

# The Moon Maid.pdf/226



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and to kill you, but to let you know first that I am going to kill you—to kill you in such a way that man was never before killed, as no other brain than mine could conceive of killing. You insulated your aluminum parts, thinking thus to thwart me, but you did not know—your feeble intellect could not know—that as easily as I destroyed aluminum I can, by the simplest of adjustments, attune this weapon to destroy any one of a hundred different substances and among them human flesh or human bone. That is what I am going to do now, Julian 5th. First I am going to dissipate the bony structure of your frame. It will be done painlessly—it may not even result in instant death, and I am hoping that it will not. For I want you to know the power of a real intellect—the intellect from which you stole the fruits of its efforts for a life time; but not again, Julian 5th, for today you die—first your bones, then your flesh, and after you, your men, and after them your spawn, the son that the woman I loved bore you; but she—she shall belong to me! Take that memory to hell with you!" and he turned toward the dials beside his lethal weapon.

But Julian 5th placed a hand upon the little box resting upon the strong tripod before him, and he it was who touched a button before Orthis had touched his. Instantly the electronic rifle vanished beneath the very eyes of Orthis, and at the same time the two ships touched and Julian 5th

had leaped the rail to the enemy deck and was running toward his arch enemy.

Orthis stood gazing horrified, at the spot where the greatest invention of his giant intellect had stood but an instant before, and then he looked up at Julian 5th approaching him and cried out horribly.

"Stop!" he screamed. "Always, all our lives you have robbed me of the fruits of my efforts. Somehow you have



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