

THE CLOUDED MOON

By MAX SALTmarsh

Hugo Stern, handsome author, living on the French Riviera. Archie Lumsden, myself, Hugo's friend. René Geiss, a singularly unpleasant cartoonist.

Yesterday: Geiss is alibied for the murder of the mannequin, Eve Monet, and the American detective, O'Donnell, by a party at his home.

Chapter Seven
Jean-François

THE next morning as I was eating breakfast on the terrace, Hugo came towards me, an unlit pipe between his teeth, his face somber.

"The police chief wants us down at the town hall at noon," he went on. "I've just been talking to him on the phone. The examining magistrate arrived from Grasse at some unearthly hour this morning. Now he proposes to put us all through the hoop."

He broke off to pack some tobacco into his pipe. "I don't think we need worry about the inquiry," he added rather dubiously, "so long as we stick to the truth and nothing but the truth, but not quite the whole truth—which means that I'm still not mentioning the message O'Donnell left for me. I know the French police. They're devilish sharp, but they're suspicious by nature and still more suspicious by cultivated habit of thought, as witness their Code Napoleon, which considers a man guilty until he can prove himself innocent. If I mentioned Pat's message, I should have to tell them the contents of it, and the 'desperately urgent—counting on you' bit would at once make them smell something fishy." He paused to apply a match to his pipe. "I've warned Penelope to keep her mouth shut about the message," said he, "and there the matter ends until I've discovered what poor Pat meant by it."

I stared at him. "Am I to take it from that, that you're proposing to carry out an independent investigation into O'Donnell's death?" "Just that," he agreed grimly. "As far as the local authorities are aware, O'Donnell was a bondsman, presumably on a vacation, but I'm taking a run in the car this afternoon across the Italian frontier. I know a fellow in New York who's a close friend of Pat's and I'll send him a cable from Ventimiglia, reporting his death. He'll know what to do about it. If Pat was over here on business, it's probable his firm will send someone over to investigate and finish off the job, but it'll be a matter of ten days before he can arrive, and meanwhile the scent'll be cold. I intend to carry on myself in the meantime, though I'll be working pretty much in the dark. Archie—"

He swung round on me suddenly. "Are you dead set on finishing—our yachting trip? I'd be uncommonly glad if you'd stay on here to give me a hand. After all, you took that girl's death to heart, and I'm a strong feeling the two crimes are connected."

I hesitated. Mark Lumsden would, I knew, be more than annoyed if I did as Hugo asked, for we had planned this trip on his little ketch for over a year. But on the other hand, the two other fellows on board, so that should in no sense be leaving him in the lurch, and even as the last, excusing thought came to me, I knew that I had decided.

"All right," I said. "I'll stay," and felt as I spoke the words a queer, premonitory tingling had a read, half excitement, run through me.

"Good man!" said he, and held out a muscular hand. "Shake on it!"

He broke off sharply, gave a sudden, inarticulate howl of rage and swung his legs over the balustrade. Next instant from the lower terrace came sounds closely resembling a dog-fight. I disentangled myself from my breakfast table and in two strides was at the marble rail, peering over. For a moment all I could see were two struggling bodies, one in red and black, the other in dingy gray, rolling over and over at the foot of a gnarled and ancient olive tree; but as I looked they disentangled themselves and Hugo got to his feet, dragging with him by the coat-collar a crumpled figure.

'A Little Investigating'

IT WAS a young lad, hardly more than a boy, with a sallow, hardy face, long, close-set eyes, and a mop of ruffled black hair, and to my surprise he made no effort to struggle against the rough-house he was going through, but hung limp in Hugo's hands, making what appeared to be deprecating and conciliatory noises.

"Pardon, monsieur," he gasped. "I beg of you to let me get I apologize for the intrusion."

Hugo snorted with disgust. "Another of these French reporters," he observed to me. "Couldn't get in at the front and comes sniping round over the wall to see what he could eavesdrop." He swung back on the lad, raising a menacing fist. "Be off with you now," he said warningly. "And make it snappy if you want to keep a whole seat to your pants."

The lad looked from one to the other of us appealingly. "But, monsieur," he implored, "one little word is all I ask—one small photograph, and he stooped, seized

as a monkey, but with a cautious eye on Hugo's foot, and retrieved from the long grass something that I saw to be a bulky press-camera. "Just a minute," I said quickly. "Let me handle this, will you?" Hugo stared at me. "As you like," he agreed grudgingly, and added on a warning note: "but watch your step, Archie. Don't give anything away."

"Not on your life!" I reassured him, and I motioned to the lad to follow me along the terrace to the boundary wall.

"Now then," I said, "let's get this straightened out. What paper do you represent?"

"The Marseille Soir, monsieur," he answered nervously.

"The Marseille Soir?" I repeated. "Not a big paper, I take it, and this, I wouldn't wonder, is your first job?"

He nodded. "I see," I said. "Your first big chance, and you would risk anything to make good. Well, now, just what did you want—a photograph or two?"

"And a story, monsieur," he said eagerly. "A small, little word! It would mean—" he drew himself up, throwing out his puny chest—"my future—my career!"

"Oho," said I, reflecting that the paper must indeed be a small one if it combined cameraman and reporter in one person, "well, see here. I've a proposition to make to you. I can't give you a story, but I might come to an arrangement with you. How much does your paper pay you?"

He flushed at that. "There is no regular emolument," he admitted. "It is a matter of commission."

"Better and better," said I. "Then you're a free lance and your time is your own? I take it you would be able, if funds were available, to stay on here in Cannes—provided, of course, there was a story to be written up at the end of the time?"

He nodded vigorously. His face was puzzled, but his eyes were brightly intelligent.

"Well," I said, "the position is this. I may want certain information that I'm not in a position to obtain myself, and if, in the meantime, I allow you to take a photograph of me, and if, say for the next fortnight, I pay you a certain sum per day to enable you to stay on here, I take it that you'd be willing to do a little investigating for me in your spare time?"

The Red Deluge

THE boy stared at me, and for a moment I fancied there were tears in his eyes. "Monsieur," he said very solemnly, "I am your man. I, Jean-François Lubel! My grandmothers live in Cannes, and I know the town as I know this," and he kissed the back of his hand.

"I can stay with her without comment, and what you wish to know I can discover for you."

"May I be so?" I asked plausibly. I presented him with a couple of hundred-franc notes. "That's for the first two days," I said. "You can meet me by the wall here every evening at, say, ten o'clock and report progress, and now take the following photograph and be off with you."

He posed me with artistic care against the wall and did his stuff; and then, as he unslung his big instrument, he looked up at me curiously. "And the information, monsieur?" he asked. "What is the first inquiry to be?"

"Just this," I told him. "I want you to find out whatever you can about Monsieur René Geiss: his habits of life, his domestic staff and arrangements, and his friends; and particularly I want to hear something about the party he was giving last night."

He gave me another sharp upward look, full of comprehension. "Monsieur," he said softly, "I will try to find out for you. Monsieur Geiss was from the time he left his villa at ten-thirty last night until he returned to it at midnight."

It was very still there on the sun-faded terrace among the olive trees. For an instant I stared at the lad; then I took a swift step forward and gripped him by the shoulder.

"And what the devil do you mean by that?" I demanded. He disengaged himself, grimacing with pain. "Nothing more than I said, but you understand that Monsieur Geiss is always news, and in the course of talk this morning with my conferees—"

Again he threw out his chest proudly. "One mentioned that at half past ten last night he had seen Monsieur Geiss slip out on foot from the small garden door that lead into the line at the side of his house. Then another colleague spoke up and said that he had seen Monsieur Geiss return in his car at midnight, and leave it in the garage at the corner of the rue du Dragon, where he is accustomed to keep it. I was sufficiently impressed by the discrepancy in the stories to offer a cigarette to the mechanic at the garage and heard from him that it was so. The car of Monsieur Geiss, a red Delage, was taken out by another gentleman, a dark gentleman of medium height—here he eyed me oddly—at nine in the evening."

"Jean-François," I said solemnly, "you're worth your weight in more than cigarettes. Get on with the job. I feel, somehow, that you don't need any more instructions from me."

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Tomorrow: The Inquiry.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

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ALFREDO WARGAW--79, SANG FROM THE 86TH FLOOR OF THE EMPIRE STATE BUILDING AND WAS HEARD ON THE STREET, 1050 FEET BELOW! -July, 1938-

Mightiest concentration of electrical energy ever achieved is Boulder Dam, Nevada, containing 15 generators of 22,500 kilowatt-ampere capacity and two of 40,000 kilowatt-ampere capacity—a total of more than 1,000,000 kw. Each of the larger generators is alone capable of lighting 15 cities the size of Denver, Colo.; water turning the giant turbines flows from spillways at a rate of 10,000 gallons each second, falling farther than the waters of Niagara.

A visitor to this super-spectacle of electrical engineering, rendered speechless by the immensity of it all, is but mildly shocked as a consequence on beholding numerous signs posted throughout the Boulder power station, reading: "PLEASE TURN OFF ALL LIGHTS NOT ACTUALLY IN USE."

Convicted Under Own Law. First man indicted and tried for murder under the provisions of a law which he had introduced into

the Oklahoma legislature was Ira N. Terrill, member of that body. Terrill, after successfully introducing and sponsoring a law providing for capital punishment by hanging, for first degree murder, was himself convicted of murder in 1892. Once condemned to the gallows, his sentence later was changed to a term of 12 years imprisonment. He served out 10 years and three months before being released.

Tomorrow: The Blind Postman.

company, Idaho, farmer, to Spokane under pretense of arrest last July 3 and extorting \$795 from him for "bail."

COMPANION OF MRS. F. R. GETS CAPITAL DIVORCE WASHINGTON, Sept. 7.—(AP)—Mrs. Malvina Thompson Scheider, personal secretary and traveling companion of Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, has obtained a divorce from Frank J. Scheider, of New York.

150 PICKERS BUSY IN APPLEGATE HOP YARD BIG APPLEGATE, Sept. 7.—(Sp.)—The superlative activity of the hop field at harvest time may be observed now at the B. M. Clute yards, where

pickings of the fat green clusters is in full swing. About 150 pickers are working, most of them southern Oregon people. A few children are employed.

Two new cabins have been added to the set up, making 15 cabins occupied as living quarters for pickers and their families. Mrs. Maude Herritt is in charge of a commissary on the grounds. The crop is good this year, and free from spiders, aphids and other pests.

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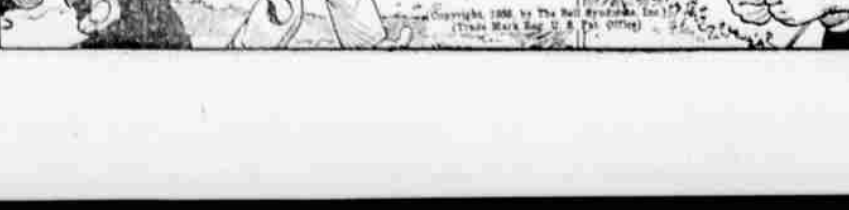
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THE WORLD AT ITS WORST BY GLUYAS WILLIAMS



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By EDWIN ALGER



By SOL HERR



Roseburg Power Cut By Tree Fall ROSEBURG, Ore., Sept. 7.—(AP)—Roseburg was without electric power for two hours Tuesday when a tree fell across the Roseburg-Prospect transmission line about five miles south of Diamondville. The Springfield power plant was unable to assume the additional load, while a part of the equipment was down at the Marshfield steam plant and energy could not be obtained over the Roseburg-Marshfield line until the machinery there could be restored to service.

13 Months Sentence For Farmer's Kidnap SPOKANE, Sept. 7.—(AP)—Leading guilty to a kidnap conspiracy charge involving an Idaho farmer, Lee Wallace Tomlinson, 25, was sentenced today in U. S. district court to 13 months in McNeil Island federal penitentiary. I. G. Anketa, Portland attorney, and Anthony Garguilo pleaded innocent. They were indicted on the same charge. All were arrested at Portland. The government accused them of bringing Thomas Lowe, Benewah