

THE CLOUDED MOON

By MAX SALTmarsh

the Characters
 Archie Lumsden, myself, visitor to the French Riviera.
 Otilie Wills, beautiful American hetaira.
 René Geiss, head of a murder conspiracy.

Yesterday: Breaking into Geiss's house to look for the murder gun I find Otilie already there. Geiss is at home!

Chapter 37 Strange Visitors

"WHAT, in the name of all that's holy, induced you to come here?" I demanded. "Haven't you learned enough by this time to keep out of trouble?"

Even in the half-light I could see the flash of anger in her dark eyes.

"You make me tired," Otilie retorted in a furious whisper. "Cut-throat told me all about how the servants had gone and Geiss was staying with Rakovsk, over in Italy, and he said how the one important thing was to find that gun, and I thought to myself, if none of you had the gumption to come and look for it, it was about time I got busy myself."

I groaned. "Well," I said, "the one question now is how we can get you safely out of here." But at that instant came a faint but unmistakable sound, the sound of a leisurely tread mounting the marble stairs.

I look round wildly. The room, as much as I could see of it, was a bedroom and, from the gilded, rococo splendor of the furnishing, I guessed it to be Geiss's own. It would be madness to conceal the girl there. Then suddenly my eye lighted on the giant cupid that acted as supports to the outer wall of the loggia. Behind their wings on either side was a most merciful patch of shadow. I caught Otilie by the shoulders, thrust her into the angle of the wall. I had just time to flatten myself against the opposite wall, holding my breath, when suddenly the lights inside the room flashed on, and Geiss himself stood at the threshold.

A moment he paused, hesitating, and I saw that he carried a suitcase in either hand. He opened them, set them up against the foot of the gilded bed. Then, as if a sudden idea had struck him, he crossed to the window and stood looking out.

For an awful instant I thought that he had seen us, but after a pause he turned to the side of the window, raised his hand, and a metal sun-shutter rattled down, shutting off the room.

I counted ten slowly, then moved, with infinite caution, to the shutter and peered through the slats, and as I did so, with a faint rustle of silk, the girl was beside me. The room inside was clearly visible, and in the middle of it stood its owner, a fantastic figure in yellow shirt and crimson trousers, engaged in the prosaic task of packing.

I soon realized that this was no haphazard preparation for a week-end, for no sooner were the two bags filled than their owner carried them off, returning a minute later with another couple. Then he halted suddenly, staring, open-mouthed, for the door was slowly opening.

I felt Otilie's grasp tighten convulsively on my arm, but when the door opened, all that showed in the aperture was the stark, uncompromising figure of Miss Henrietta Adams. There was something cold, something menacing in the glint of her green eyes through the glasses, and I saw the cartoonist take an involuntary step backwards.

"So," she said harshly, "you're quitting?"

He looked at her, slowly raising his eyebrows. "I thought it foolish to give you that key," he said softly, "and now I know it. What business is it of yours what I do?"

'You're Mad'

SHE sat down quietly on the edge of the bed and looked at him oddly. "You're quitting," she said again, "and I don't blame you. The police have been questioning your servants and they've run away. The judge of instruction has let it be known that he no longer suspects Lumsden, and that means that he knows you were lying, and it means, too, that he suspects you and Stahl and Rakovsky." She bent her hands together furiously. "Why did you ever mention their names?" she demanded. "Were you mad? And now Noah More has tried to kill Lumsden and failed, because an Arab carpet-seller saved him—"

"An Arab carpet-seller?" he echoed, surprised. "Are you sure of that, Henrietta?"

She silenced him with an impatient jerk of the head. "—and now the man from Marseille guesses that Ludovic killed Venner and he's searching the coast for him. That means that tomorrow's plans are spoiled."

He looked at her, smiling, and slowly shook his head. "That means nothing of the sort," he answered gently. "They have not found him yet, have they? And if they catch him afterwards, there is nothing to connect him with the affair at Prague."

"Pah!" said she contemptuously. "Will any man alive not tell the truth to save his own skin? I would, I tell you, but I hope that I shall not have to. That is why I have come to see you tonight. You all three of you, have your way of escape, but what is to become of the rest of us? I, for one, am not

going to wait to be caught like a rat in a trap. I want money, and when I have got it I am going, tonight, at once. You can give Ludovic your own orders and pay the price if he fails!"

"Just a minute," he broke in smoothly. "In that case you had better tell me where Ludovic is now."

She stared at him blankly. "At 'l'Amouric, of course. Fatma gave the message to the chauffeur."

He gave a short, cackling laugh. "Quite, but the chauffeur unfortunately lost it before it reached us. He suspects, in fact, that it was stolen from him by an Arab carpet-seller."

"So!" she said, with a sort of strangled scream. "The man who saved Lumsden, and yet you doubt that the game is lost! You're mad. I tell you, out then you were always mad."

He looked at her consideringly, his head on one side. "I am mad, am I?" he echoed, and there was something so indescribably menacing in his tone that I felt the girl beside me shudder. "That is not a very safe thing to say. But let it pass. How much money do you want? Ten thousand francs?"

The woman sneered in his face. "A hundred thousand could be more like it," she retorted. "You can give me what money you have in the house, and a check on your account in Brussels for the balance." She gave a short, harsh laugh. "And I don't think, somehow," she added, "that you will try to stop the check, because, if you did, I might feel inclined to talk. There are a number of insurance companies who would be very glad to listen to me."

Between Two Fires

GEISS sighed, as one whose faith in human nature has been rudely tried. "How true it is that one should never expect gratitude from one's inferiors! But come then, Henrietta, I will give you what money I have, and for the rest, as you so cleverly suggest, there will be a check on my Brussels account—a check that I shall not dare to cash."

The woman's eyes had never left his face, but save for a tightening of the thin lips, she gave no sign of the effect his diatribe had on her. Now she stood up and motioned him to precede her from the room.

"I'm in a hurry," she said. "The express leaves at midnight, and I don't fancy you want to linger."

The cartoonist shrugged, smiling gently at her. "Still suspicious?" he said drily. "Never fear, Henrietta, I will keep my word."

He passed quietly from the room, the woman following close at his heels, and with a sharp click the light went out.

"Thank Heaven they've cleared out," I said. "Now I can get you away."

"You wouldn't be so silly!" Otilie retorted sharply. "We're here, and we know the game is lost in five minutes, and then we've all the night to look for that gun."

"I have," I corrected her gently. "But first, young woman, I'm going to see you clear away." And as I spoke, I peered cautiously over the edge of the balcony. But as I did so, I experienced a sudden sinking of the heart, for across the graveled forecourt below me I saw a dim shape move, a sinister, slinking shape that I recognized only too well.

"We're too late," I said dismally. "There's a bloke standing sentry down below there."

I heard her catch her breath. "Who is it?"

"A fellow called Noah More," I whispered back, "one of Geiss's creatures. He tried to do me in last night." But even as I spoke, I heard a faint, scuffling noise against the wall that told me, incredibly as it seemed, that the repulsive object below was starting to scale the house, even as we had done.

For an instant I hesitated, paralyzed by the sheer horror of the situation. It seemed obvious that yet another of the rats had come to salve what he could before leaving the sinking ship, but well I knew that, once we were discovered, all three of them, Geiss, the woman, and the creature even now climbing up towards us, would combine together against us, held by a common fear and a common regard for their own safety.

"Quiet!" I breathed, and bending, caught the bottom of the sun-shutter and gently levered it upward. I gripped the girl's arm and drew her into the dark bedroom. I dragged her out to the landing, shut the door behind me, and struck a match, looking for a key in the lock, but there was nothing—only a bolt on the inside which was no sort of use to us.

"Take off your slippers!" I whispered, and obediently she slipped off her beach sandals, while I did the same; then we crept silently on our bare feet down the stairs. But even as we gained the foot of the stairs, my heart sank, for the door to the right, which I knew led to the dining-room, opened suddenly, letting a yellow beam of light out across the blackness of the hall, and I heard Geiss's voice.

"So now you've checked Henrietta, and if you will come with me, I will give you what money I can spare for your journey."

In another moment the precious pair would be out in the hall; behind me, on the landing, the scowish of a closing door told that Noah More was on his way down, and there I was, caught between two fires with a helpless girl to look after.

(Copyright 1938, Max Saltmarsh)

Tomorrow: A night of horror.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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

ALARM BIRD--
 A ROBIN AWAKENED
 GEORGE JOHNSON,
 Astoria, Ore, farmer
 21 DAYS IN A ROW
 BY PECKING AT HIS
 WINDOW...

COLUMBUS WAS A PIRATE!
 HE FIRST WENT TO SEA AT 14
 WITH A BAND OF BUCCANEERS
 TO CAPTURE THE KINGDOM OF NAPLES!
 (1459-61)

PITCHER
 JOE KOHLMAN--
 of the Salisbury (Md.)
 Indians,
 WON THE EASTERN
 SHORE LEAGUE PLAYOFF 3-0-2,
 BY PITCHING A NO-HIT
 NO-RUN GAME AGAINST
 CENTREVILLE IN THE LAST
 GAME OF THE SERIES!
 -1937-

THE DESERT SPINELESS CACTUS
 PRODUCES A LARGER CROP PER
 ACRE THAN ANY OTHER
 PLANT KNOWN TO MAN!
 IT IS USED AS
 FODDER!!

Columbus Was a Pirate
 Most of the incidents of the life of Columbus—and even the man himself—are given to such controversy that historians studying his life often confuse fact and fiction. Well credited, however, is the knowledge that Columbus began his seafaring career as a pirate. True, he was a mere lad, but a pirate—swashbuckling and daring—nevertheless.

After his sojourn at Pavia Columbus returned to Genoa. By his own statement he was then 14 years old. He readily fell in with John of Anjou, Duke of Calabria, as the spice of adventure offered by the life of a buccaneer was too much for young Columbus to resist.

The duke was fitting out an expedition to recover possession of the Kingdom of Naples for his father, Duke Rene, in 1459. It is known to have been nothing more than a band of corsairs bent on a piratical adventure.

This was Columbus' first voyage. Oddly enough, on the same expedition was a Greek captain, also named Columbus. How the young explorer-to-be fared on this venture is conjecturable, but it did lay the groundwork for a life at sea which was later to make Columbus immortal.

Builds Miniature Band
 PHILADELPHIA—(UP)—Fred Ross, unemployed wood carver, has built an orchestra in miniature which he synchronized with music from a phonograph, so that the small musicians appear to be playing. Ross used old tin cans, radio parts, dentists' instruments and copper tubing in making the model.

Closing time for Too Late to Classify Ads is 1:30 p. m.

Snoring Disturbs Prisoners
 BOSTON—(UP)—State prison officials are seeking a way to provide unbroken slumber for restless inmates who complain that their sleep is disturbed by their colleagues' snoring. After an inspection tour, the warden said the complaints are justified. A plan to segregate snorers from light-sleepers is being considered.

Tomorrow: What inspired Greeley to say: "Go west, young man, go west?"

Use Mail Tribune Want Ads.

SUBURBAN HEIGHTS

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

IN SPIITE OF THE BEST OF INTENTIONS, THE PERLEYS GOT THEMSELVES INTO A WRANGLE WHEN MRS. PERLEY, COMING OUT FROM TOWN, RODE UP WITH A FRIEND AND LEFT THE CAR AT THE STATION FOR FRED, AND FRED, COMING OUT A TRAIN LATER, LEFT IT THERE FOR HIS WIFE AND WALKED UP; AND SO HAD TO WALK BACK TO THE STATION TO GET THE CAR.

10-11
 (Copyright, 1938, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)
 GLUYAS WILLIAMS

8 MATTER POT

By C M PAYNE

FOUR CHAWKLETS. TWO FOR ME AN' TWO FOR YOU!

YER CHEATIN'! I OUGHTA HAVE AN EXTRA ONE!

CANCHA SEE? THERES TWO TWOS AN' THEY ADD UP FOUR!

THA ONLY THING I KIN SEE TO DO IS FIND OUT HOW TO MAKE THEM ADD UP FIVE!

P.O.P

YES, DARLING!

(Copyright, 1938, by The Bell Syndicate, Inc.)

TAILSPIN TOMMY—The Danger Is Not Over Yet!

By HAL FORREST

BY A STRANGE TWIST OF FATE, THE BULLET INTENDED FOR TOMMY STRUCK THE VERY MAN WHO HAD ARRANGED FOR TOMMY'S ASSASSINATION, NONE OTHER THAN BUNYAN PYLON, PILOT WHO RUSHED AHEAD OF TAILSPIN TO THE RADIO MIKE TO PROTEST THE MERCURY'S VICTORY! A DOCTOR, WHO IS BLENDED, BRIEFLY EXAMINES THE INERT FLYER AND GRAVELY ANNOUNCES:

HOLY CATS!

THIS MAN IS DEAD! HE HAS BEEN SHOT!

I WANT TO REPORT A VIOLATION! THE COMET PILOT DELIBERATELY FOULED THE JUPITER PILOT AT THE BANYAN PYLON CAUSING HIM TO CRASH.

HERE'S THE COMET PILOT BUT HE'S PAST DENYING YOUR CHARGE!

YOU SEE, CHIEF, I WAS RIGHT! THEY'RE OUT TO KILL TOMMY. THEY GOT SHOT BY MISTAKE!

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—Willing to Talk!

By EDWIN ALGER

GOOD! HE'S HERE! NOW YOU FELLOWS WAIT UNTIL I CALL YOU—

IT'S PROF. ADIT! AN' THERE'S SOME OTHER GUYS WITH HIM!

GET THAT BIG MOURNFUL LOOK READY, RUSTY!

HERE, BRIAR! COME IN, PROFESSOR—

JUST WAIT THERE, MEN! I'LL GIVE THIS YOUNGSTER HIS FINAL CHANCE!

WELL, WHAT ABOUT IT?

I'VE DECIDED TO TALK, SIR—

THE NEBBS—Who Comes Here?

By SOL HESS

SV EET CURRANT JELLY! WHAT'S THIS COMING IN?

WHAT PRICE ROOM, PLEASE, AND DO YOU WANT NOXAGE WATER SENT TO YOUR ROOM?

JUST A NICE ROOM, SAHIB!

THAT BABY'S GOT HIS HEAD WRAPPED UP LIKE HE THINKS IT'S WORTH SOMETHIN'!

HOW DID THAT BIRD FIND THIS ROOM?—WE MUST BEGETTING FAMOUS!

I'LL BET IF YOU EVER CATCH A COLD IT'S GOTTA COME IN THROUGH YOUR FEET. NO COLD EVER FOUND ITS WAY THROUGH THAT CAP!

I HOPE HE CAME HERE TO DRINK THE WATER—WHEN YOU CAN BRING THEM HALF WAY AROUND THE WORLD YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING!!

LETTER SENT OUT BY GUFFEY, EARLE, CALLED ILLEGAL

WASHINGTON, Oct. 12.—(AP)—An attorney general's ruling in 1902 provided a basis today for the contention by the senate campaign expenditures

committee two letters sent out by the Pennsylvania Democratic committee violated civil service laws.

The letters, soliciting campaign funds, were written on letterheads which bore the names of Senator Guffey (D. Pa.) and Gov. George Earle, Democratic senatorial candidate. The first letter carried the purported signature of Guffey and the other that of Oscar Decker, state finance committee chairman.

The senate committee said yesterday it had found no evidence to dispute the assertion by Guffey and Earle they knew nothing of the issuance of the letters. However, the committee added, use of their names in the captions made the appeals