

baugh threw out the drag rope. It caught on a tree in a ravine, three hundred feet below. They hung anchored over the ravine, and it was there that night closed over them.

It was a very black night. They hung over the basket edge, peering into bottomless gloom. At last they were relieved to see lights approaching in the trees below. They leaned over the edge and bellowed through cupped hands. The lights went out.

They continued to watch, and the lights reappeared. They shouted again. Again the lights vanished.

"We're surrounded by moonshiners," Carl said.

"They'll shoot us," Bumbaugh warned him.

But Carl hung out the basket to shout down that they were balloonists caught by their rope and needed help. The lights flashed on once more, and disappeared again.

It was then the pair congratulated themselves upon having brought along revolvers. They aimed the guns over the basket's rim and waited in the darkness, expecting at any moment to have the balloon and their own bodies riddled by the gunfire of unfriendly mountaineers.

After a long time Carl began chuckling.

"I'd like to know what you find funny about this," snapped the exasperated Bumbaugh.

"If we're not the damndest couple of fools," Carl chortled. "Those aren't moonshiners' lanterns down there—they're will-o'-the-wisps!"

Then they settled back in their blankets and slept, ignoring the little dancing lights emanating from the gaseous depths of the nearby marshes.

They managed to shake the rope free when morning came, and continued their zigzag course over the Tennessee range. Several times they were about to be shot down by outraged mountaineers whose property rights they seemed to be threatening from the sky.

After forty-nine and a half hours in the air and many misadventures, the two pilots agreed morosely that the "Indiana" had lost the race. They were drifting low over a field now, and Carl, since time was no longer important, decided to take a rest on terra firma. He shinned down the drag rope, sat down under a tree and lighted a cigar.