

# THE CLOUDY MOON

By MAX SALTMARSH

**The Characters**  
Hugo Stern, handsome author, living on the French Riviera.  
Archie Lumsden, myself, Hugo's friend.  
René Gelas, man behind a murder plot, who is trying to get rid of me.

Yesterday, Verner is murdered, and a torch and toilet planted in my room. I hide the evidence under a tile in the hall.

**Chapter 32**  
**Many Curious Facts**  
"Mr. Verner and I spoke of London," I told the examining magistrate. "He was a very homesick man."

The judge d'Instruction pursed his lips, looking at me sharply from under lowered brows, startlingly like a cat about to pounce. "And no incident occurred during this interesting conversation?" he inquired. "Nothing that struck you as out of the ordinary? You entered this room, you sat and conversed, you took your leave?"

A warning bell rang in my brain. Something—I couldn't tell what—whispered that a lot depended on my answer to that question, that some carefully laid trap was about to be sprung if I didn't watch my step. They were all eyeing me, silent, wary, expectant, and I hesitated, racking my brains; and then, as I looked from one to the other, I caught the eye of the stout, cheerful-looking fellow on the commissaire's right, Fleuriot, the man from Marseille, and saw him give a slight, reassuring nod—a nod that said: "Carry on, I'm on your side."

I did a minute's quick thinking. There was something he wanted to say, but obviously he could have no knowledge of what I had discussed with Verner. And then, suddenly, I guessed.

"There was one incident," I said, speaking slowly and picking my words. "Mr. Verner had a heart-attack just before I left—I think speaking of London had been a trifle agitating, and I understand his heart was weak. He asked me to get him some drops from the table beside his bed, and just after I had brought them, he thought he heard a sound on the balcony outside his bedroom window and told me to go and see a look."

"You actually went out on the balcony?" said M. Fleuriot encouragingly.

"Yes," I answered. "I had a good look at the balcony, but there was no one there."

"That proves nothing except that he is clever," the judge remarked, and then to me: "Now we come to the rest of the evening. You say you spent it with Monsieur Stern? You have other witnesses, I suppose?"

"Naturally," I retorted. "Miss Ada Stern, and Mr. Dunning, an American friend."

"And after dinner you came back to the hotel? At what time?"

"At five minutes to ten," I said. "But the hotel gates were already shut. I had already decided that, as far as my use of the key went, there must be no attempt at concealment."

The judge raised his eyebrows. "The gate was locked; then how did you get in, pray?"

"Oh," said I airily. "I had a key. I got it from the late chasseur, two days ago—the housekeeper will tell you all about that—and it got lost, but it turned up again. Here it is." I threw it on the table.

He glanced at it, evidently satisfied. "Then," he said gently, "you have no witness as to what time you came in?"

"Do you want one?" I asked dryly.

"I want more from you than that, Mr. Lumsden," he retorted. "I want an explanation for many curious facts. First, the fact that your fingerprints, and yours alone, have been found inside and outside the shutters of this window; second, the fact that your fingerprints are the only ones on the medicine-bottle, the water-carafe, and the glass; third, the fact that, apart from the man Amédée, who is an honest fellow and has a good record, you were the last person to see Monsieur Verner alive."

**'Vowing Vengeance'**  
HE STOOD up suddenly, his eyes, sharp and keen as gimlets, boring into mine.

"Shall I tell you the truth?" he said softly. "You came here, an unexpected guest, because you were in need of money, because you knew some guilty secret of Monsieur Verner's past life, some secret that he would pay well to have you silent about. You disclosed your knowledge to him in the morning and gave him until night to make his decision. He sent for you and there took place an interview so stormy that he was afflicted with a heart-attack. He refused your exorbitant demands and you departed, vowing vengeance. Then, in the silent hours of the night, you returned to your wretched victim and brutally murdered him, taking what money you could find. You are not aware, I suppose, that his wallet is missing?"

Now that the storm had broken, I was conscious only of a queer relief at strain relaxed, and an immense thankfulness that I had mentioned the medicine I had given the old man and the excursion to the balcony, for if I had not,

those damnable fingerprints would have been doubly incriminating.

"Just a minute," I said quietly. "Am I to understand, Monsieur le juge, that you accuse me of murdering Mr. Verner?"

He shook his head. "I make no accusations—as yet," said he. "I reconstruct the crime, as I am at liberty to do."

"It seems to me," I said "that in your precious reconstruction you've omitted two important points: first, that the door to these rooms was locked from the inside, and second, that the bedroom next door was also locked and the key in its place in the office, as Amédée can tell you."

"The key?" he said dryly. "What more easy than for you to possess yourself of the other key, a key of an unoccupied room that would never be missed?"

I shrugged. "All right," I said wearily, "let's leave the question of the key. Where's the weapon that committed the crime, and the wallet that was stolen? You can see for yourself it isn't on me, and I gather, from the look of my room, that you're satisfied yourself it isn't there either."

He smiled gently at me. "Your wits are slow today, my young friend," he retorted. "Have you not told us yourself that you took a bath this morning and that no one saw you leave the house? What more easy than for you to carry the evidences of your crime out with you and conceal them in the garden—on the beach—where you like? No, no! You cannot escape as easily as that!"

He glanced round him, at the silent, watchful ring of police, at the commissaire, plump and uneasy, at the man from Marseille, studiously aloof, and took a quick step forward. "Take him over there!" he said sharply. "Let him see what he has done! And before I realized what was happening, a couple of brassy fellows had seized me by the arms and propelled me to the bed."

**The Dog Lulu**  
THE judge had followed round the table in our wake, and now he suddenly ripped back the bed-clothes. "Miserable one, behold thy victim!" he said quietly, and for a long instant I stood staring down at the dreadful thing which lay revealed.

A wave of nausea swept over me, followed by a surge of blind, ungovernable rage. I could have taken the heads of the men who held me and crashed them together; but before the last rags of faintly slipping from me, salvation came. A voice spoke from my rear, a calm, unburied voice, but with the unmistakable ring of authority.

"That's enough," it said, and next minute the man from Marseille had pushed my captors aside and quietly pulled the covers back in place. "You may go now, young man, but understand, you must not leave the hotel."

"I understand," I told him gratefully.

dressed, and made my way rather dimly down the stairs, wondering how I was going to get through the interminable hours that lay before me, and still more how I could get in touch with Hugo. But as my foot touched the bottom step, I heard his voice calling my name.

"Archie!" he shouted. "What the devil have you been up to, and what's all this going on here?"

I caught him by the shoulders and swung him round in the direction of Amédée's entry. I shut the door, and told him my story. As I finished he heaved a sigh.

"Well," said he, "that finishes it. You pack your traps, my lad, and come straight home with me."

"You forget," I suggested mildly, "that as a special murderer I'm not allowed to leave this hotel."

"Well, at least, I'm going right away to the Vice-Consul to get the name of a good criminal lawyer."

"You'll do nothing of the sort," I retorted. "It'll be time enough for that when they accuse me. Let's take it that I lie low for awhile and you carry on without me. After all I can always let you know if I'm in any sort of a jam."

"And how will you do that?" he demanded sourly.

I thought for a minute. "There's Amédée," I said. "I could trust him to take a message without tipping off the police."

I broke off short, for the object of my commendation had poked his head cautiously round the door. "Monsieur," he said in a rusty whisper, "a word if you please—about the dog, Lulu!"

"He's not dead?" I asked, startled, for the poor brute had of the moment slipped from my memory.

"No, no," said he, "but the Mees has just called me to give me orders to have him destroyed immediately, without delay."

"The deuce she has!" said I, and whistled softly. "Now, I wonder who?"

Hugo looked at me meaningly. "You say the dog was present at the murder?" he queried dryly. "He was, in effect, knocked on the head by the murderer? Isn't it conceivable that he might, if he recovers, recognize the man who did it?"

"I believe you're right," I swung round on Amédée. "Listen, friend, I said 'Tell the Miss that you are carrying out her orders. The dog will be destroyed tonight and buried in the garden, if necessary; you can dig a grave to add a touch of local color—but instead get him carried up to the top of the lane some time after dark—say about nine thirty.' I turned to Hugo. "Well, that suit you?"

"Admirably," said he.

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Tomorrow: The third degree.

## STRANGE AS IT SEEMS—By JOHN HIX

For further proof address the author, enclosing a stamped envelope for reply. Reg. U. S. Pat. 32.

**COMPOSITION OF DEATH!**  
LOUIS MOREAU GOTTSCHALK,  
American composer,  
DIED WHILE WRITING  
"LA MORTE" (THE DEATH!)  
-1869-

**CROSS-COUNTRY KNOCKOUT...**  
JOHN L. SULLIVAN  
KNOCKED OUT 29 MEN  
IN AN 8-MONTH  
TRIP FROM NEW YORK  
TO SAN FRANCISCO.

**THE LOG OF  
THE S.S. LEVIATHAN  
DAILY RECORDED ITS POSITION  
FOR MORE THAN 3 YEARS  
WHILE THE SHIP WAS DOCKED  
AT HOBOKEN, N. J.  
(Sept., 1934 -  
Jan., 1938)**

**THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE--**  
WHICH ADDED TO THE U.S.  
6 WHOLE STATES, MOST OF 6 OTHERS  
AND PARTS OF 5 MORE, INCLUDED  
ONLY ONE HALF OF  
LOUISIANA!  
-1803-

10-6-38

**Louisiana Purchase**  
Greatest act of Thomas Jefferson, first President of the United States to be inaugurated in Washington City, was the purchase of the extensive Louisiana Territory from France for the sum of \$15,000,000.

Two foremost objectives were in mind when this huge land deal was contemplated to give the United States control of the Mississippi River and the port of New Orleans, and to keep this country unhampered by European countries in the development of a republican form of government.

The purchase, made in the year 1803, was sanctioned by Napoleon not so much out of friendliness toward the United States than because he feared he could not hold the port of New Orleans against British attack.

Jefferson sent James Monroe to close the deal; at a cost of fifteen million dollars the United States obtained 1,172,000 new square miles of land—less than fifteen dollars a square mile.

Strange as it seems, the Louisiana purchase did not include all of the present state of Louisiana, omitting about one-half of it; it did include

**SPANISH REBELS HALTED ON EBRO**

HENDAYE, France.—(AP)—The Spanish government reported today its troops halted an insurgent drive on the Ebro front and recaptured many positions lost during the past few days.

Insurgents admitted counter-attacks in force but claimed possession of six additional government positions.

The fighting centered among hills along the Gandesa-Mora de Ebro highway. Positions have been changing hands repeatedly with little effect on the general front.

The Cortland apple is becoming one of the more important varieties grown in New York state.

TAILSPIN TOMMY—Cause for Worry!

**ATOP THE LAGUNA PYLON**  
TWO RACE OFFICIALS TURN PALE AS TWO LEADING SHIPS FLASH TOWARD THEM AT OVER FOUR HUNDRED AND FIFTY MILES PER HOUR. THE GREATEST SPEED EVER ATTAINED BY AIRPLANES!

THE PLANES ARE NOW FLYING WING TIP TO WING TIP, EACH STRIVING FOR CHOICE POSITION TO TAKE THE TURN, AND THE COMET GETS THE FAVORED BANK WITH A SAVAGE ROAR AS THE SHIPS CLOSE ON THE PYLON.

ZOWIE! THAT'S SHAVIN' 'EM CLOSE!

BEN WEBSTER'S CAREER—A Discovery!

WHEW! ON ACCOUNT O' US MCGURKS HAVIN' STRONG SKULLS AN' THERE BEIN' WATER IN THIS DITCH I GUESS I AIN'T INJURED!

BUT I'VE LOST THE CAR! NO I AIN'T! THEY'RE SLOWIN' UP!

THEY TURNED OFF THE ROAD AHEAD! BOY, AM I LUCKY! BUT I WONDER WHERE WE ARE?

FOR CRYIN' OUT LOUD! SO THIS IS WHERE PROF. ADIT TURNED IN, EH? WHY, THE BIG PHONY! PRETENDIN' HE'S FROM THE GOVERNMENT AN' ALL THE TIME IN CAHOOTS WITH THE JIPPEMS!

THE NEBBS—Advice to the Love-Sick

FANNY, AFTER GETTING SUCH A LOVELY LETTER I THINK I OUGHT TO GO UP AND SEE NELLIE.

DON'T YOU THINK IT'S THE PROPER THING TO DO AFTER GETTING THAT LETTER WITH "DEAR STEVE" IN IT?

YOU ARE ASKING ME?

I'M NOT GOING TO ADVISE YOU IN THIS AFFAIR—YOU GOT YOURSELF LOADED UP WITH MISERY—YOU CAN CRAWL IN FURTHER OR WIGGLE YOUR WAY OUT—THAT'S YOUR BUSINESS!

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## SERIOUS FOOTBALL

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS

ARRIVES PROMPTLY FOR PRACTICE

WHILE WAITING FOR EVERYONE TO SHOW UP, CLOWNS AROUND GETTING DOWN BEHIND BOYS WHILE BUD BEMIS SHOVS THEM OVER

THIS INEVITABLY RESULTS IN SEVERAL WRESTLING BOUTS

GETTING TIRED AT LAST EVERYONE SITS AROUND AND ARGUES ABOUT ANYTHING

MOST OF THE TEAM HAVING REPORTED, FIVE MINUTES IS SPENT SHOUTING FOR EDDIE SELZER TO HURRY UP

EDDIE SELZER SHOWS UP JUST AS A CONTEST STARTS TO SEE WHO CAN HIT THE TELEPHONE POLE WITH A STONE FIRST

CONTEST ENDING, CALLS LET'S GET TO WORK, AT WHICH POINT FINDS THAT NO ONE HAS BROUGHT A FOOTBALL

TEAM DISBANDS, EVERYONE PROMISING TO BE ON TIME TOMORROW

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## SMATTER POI

HONK!

I'LL TELL POP!

BAW!

SMATTER WITH WILLYUM?

SOME TOUGH FELLA BUMPED HIM OFF!

AWK!

Tomorrow: The blind man who saw!

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By HAL FORREST

IN A BOX SEAT ANOS SNEAD MOANS TO HIS PARTNER, GIRTY

DON'T BE TOO QUICK, SNEAD! TOMKINS HAS THE LEAD NOW, BUT...

LOOKS LIKE WE KISS THAT GOVERNMENT CONTRACT GOOD-BYE!

CHIEF! WE'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING! THEY'LL KILL TOMMY IF HE WINS!

WHO WILL I SAW WHAT DO YOU MEAN, BETTY-LOU?

AND BETTY-LOU.

By EDWIN ALGER

WHEW! ON ACCOUNT O' US MCGURKS HAVIN' STRONG SKULLS AN' THERE BEIN' WATER IN THIS DITCH I GUESS I AIN'T INJURED!

BUT I'VE LOST THE CAR! NO I AIN'T! THEY'RE SLOWIN' UP!

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By SOT HESS

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## DENY DISMISSAL OF CHARGE IN BAY CITY RUM DEATH

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct. 6.—(AP)—Municipal Judge Hugh L. Smith today refused a defense motion to dis-

miss manslaughter charges against Thomas White, 34, one of two men accused of the mysterious death of Walter C. Vibert, 48, executive of the federal housing administration for northern California.

Vibert, son of Philip Vibert of Victoria, B. C., was found dead in his hotel room here last August 12.

Walter Duane, attorney for White, made the motion for dismissal after Jesse P. Carr, city pathologist, testified Vibert could have suffered a cerebral hemorrhage in a fall.

Dr. Carr said Vibert was born with unusually thin-walled blood vessels at the base of his brain and added