

Eclipsing the Moons – by Rob Steele

The house was quiet. As it should be. Well, as I prefer it, anyway. I can think that way. Although, that's probably not the way the owners intended it. They'd probably want a little bit more noise than this. Of course, they're dead so they probably don't care all *that* much about it.

My name is Cooper Wright, a 14-year veteran of the police force, and it's my job to figure out just what the hell happened here. The victims: Paul and Kelly Moon – both of them were astronomers. They ran the observatory over on Floyd's Bluff. Near as I can tell, they had no enemies.

The person who did this probably wasn't a personal enemy, as such. Both were bludgeoned with a candlestick. The matching one is on the dining room table so my guess: weapon of opportunity. Botched burglary, maybe? Except nothing looks ransacked or is obviously missing and no sign of forced entry.

I've already spoken to their co-workers. All seven of them. No one mentioned anything out of the ordinary. I suppose it was convenient of the observatory to have that party tonight. Certainly made my job easier. They were celebrating something about the Moons discovering a new planet. I wonder if that would sound as odd out loud as it did in my head.

"Detective Wright! Detective Wright!" Oh good. Manny's here. Officer Manny Vasquez really is a good kid, but damn he's young. Like a puppy dog. He could do with less caffeine. And someone to tell him to make up his mind about that damn mustache. Sometimes it's a thick Latino 'stache. Which makes sense. He's Puerto Rican. Sometimes it's a Rollie Fingers handlebar thing. Sometimes 70s porn 'stache. Today? Eddie Murphy circa 1984, a.k.a. peach fuzz. I keep meaning to ask him how he grows it so damn fast.

"What is it Manny?"

"I think you're going to want to hear this. There was another co-worker that we haven't talked to. I found this notebook upstairs and it talks about a Christos Klaus, a Finnish astronomer who claimed *he* found the new planet the Moons found." Yep, that sounded just as weird out loud as it did in *my* head. "According to this, the Moons fired him and, he's going to be headed back to Finland in the morning." "A pre-arranged getaway and a motive. Good job Manny. Got an address?" He did. Already looked it up. Good kid. I left him at the Moon's house to watch the scene. Damn coroner takes forever sometimes.

It only took about five-minutes to get to Klaus's apartment. Could have been less if it wasn't for that damn Toyota that cut me off. People in this town don't know how to drive, and I don't have the time or inclination to chase them down to give them a ticket. I'll let Manny do that later.

Unfortunately, I didn't find what I was expecting at the apartment. It would be a nice little bachelor's pad if it weren't for all the blood, and probably the body in the middle of the floor. Just a quick look at it confirmed, at least to me, that the victim here was Christos Klaus. And this happened very recently. Blood was still running down the walls and dripping off a broken pool cue laying on the kitchen table. The question that immediately sprang to my mind was, are these murders related?

CONTINUED IN Eclipsing The Moons <https://www.steele42.com/eclipsing>