with a glass of port, concoct a plan. Try Fort Knox or the First National Bank, instead.

Think of them as your training wheels.

