

Adventures in McCloudland

By Marilyn J. Ogden

Chapter 42

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New Year's Morning

Lee shook me awake at 5 am and said I had to come see the lobby. Nothing could be important enough to get me out there at this hour. But he insisted. Then I remembered that we had actually robbed the train last night...now what?

As I entered the dim lobby it looked like our old lobby, except that helium balloons were floating everywhere. Dozens of them floated at eye level throughout the room. As I walked through the space they danced about and found new resting spots only to be disturbed again and float about. It was eerie and wonderful. I felt very fortunate at having good friends who would spend hours doing this in the middle of the night. They created a wonderful memory.

The breakfast servers, however, had a devil of a time dodging balloons.

As we set up and served a special New Year's morning buffet, Susan Nichols, who had tagged me the night before on the train, burst through our front door into the lobby waiving a butter knife. "Here," she shouted so everyone could hear, "You forgot one," and thrust the butter knife toward me.

"Gee, Susan, what would we do with more butter knives?" "Would you like some breakfast? Why don't you join us?"

She sat and enjoyed breakfast while sharing with our guests the story of a daring butter knife train heist.

After she left, I found she had lifted an antique salt and pepper set.