

PART TWO

Thanks to: Everyone that read this, I had fun writing it.

The room was still, there was no wind, therefore the curtains merely lay placid against the window. A big, round moon watched silently over the occupants of this room, seemingly uncaring of their feelings. One of the figures – a man, we see, as he rolls over – jerked out of sleep as the phone shrilly announced its presence.

“Lo?”

David Addison wasn't happy. Oh, things were pretty much perfect, he and Maddie had decided to start over, and things were going smoothly (as smoothly as they could, anyway, we are talking about Maddie and David here). The agency had just cracked a case for the FBI, raking in not only unimaginable amounts of money, but publicity also. All of this was wonderful – not to mention a powerful aphrodisiac – and David would have continued to be blissfully happy, except it was four-thirty in the morning, he was suffering from a mild hangover, the damn moon was shining right in his eyes, and the phone was screaming at him at an impossibly high pitch.

He had intended to shout at the caller, demanding what the hell they had been thinking, but his sleep-filled mind refused to send the signal to his mouth,

and thus he uttered one syllable: “Lo?”

“Dave?”

David was suddenly wide awake, and now more than a little curious. “Richie?”

He had not heard from his older brother in months, not strange for them, but the last time Richie had called, it was to tell him that their stepmother was pregnant, and consequently David was a bit wary. “Is something wrong?”

There was an intake of breath and David felt his heart squeeze. It was about this time that the other occupant of the bed woke, stretching slightly. “David?” she questioned, but went no further when she saw the look of shock on his face.

Maddie sat up and switched on the bedside lamp. Sending a concerned glance at her agitated partner, she got out of bed and made her way to the bathroom. When she emerged a moment later, it was to find the room awash with light and David dashing about, looking for clothes and, upon finding them, flinging them into his duffel bag.

She stopped his panic driven actions with a hand on his arm. At her touch, he jumped, turning quickly to face her. Maddie felt shock register on her face at the expression of fear and utter helplessness on his features. Opening her arms, Maddie

accepted David's embrace and held him tightly for several seconds, wondering what had upset him so badly.

David pulled away and kissed her lightly on the mouth. “My dad had a heart attack earlier this morning.” At Maddie's gasp, he hugged her quickly. “He's Ok, but . . .”

“No, no . . . I understand. Richie must be beside himself. Your family needs you, go to them,” she said with an understanding smile.

He had gone back to packing, his back to her, but at this statement he turned and took her hand. “You are my family.”

Maddie leaned in and kissed him. “I meant your real family.” She turned and walked into the bathroom, gathering his toothbrush, razor, and shaving cream. “Did you already book a flight?” she called out.

“Yeah,” came the answer. “It leaves in an hour.”

She walked back into the bedroom and put his things in the bag, then zipped it. David pulled it off of the bed, letting it hit the floor with a loud thump! before picking it up. A horn honked from out front and Maddie glanced out the window and raised her eyebrows at the sight of a cab.

“I would have driven you,” she said, walking with him down the stairs. *(Continued on pg. 41)*

They reached the front door and David turned to face her. "There's no reason for both of us to be up at this ungodly hour. . . . and on a Saturday, no less." He gave her a lingering kiss. "Go back to bed."

Maddie sighed. "I won't be able to." At his inquisitive look, she shrugged and gave a small smile. Who else it could possibly be? Not David's family, who were all at work, not even aware that a vital part of them – as well as her – lay dead on a runway over a thousand miles away. Although, she supposed, one of them could have seen it on the news. Except she didn't think that the news was on in the middle of the day.

It could've been the office, calling out of concern. Agnes always did that when Maddie missed a day. A smile flitted across her face at this thought, only to be replaced a second later with a look of horror.

Dear God, she had just smiled. Her partner, lover, best friend, was dead, and she was smiling. What kind of person did that make her?

Maddie pushed this thought to the back of her mind, painfully aware that it would fester and grow in intensity and present itself to her at a later date. She knew she needed to call the Addison family and let them know, but she couldn't bring herself to pick up the phone.

Silent tears had been making their melancholy way down her cheeks since the airport, but now, sitting on her couch, watching her answering machine's light blink, she bent her head and, resting it on her knees, Maddie sobbed.

She felt better afterward and slowly wiped the back of her hand across her red, puffy eyes. She sighed and reached for the phone.

It was now or never.

Instead of picking up the phone, however, Maddie's hand once again hovered over the button labeled "play" on the answering machine. She couldn't ignore it forever, and she found the thought of hearing his voice one last time would be more of a comfort, rather than agony.

With this thought running through her head again and again, Maddie rewound the tape and pressed play before the doubts could return.

Madolyn Hayes grinned, tears once again coursing down her face, as she heard the most beautiful words in the world:

"Maddie, it's me. I missed my flight."

MOONLIGHTING *Strangers*

After this issue, Moonlighting Strangers will become a quarterly. This will give people more time to submit and contribute to the fanzine. The next issue will be scheduled to come out in late October. Please send any original work to: ceetay@earthlink.net