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'The Trump Castle,' a Novel

By CATHLEEN SCHINE NOV. 18, 1990

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Pocket Books is gambling an estimated \$3 million or so on two novels that it will publish with Ivana Trump's name on them as author. -- The New York Times, Oct. 15, "Who are you?" asked K.; and disdainfully -- whether contemptuous of K. or of her own answer was not clear -- she replied: "A girl from the Castle." -- "The Castle" by Franz Kafka Chapter One

It was late in the evening when Ivana T. arrived. She stood for a long time gazing at the baggage claim area. Without being able to explain it completely to herself, she felt a twinge of uneasiness. The other passengers collected their suitcases and left. Her baggage was not on the conveyor belt, which was now empty except for the bulk of a perfectly indifferent cat.

"I am lonely," Ivana T. said to a peasant beside her.

He lifted her in his strong arms. Her heart beat faster. "I am waiting for a limousine," she said.

"No limousines come here," said the peasant, pressing his lips to her lovely white throat.

"But this is the airport."

"All the same," said the peasant. "All the same. But I will take you in my limousine. Where do you want to go?"

"To the Trump Castle," said Ivana T. Chapter Two

"I won't take you there," said the peasant. Chapter Three

Ivana T. walked through the deep snow. The opening of the new casino in her homeland of Czechoslovakia was three hours away. She headed toward the Castle, but the road, which at first seemed to lead up to the Castle hill, only made toward it, and then, as if deliberately, turned aside, and though it did not lead away from the Castle, it lead no nearer to it either. Ivana T. experienced a fit of despair.

"Taxi!" she called into the empty street. Chapter Four

My heel has snapped, thought Ivana T. She saw a shop with a sign, a cut-out of two gigantic green shoes.

"My heel has snapped," she said to the man who looked out through the tiny window.

"You must have an application," said the man. He closed the window. A church bell rang cheerfully. Chapter Five

"Darling," said the skier as he schussed by. "So good of you to come." Chapter Six

Fatigued and confused, Ivana T. entered a doorway. Round tables, with starched white cloths, stood empty and desolate.

"Do you have a reservation?" asked a man blandly.

"But your restaurant is empty."

"Nevertheless, you must have a reservation. It is our custom." The man nervously pushed her outside.

"I am going to the Castle," said Ivana T. "I own the Castle."

"Perhaps," said the man, and slammed shut the door. Chapter Seven

In the telephone booth, Ivana T. tried to place a call. She reached for a coin, but her red satin evening gown had no pockets. What has happened to me? she thought. It was no dream. Ivana T. angrily dialed the operator.

"I wish to speak to the Castle. I own the Castle," she said. Ivana T. had a shock as she heard her own voice, which had acquired a persistent horrible twittering

squeak. "I am Ivana T.," she said.

"What are you saying?" asked the operator.

The words she uttered in her new voice were no longer understandable, apparently, although they seemed clear enough to her. In the glass of the booth, Ivana T. saw a reflection. Was it really she, Ivana T.? Her hair had changed. It was very black, and short like a man's. Her ears had become quite prominent, her eyes dark and brooding. "Ivana T.!" cried Ivana T.

"What is that?" said the operator in a bored voice. "A novelist? What is that to me? Everyone is a novelist these days."

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