

MoonEarth Collision: A Disaster Story

by C.F. Pierce

*Blue moon you saw me standing alone
Without a dream in my heart
Without a love of my own*

Lorenz Hart, Richard

Rogers

Full Moon

When the Vice President is informed of the impending apocalypse, the Renaissance man turned politician recalls a verse from Kerouac: *The moon her magic be, big sad face of infinity*. A former academic and University Chancellor, Vice President Jamison has always preferred poetry over power.

"My fellow Americans," says his boss, leader of the free world. "The orbit of the moon has been disturbed. No longer revolving around the earth, the moon now hurtles toward the earth. Impact is expected within days. Experts opine that a thermonuclear accident occurred in outer space. Suspected culprits are well funded ISIS astro-scientists seeking a military satellite from which to target Western democracies. At this juncture, our energies are directed at averting disaster."

"Of biblical proportion," whispers Jamison.

Crescent Moon

Seated at a long table, Jamison listens to the somber Secretary of Defense.

"Missiles and lasers have achieved limited success. Most of the moon has been destroyed. A large lunar mass remains undiverted. We are continuing our efforts. But we are not optimistic."

Meteor Moon

Jamison stares at a screen in horror. "Jagged lunar asteroid hammers English Channel near France. Earthquakes, tsunamis, chaos. Death toll at tens of thousands, rapidly rising. Eiffel Tower collapsed. The Seine flooding the Louvre, entire collection threatened."

Years ago at Les Deux Maggots, he drank cafe au lait from a porcelain cup. Seated on the terrace, pretty wife by his side. It was summer.

"Did I ever tell you I used to dream of coming to Paris to write a novel?" he asked.

He lowered the cup onto a white saucer. His wife turned to him and made an unexpected suggestion. Politics. "You have the resources, imagine the possibilities."

It was supposed to be a romantic vacation.

On that evening, the Parisian sky was clear. He cannot recall the moon.

Zero Moon

"Urgent: Come to the White House at once."

En route, Jamison receives a call from the British Prime Minister. "Mr. Vice President, I cannot reach the President. Our sources report the President's doomsday address was not accurate. The catastrophe in reality was the result of clandestine operations carried out by your Pentagon and NASA with the President's approval. The terrorist explanation was pure fiction. Were you aware of this?"

"Mr. Prime Minister, surely there is some mistake."

"I have spoken to my counterparts in France and Germany. We will be seeking the immediate expulsion of the United States from the NATO alliance."

* * *

"Mr. President," says Jamison. The Chief Executive ignores him without expression and enters the Oval Office.

"The President has asked for a moment of solitude for prayer," says the Chief of Staff.

"Of course," says Jamison. Like many historic leaders in crisis, the President is alone. A modern Greek tragedy, thinks Jamison, deep down relieved he is not head of state, especially in this hour. He imagines himself for the first time--really sees himself--in the role he does not covet. He feels increasing empathy for his superior when he is startled by an odd popping sound emanating from the solemn enclosure.

The opening of a bottle of champagne? He recalls a toast with the French prime minister at Matignon during his first official visit in France. Warm welcoming smiles all around him in an elegant dining hall.

The noise is followed by the thud of a heavy object falling on the floor.

