

# THE CLOUDE MOON

By MAX SALTmarsh

**The Characters**  
 Hugo Stern, handsome author, living on the French Riviera.  
 Archie Lumsden, myself, Hugo's friend.  
 Rene Geiss, a singularly unpleasant cartoonist.

Yesterday: We trail Geiss to a bathing place where we see an American heiress, Ottilie Wills, who looks just like Eve Monet.

## Chapter 12 Another Penny

THE girl stood in the doorway, looking down the room. She had stripped off her bathing-cap, losing a mass of curling hair as tawny as a ripe chestnut and seen thus the likeness to the dead Eve had lessened considerably.

She came slowly towards the bar, her face thoughtful, her dark eyes remote. It was obvious that something quite other than the immediate question of drinks occupied her mind, but as she halted a yard away from us, and the barman hurried to meet her, a sudden ray and charming smile lit her face. I caught my breath again. The likeness, when it came, was almost painful.

"Grapefruit juice for me, please, Charles," she said. "And eye as usual." Mr. Wills only went slowly with the angostura this time. She paused, hesitating. "Perhaps, on the whole, I'd better mix it myself."

"Very please," Miss Wills, Charles agreed affably, and as he set the bottles on the counter before her she slipped her arms into her sleeves in a workmanlike manner. She was so near that the soft, creamy stuff brushed my arm, and I stepped back a pace to make room for her. As I did so, my elbow raised Hugo's wrist. In the act of raising his glass to his lips, and sent the best part of a drink cascading down his shirt.

He gave an angry grunt and whipped out his handkerchief and in doing so he flicked from his pocket something which fell with a tinkle on the floor and rolled straight to the feet of the girl.

She had watched the accident with an amused, impersonal little smile, but as she sighted the small brown object the smile faded, giving way to a look of sheer amazement. She stooped quickly as a flash, and snatched it up. "My lucky cent-piece!" she said. "Now, how in the world did you come to pick it up? I didn't know I had lost it."

"Neither did I," said Hugo dryly. He took a step forward so that they were facing each other, and so tall was that their eyes were almost on a level, while the dark ones staring into chilly blue. He held out his hand with an unmistakable request. "Actually," said he, "it's my lucky cent. It was given me only this morning."

She looked at the coin in her hand, the little coin lying on her open palm. "I could have sworn there wasn't another cent in the world bored that way, except—"

She paused and caught her breath, and a second time her expression changed. The rounded cheeks hardened, the red lips shut firmly.

"Just a minute," she said. "If you'll look into this matter, if you please."

### 'A Matter of Life And Death'

SHE snatched up her big beach bag, rummaged in its interior, and drew out a smaller one of white kid. She felt in this and drew out, with a look of surprise that was almost comical, what might have been the very twin of the coin that lay on the counter.

"Well," she said, "isn't that the queerest thing!"

She looked up at Hugo with a shamefaced smile. "I'm terribly sorry! But you see—there was some excuse. You'd never know me apart, except that mine is a little bit superior. You see, it had my name engraved on it—one letter on each of the Redskin's feathers, but they're so small you want a microscope to see." She picked up one coin, holding it against the light. "Look!" she said. "There it is."

She stopped abruptly, and for an instant stood immovable, her eyes riveted on the coin in her hand. Then slowly she turned to us, and it seemed to me that every tinge of color had been wiped from her face. "Tell me," she said harshly. "This isn't a time for joking. Tell me at once where you got this coin."

Hugo gave her one long, slow look, then deliberately picked up the other one-cent piece and examined it.

"Ottilie Wills," he read out slowly, and then, half to himself: "Yes, you picked up the wrong coin. They're so alike you didn't know your own." He straightened up and deliberately gave her back the coin he held, taking the other and thrusting it into his own pocket. "This one-cent piece, Miss Wills," he said, and as he spoke his eyes never left her face. "It was the property of a young lady named Eve Monet."

She stared at him, her face showing no sign of recognition at the name. "But where did you get it?" she demanded. "Quickly, you've got to tell me! Don't you understand?" her voice quivered and almost broke—"it's a matter of life and death."

They were so intently engaged

with each other that neither had eyes for anything else, but I was standing facing the door, and in that instant I saw two silhouettes darken the glass. "Careful!" I whispered to Hugo, and he glanced up quickly.

"Miss Wills," he said urgently. "We can't discuss this here. I'll tell you all you want to know about this coin, if you will meet me tomorrow at—"

"He hesitated. "Say on the beach at Juan-les-Pins at midday. Have you a car here?"

She nodded.

He gave a short sigh of relief. "That's fine," he suggested that I drive yourself and make a slight detour, to insure that you're not being followed? And may I suggest too that you don't mention this matter to your uncle or anyone else? Don't think I'm mad," he added with the ghost of a smile, "but this matter may be more serious than you think."

"I don't think you're mad," she answered very low, her great dark eyes still on his face. "Only I can know how serious this matter may be! Yes, surely, I'll be there. On board-walk at twelve."

"That's fine!" said Hugo again. He looked over her shoulder; the door was opening and the tall form of Mr. Virgoe Wills filled the aperture, with a smaller, stockier shape close behind him. "Come on, Archie," he said. "we'll be going."

WE CLIMBED the stairway, crossed the upper floor, and came out into the road. Hugo had said never a word, but as he started up the engine of the car, he turned to me, and his face was very grave. "Archie," he said, "I wish tomorrow's interview was over. Take a look at that," and he tossed the one-cent piece into my lap. I picked it up and scrutinized it, and there, finely scrawled on the Indian's feathers, one letter to each plume, I saw a name—

"Melanie Wills," I read out slowly and turned to him. "Hugo, what the devil does this mean?"

"It means," said he, "that tomorrow I must tell you that your sister has been foully murdered."

There was a long pause. I had known, in a sense, what he was going to say, but spoken baldly aloud it sounded infinitely more shocking.

"And what of the Eve Monet name?" I asked.

He shook his head wearily. "I can't tell. I can think of a dozen likely explanations. The Wills girls are adopted in New York, heard a lot about them while I was there, though I never met them. The old man is a bachelor and wealthy, even by American standards. These girls are orphaned—his brother's children—legally, I mean, as his co-heiresses—and brought 'em up."

We drove back to Cannes in silence. Queer thoughts jostled in my brain; names that I had never distinctly like any girls. Ottilie Wills, Melanie Wills—if Hugo was right, the uncanny likeness was well explained—Rene Geiss, Virgoe Wills; and a tain, that sinister refrain: Venner, the banker Vladimir Rakovskv, Baron Stahl.

We found a corner table at the Carlton Bar, while Hugo settled himself and hailed a passing waiter. I went inside to the office, for my money was running short and I wanted to cash a traveler's check.

When I told the man at the desk my name, he raised his eyebrows. "But, monsieur," said he, "there is a letter for you."

I thanked him, pocketed the letter, and transacted my business, but as I halted in the entry I saw that my place at the table was already filled. Dr. Riquet sat there, talking eagerly to Hugo, and from the intent expression on my friend's face I judged that he was hearing something interesting.

It would be, I felt, injudicious to say the least, to interrupt them, so I perched myself on the stone balustrade of the ramp and pulled out the letter. It was addressed fully, in a big, flowing hand, to Mr. Archibald Lumsden. I had never seen the writing before, and as I slit the envelope and pulled out the couple of flimsy sheets that it contained, I wondered who in the world my correspondent could be. And then, as I saw the signature at the foot of the page, I stiffened and a queer, prickly chill stole over me. "Eve Monet." The words stared up at me, scrawled in that big, spreading hand, and for an instant it seemed that she was there beside me, a pale phantom, leaning on my shoulder.

"Do you remember me?" she wrote without preamble. "I spoke to you half an hour ago in the Carlton Bar. am in dreadful trouble. No one to turn to. I beg you to help me. Buy the Grimoire astrologique (L'Amourie is the old name) Look at the page for August. You will see what I mean. August 30th of the day. Warn him if you can. Beg him to go back home. The Club des Sans Clubs meets at the Caves des Muettes or the Chateau la Vague. I dare not write more. You may not get this letter. If I am alive tomorrow I will ask for it back. Eve Monet."

The short staccato sentences, the smudged, illegible scrawls, spoke only too plainly of the bitter urgency in which they had been written. It was a cry of despair, but it was also a call for help.

(Copyright 1938, Max Saltmarsh)

Letter From A Lady

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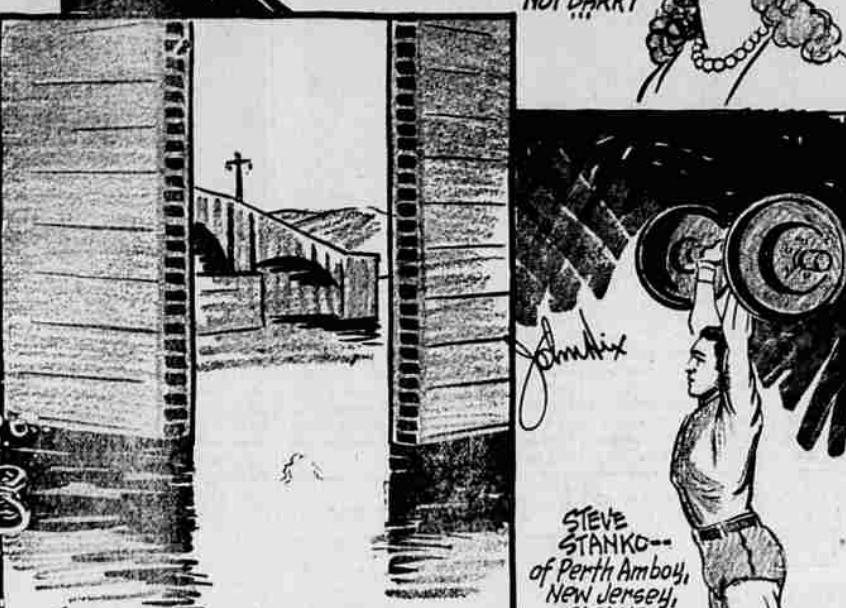
Monday: Another American.

## STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

For further proof address the author, inclosing a stamped envelope for reply. Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.

THE 4-IN-1 STAR! EPSILON LYRAE—northernmost star in the constellation Lyra, is a "DOUBLE-DOUBLE," ACTUALLY 4 SEPARATE STARS!

COUNTESS DU BARRY—favorite of Louis XIII of France WAS NOT A COUNTESS, DID NOT RATE THE TITLE "DU"—AND HER NAME WAS NOT BARRY



STEVE STANKO—of Perth Amboy, New Jersey, CLEANED AND JERKED 347 1/2 POUNDS—1938

THE PANAMA CANAL LOCKS WERE ONCE OPENED TO PERMIT A SWIMMER TO PASS THROUGH! RICHARD HALLIBURTON, world traveler, PAID THE SAME TONNAGE RATE AS SHIPS—AMOUNTING TO 36 CENTS!—1928

Canal Swimmer

Fifty miles long and capable of handling any ship afloat except the Normandie and the Queen Mary, the Panama canal is one of the greatest examples of modern engineering.

Foreign governments pay an average \$10,000 to send a battleship through; England is reported to have paid in excess of \$22,000 to send through the 42,100-ton battle cruiser H. M. S. Hood.

While toll charges are based on tonnage, it actually costs the United States government more to send a rowboat through the Panama canal than to send a battleship through, because the larger vessel displaces more water than the rowboat, permitting the locks to be filled more quickly.

Smallest toll ever exacted for a passage through the canal was 36 cents paid by Richard Halliburton, noted traveler, who swam the canal from one ocean to the other.

Halliburton made special arrangements with the governor of the Canal Zone and accomplished the swim in 1928. Because of Halliburton's relatively small displacement, it cost the

government more to send him through for 36 cents than to send through a large ship.

Epsilon Lyrae

Two stars placed in close alignment and appearing to the naked eye as one are called double stars.

Epsilon Lyrae, near Vega in the constellation Lyra, is actually a "double-double," or two double stars in close apparent proximity. Only persons with exceptional eyesight can see even two stars in this group.

Tomorrow: The Skating thrillers.

with Medford business men to plan their support of the tour plan.

THE HOTTEST day was Aug. 3, when the mercury climbed to 93 degrees. Coldest day was the 14th at 49 degrees. Precipitation was 22 inches. Twenty-eight days were clear, three were partly cloudy.

AUGUST PLEASANT IN J'VILLE WEATHER BOOK

JACKSONVILLE, Sept. 13.—(Sp.)—Mean temperature here during August was 68.98 degrees, according to figures released by Emil Britt, voluntary weather observer. Mean maximum temperature was 69.19; mean minimum was 51.77.

MONEY POURS IN FOR BIG PARTY CAMPAIGNS

WASHINGTON, Sept. 13.—(A)—The Democratic national committee reported to the clerk of the house to-

day it received contributions totaling \$129,511 from June 1 to September 1. This brought its receipts for the first eight months of 1938 to \$563,374.

Last week the Republican national committee reported receipts of \$788,185 for the January 1-September 1 period.

WINDOW GLASS—We sell window glass and will replace your broken windows reasonably. Trowbridge Cabinet Works.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Heading for a Crack-Up!

HE'S LOST HIS WHEELS!

HE'LL CRASH!

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—First Order!

MORNIN', MR. SAXTON—HERE'S THE FIRST CRATE—MORE A-COMIN'!

OH, HELLO, WILFRED—HOW'S TRICKS?

MIND GETTIN' THEM PEEWEES OUT O' THE WAY SO WE'LL HAVE ROOM FOR OUR JUMBO EGGS, MR. SAXTON?

NOT AT ALL RUSTY!

GOODIE, GOODIE, GOODIE! THOSE ARE THE EGGS I WANT, MR. SAXTON—THREE, PLEASE!

HMM, YOU MUST BE DOIN' A HEAP O' ENTERTAININ' THESE DAYS, MISS ALFORD!

THE NEBBS—Good Bye

WELL, I'M GLAD WE'RE FINALLY PULLING OUT OF THIS PLACE—MOTHER HAD A NERVE TO INVITE ME HERE

SAYS YOU, MOTHER HAS MADE SOME MISTAKES BUT THE BIGGEST ONE IS YOU!

I'M SO SORRY NELLIE THAT I LOST MY TEMPER WITH JANE AND I HOPE YOU'LL FORGIVE ME AND THINK KINDLY OF ME

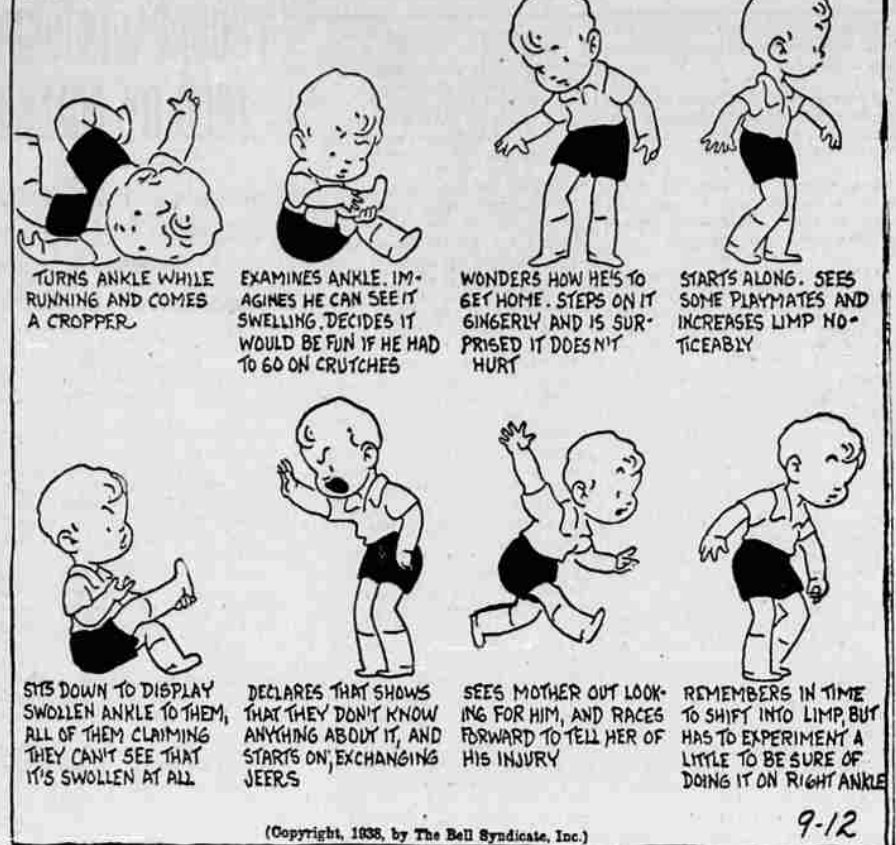
STEVE, I'LL NEVER FORGET YOUR KINDNESS AND YOU'LL LIVE FOREVER IN MY MEMORY

HI, STEVE IF YOU EVER GET TO TOWN LOOK US UP—WE'RE FROM THE THIRD HOUSE FROM THE CORNER

WHO WANTS A LITTLE GRIEF? I'VE GOT IT ALL!

## SERIOUS INJURY

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



S'MATTER POI By O M PAYNE



By HAL FORREST



By EDWIN ALGER



By SOL HESS



## FOUR HELD IN PLOT TO HIGH-GRADE ORE

SACRAMENTO, Calif., Sept. 13.—(AP)—Charles Rich, U. S. secret service agent, and State Mining Engineer, J. Bongard disclosed today the arrest of four men in what they said was a \$750,000 ore high-grading conspiracy.

The suspects held in city prison here, were identified as Elwood Orr 36, John Benich, 49, George E. Fuller, 36 and Frank Fuller, 30.

The investigators said the prisoners were associated in operating a custom mill near Plymouth in Amador county. Orr and Benich were arrested in Jackson and the Fuller brothers in Plymouth.

Mrs. Martin has been conferring

## MRS. MARTIN SEEKING TOURIST LURE FUNDS

Mrs. Henrietta B. Martin, former Medford resident, was today as chairman of a committee which is seeking \$20,000 of the advertising division of the state highway department for a nine-months promotional tour of the east.

The committee, appointed by the reality board in Salem where Mrs. Martin now resides, proposes to show scenic motion pictures of Oregon during the projected eastern tour in an effort to bring more tourists and new capital to the state.