

# SERIAL STORY

## ELUSIVE ISABEL

By JACQUES FUTRELLE

Illustrations by M. KETNER

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### SYNOPSIS.

Count di Rosini, the Italian ambassador, is at dinner with diplomats in the national capital when a messenger brings a note directing him to come to the embassy at once. Here a beautiful young woman asks that she be given a ticket to the embassy ball. The ticket is made out in the name of Miss Isabel Thorne. Chief Campbell of the secret service, and Mr. Grimm, his head detective, are warned that a plot of the Latin races against the English speaking races is brewing in Washington and Grimm goes to the state ball for information. In a conservatory his attention is called to Miss Isabel Thorne, who with her companion, soon disappears. A revolver shot is heard and Campbell and Grimm hasten down the hall to find that Senator Alvarez of the Mexican legation, has been shot. A woman did it, and Grimm is assured it was Miss Thorne. He visits her, demanding knowledge of the affair, and there arrests a man named Pietro Petrosini. Miss Thorne visits an old man, Luigi, apparently a bomb maker, and they speak of a wonderful experiment. Fifty thousand dollars in gold is stolen from the office of Senator Rodriguez, the minister from Venezuela. While detectives are investigating the robbery Miss Thorne appears as a guest of the legation.

### CHAPTER X.

#### A Safe Opening.

Together they entered the adjoining room, which was small compared to the one they had just left. Senator Rodriguez used it as a private office. His desk was on their right between two windows overlooking the same pleasant little garden which was visible from the suite of tiny drawing-rooms farther along. The safe, a formidable looking receptacle of black enameled steel, stood at their left, closed and locked. The remaining wall space of the room was given over to oak cabinets, evidently a storage place for the less important legation papers.

"Has any one besides yourself been in this room today?" Mr. Grimm inquired.

"Not a soul, Senator," was the reply. Mr. Grimm went over and examined the windows. They were both locked inside; and there were no marks of any sort on the sills.

"They are just as I left them last night," explained Senator Rodriguez. "I have not touched them today."

"And there's only one door," mused Mr. Grimm, meaning that by which they had entered. "So it would appear that whoever was here last night entered through that, room. Very well."

He walked around the room once, opening and shutting the doors of the cabinets as he passed, and finally paused in front of the safe. A brief examination of the nicked dial and handle and of the enameled edges of the heavy doors satisfied him that no force had been employed—the safe had merely been unlocked. Whereupon he sat himself down, cross-legged on the floor, in front of it.

"What are the first and second figures of the combination?" he asked.

"Thirty-six, then back to ten."

Mr. Grimm set the dial at thirty-six, and then, with his ear pressed closely against the polished door, turned the dial slowly back. Senator Rodriguez stood looking on helplessly, but none the less intently. The pointer read ten, then nine, eight, seven, five. Mr. Grimm gazed at it thoughtfully, after which he did it all over again, placidly and without haste.

"Now, we'll look inside, please," he requested, rising.

Senator Rodriguez unlocked the safe while Mr. Grimm respectfully turned his eyes away, then pulled the door wide open. The books had been piled one on top of another and thrust into various pigeon holes at the top. Mr. Grimm understood that this disorder was the result of making room at the bottom for the bulk of gold, and asked no questions. Instead, he sat down upon the floor again.

"The lock on this private compartment at the top is broken," he remarked after a moment.

"Si, Senator," the diplomatist agreed. "Evidently the robbers were not content with only fifty thousand dollars in gold—they imagined that something else of value was hidden there."

"Was there?" asked Mr. Grimm naively. He didn't look around.

"Nothing of monetary value," the senator explained. "There were some important state papers in there—they were there yet—but no money."

"None of the papers was stolen?"

"No, Senator. There were only nine packets—they are there yet."

"Contents all right?"

"Yes. I personally looked them over."

Mr. Grimm drew out the packets of papers, one by one. They were all unsealed save the last. When he reached for that, Senator Rodriguez made a quick, involuntary motion toward it with his hand.

"This one's sealed," commented Mr.

Grimm. "It doesn't happen that you opened it and sealed it again?"

Senator Rodriguez stood staring at him blankly for a moment, then some sudden apprehension was aroused, for a startled look came into his eyes, and again he reached for the packet.

"Dios mio!" he exclaimed, "let me see, Senator."

"Going to open it?" asked Mr. Grimm.

"Yes, Senator. I had not thought of it before."

Mr. Grimm rose and walked over to the window where the light was better. He scrutinized the sealed packet closely. There were three red spots of wax upon it, each impressed with the legation seal; the envelope was without marks otherwise.

He turned and twisted it aimlessly, and peered curiously at the various seals, after which he handed it to the frankly impatient diplomatist.

Senator Rodriguez opened it, with nervous, twitching fingers. Mr. Grimm had turned toward the safe again, but he heard the crackle of parchment as some document was drawn out of the envelope, and then came a deep sigh of relief. Having satisfied his sudden fears for the safety of the paper, whatever it was, the senator placed it in another envelope and sealed it again with elaborate care. Mr. Grimm dropped into the swivel chair at the desk.

"Senator," he inquired pleasantly, "your daughter and Miss Thorne were in this room yesterday afternoon?"

"Yes," replied the diplomatist as if surprised at the question.

"What time, please?"

"About three o'clock. They were going out driving. Why?"

"And just where, please, did you find that handkerchief?" continued Mr. Grimm.

"Handkerchief?" repeated the diplomatist. "You mean Miss Thorne's handkerchief?" He paused and regarded Mr. Grimm keenly. "Senator, what am I to understand from that question?"

"It was plain enough," replied Mr. Grimm. "Where did you find that handkerchief?" There was silence for an instant. "In this room?"

"Yes," replied Senator Rodriguez at last.

"Near the safe?" Mr. Grimm persisted.

"Yes," came the slow reply, again. "Just here," and he indicated a spot a little to the left of the safe.

"And when did you find it? Yesterday afternoon? Last night? This morning?"

"This morning," and without any apparent reason the diplomatist's face turned deathly white.

"But, Senator—Senator, you are mistaken! There can be nothing—! A woman! Two hundred pounds of gold! Senator!"

Mr. Grimm was still pleasant about it; his curiosity was absolutely impersonal; his eyes, grown listless again, were turned straight into the other's face.

"If that handkerchief had been there last night, Senator," he resumed quietly, "wouldn't you have noticed it when you placed the gold in the safe?"

Senator Rodriguez stared at him a long time.

"I don't know," he said, at last. He dropped back into a chair with his face in his hands. "Senator," he burst out suddenly, impetuously, after a moment, "if the gold is not recovered I am ruined. You understand that better than I can tell you. It's the kind of thing that could not be explained to my government." He rose suddenly and faced the impassive young man, with merciless determination in his face. "You must find that gold, Senator," he said.

"No matter who may be—who may suffer?" inquired Mr. Grimm.

"Find the gold, Senator!"

"Very well," commented Mr. Grimm, without moving. "Do me the favor, please, to regain possession of the handkerchief you just returned to Miss Thorne, and to send to me here your secretary, Senator Diaz, and your servants, one by one. I shall question them alone. No, don't be alarmed. Unless they know of the robbery they shall get no inkling of it from me. First, be good enough to replace the packet in the safe, and lock it."

Senator Rodriguez replaced the packet without question, afterward locking the door, then went out. A moment later Senator Diaz appeared. He remained with Mr. Grimm for just eight minutes. Senator Rodriguez entered again as his secretary passed on, and laid a lace handkerchief on the desk. Mr. Grimm stared at it curiously for a long time.

"It's the same handkerchief?"

"Si, Senator."

"There's no doubt whatever about it?"

"No, Senator, I got it by—!"

"It's of no consequence," interrupted

ed Mr. Grimm. "Now the servants, please—the men first."

The first of the men servants was in the room two minutes; the second—the butler—was there five minutes; one of the women was not questioned at all; the other remained ten minutes. Mr. Grimm followed her into the hall; Senator Rodriguez stood there helpless, impatient.

"Well?" he demanded eagerly.

"I'm going out a little while," replied Mr. Grimm placidly. "No one has even an intimation of the affair—please keep the matter absolutely to yourself until I return."

That was all. The door opened and closed, and he was gone.

At the end of an hour he returned, passed on through to the diplomatist's private office, sat down in front of the locked safe again, and set the dial at thirty-six. Senator Rodriguez looked on, astonished, as Mr. Grimm pressed the soft rubber sponder of a stethoscope against the safe door and began turning the dial back toward ten, slowly, slowly. Thirty-five minutes later the lock clicked. Mr. Grimm rose, turned the handle, and pulled the safe door open.

"That's how it was done," he explained to the amazed diplomatist. "And now, please, have a servant hand my card to Miss Thorne."

### CHAPTER XI.

#### The Lace Handkerchief.

Still wearing the graceful, filmy morning gown, with an added touch of scarlet in her hair—a single red rose—Miss Thorne came into the drawing-room where Mr. Grimm sat waiting. There was curiosity in her manner, thinly veiled, but the haunting smile still lingered about her lips. Mr. Grimm bowed low, and placed a chair for her, after which he stood for a time staring down at one slim, white hand at rest on the arm of the seat. At last, he too sat down.

"I believe," he said slowly, without preliminaries, "this is your handkerchief?"

He offered the lace trifle, odd in design, unique in workmanship, obviously of foreign texture, and she accepted it.

"Yes," she agreed readily, "I must have dropped it again."

"That is the one handed to you by Senator Rodriguez," Mr. Grimm told her. "I think you said you lost it in his office yesterday afternoon?"

"Yes," she nodded inquiringly.

"It may interest you to know that Senator Rodriguez's butler positively identifies it as one he restored to you twice at dinner last evening, between seven and nine o'clock," Mr. Grimm went on dispassionately.

"Indeed!" exclaimed Miss Thorne.

"The senator identifies it as one he found this morning in his office," Mr. Grimm explained obligingly. "During the night fifty thousand dollars in gold were stolen from his safe."

Miss Thorne sat motionless, waiting.

"All this means—what?" she inquired, at length.

"I'll trouble you, please, to return the money," requested Mr. Grimm courteously. "No reason appears why you should have taken it. But I'm not seeking reasons, nor am I seeking disagreeable publicity—only the money."

"It seems to me you attach undue importance to the handkerchief," she objected.

"That's a matter of opinion," Mr. Grimm remarked. "It would be useless, even tedious, to attempt to disprove a burglar theory, but against it is the difficulty of entrance, the weight of the gold, the ingenious method of opening the safe, and the assumption that not more than six persons knew the money was in the safe; while a person in the house might have learned it in any of a dozen ways. And, in addition, is the fact that the handkerchief is odd, therefore noticeable. A lace expert assures me there's probably not another like it in the world."

He stopped. Miss Thorne's eyes sparkled and a smile seemed to be tugging at the corners of her mouth. She spread out the handkerchief on her knees.

"You could identify this again, of course?" she queried.

"Yes."

She thoughtfully crumpled up the bit of lace in both hands, then opened them. There were two handkerchiefs now—they were identical.

"Which is it, please?" she asked.

If Mr. Grimm was disappointed there was not a trace of it on his face. She laughed outright, gleefully, mockingly, then, demurely:

"Pardon me! You see, it's absurd. The handkerchief the butler restored to me at dinner, after I lost one in the senator's office, might have been either of these, or one of ten other duplicates in my room, all given to me by her Maj.—I mean," she corrected quickly, "by a friend in Europe." She was silent for a moment. "Is that all?"

"No," replied Mr. Grimm gravely, decisively. "I'm not satisfied. I shall insist upon the return of the money, and if it is not forthcoming I dare say Count di Rosini, the Italian ambassador, would be pleased to give his personal check rather than have the matter become public." She started to interrupt; but he went on. "In any event you will be requested to leave the country."

Then, and not until then, a decided change came over Miss Thorne's face. A deeper color leaped to her cheeks, the smile faded from her lips, and there was a flash of uneasiness in her eyes.

#### (TO BE CONTINUED.)

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# STATE CAPITAL NEWS

## HEALTH OF STATE BEST IN YEARS.

Health Commissioner Dixon reported that the list of communicable diseases for June was the lowest experienced throughout the State for several years. The report showed a total of 7686, a decrease of 5162 as compared with May, and a decrease of 2654 and 1282 compared with June of 1910 and 1909 respectively. The commissioner declares the co-operation of the people of the State in enforcing the laws largely is responsible for the excellent showing.

Continuing, Mr. Dixon said: "This decrease is even more remarkable than appears on its face from the fact that reports for the present year cover practically every city, borough and township in the State, while in previous years reports from quite a few of the boroughs and townships were not reported, and then again, intelligent, moral and faithful physicians have awakened to the necessity of co-operating with the great move being made to prevent sickness and death."

The Government work notwithstanding these great results is criticised by those who have been punished for the violation of our laws governing these sanitary conditions of our Commonwealth. Fortunately the new Medical Bureau of Pennsylvania can consider the moral character of a man before granting a license to practice medicine and that same bureau can revoke medical licenses when the holders of the same are guilty of malpractice.

The splendid health law formulated by Dr. Charles B. Penrose and passed by the Legislature of 1905 is beginning to show a reduction in the great total of communicable diseases. The special diseases showing marked decrease are scarlet fever and measles, the latter of which has been heretofore looked upon by those in care of children as being harmless notwithstanding it was so deadly as shown by the report of the new Bureau of Statistics.

Typhoid fever, a disease which should be exterminated remains lower than for previous years, and the only disease showing a tendency to increase is whooping cough, of which disease the State Department, even with the help of all the newspapers in the State, has not been able to awaken the people to the enormity of the death rate and to its power to leave in its wake tuberculosis and other afflictions.

The decrease in communicable diseases is not confined to cities, boroughs or townships, but is general all over the forty-five thousand square miles of territory in the State.

**Noon-Hour Lunch Law.** Chief Factory Inspector Delaney issued notices to all deputy factory inspectors informing them that they must enforce the acts fixing the period of time allowed for the noonday meal in the industrial establishments of the State. In his notice Chief Delaney says: The act of 1905 provides one hour for the noonday meal, which may, for good cause be reduced to less than one hour. The act of 1909 fixes forty-five minutes as the minimum period for the noonday meal for males under sixteen and females under eighteen years of age. In enforcing these acts you will hereafter proceed as follows: In establishments where no males under sixteen years, and no females under eighteen years are employed, you may, for good cause allow thirty minutes, but in establishments where males under sixteen and females under eighteen years are employed no less than forty-five minutes must be permitted for the noonday meal.

**Bigelow to Start Surveys Soon.** State Highway Commissioner Bigelow announced the appointment as assistant engineer of C. W. Hardt, Wellsboro; Arthur W. Long, Scranton; Edward S. Frey, York, and W. A. Wynn, Pittsburg. They will assume their duties at once. The plan is to start surveys as soon as engineer corps can be organized, and by next Spring it is expected to have complete data regarding the 296 routes mentioned in the Sproud bill. The first survey will be made between this city and Gettysburg, over the lines of the old Gettysburg and Harrisburg turnpike. The commissioner announced that the first bids under the new road building act would be opened August 2 for the construction of the stretch of road through Lewistown "narrows." This will be part of the Juniata Valley main road and will be built in conjunction with street improvement in Millin Borough.

**Complain Against Reading.** The borough of Manheim, Lancaster county, through its Chief Burgess, John H. Schenck, has filed a complaint against the Philadelphia & Reading Railway Company. It is alleged that upon various occasions the crossings in the borough have been blocked by the company's cars and that on June 7 of this year the highway was obstructed for twenty-six minutes. The company was requested to disclose the names of those responsible for the violation of the ordinance.

**TERMS.**—The terms of subscription to the Reporter are one dollar per year in advance.

**ADVERTISING RATES.**—Display advertising of ten or more lines for three or more insertions, eight cents per inch for each line. Display advertising occupying less space than ten lines and for less than three insertions, from ten to twenty cents per inch for each line, according to competition.

Local notices accompanying display advertising five cents per line for each insertion; other wise, eight cents per line, minimum charge twenty-five cents.

Legal notices, twenty cents per line for three insertions, and ten cents per line for each additional insertion.

**POLITICAL ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

**DEMOCRATIC.**

**FOR SHERIFF.** We are authorized to announce that Arthur B. Lee, of Potter township, is a candidate for the office of Sheriff subject to the rules and regulations of the Democratic primaries to be held September 30.

We are authorized to announce that D. J. Ginery, of Huston township, is a candidate for the office of Sheriff subject to the rules and regulations of the Democratic primaries to be held September 30.

**FOR COUNTY COMMISSIONER.** We are authorized to announce that John R. Leason, of Ferguson township, is a candidate for the office of County Commissioner subject to the rules and regulations of the Democratic party.

We are authorized to announce that John H. Runke, of Potter township, is a candidate for the office of County Commissioner subject to the rules and regulations of the Democratic party.

We are requested to announce that John L. Donia will be a candidate for County Commissioner, subject to the decision of the Democratic voters of the county as expressed at the primaries to be held September 30, 1911.

We are authorized to announce that William A. River, of Penn township, is a candidate for the office of County Commissioner subject to the decision of the Democratic voters at the primaries to be held September 30.

**FOR COUNTY TREASURER.** I hereby announce myself a candidate for Treasurer of Centre county, subject to the decision of the Democratic primaries to be held September 30. J. MITCHELL CUNNINGHAM, Pa. Bellefonte, Pa.

We are authorized to announce that John D. Miller, of Walker township, is a candidate for County Treasurer, subject to the usage of the Democratic party.

We are authorized to announce that Frank W. Crebe, of Phillipsburg Borough, is a candidate for the office of County Treasurer, subject to the decision of the Democratic voters to be held September 30.

**FOR REGISTER.** We are authorized to announce that Frank Smith, of Centre Hall borough, is a candidate for Registrar, subject to the usage of the Democratic party.

**FOR RECORDER.** We are authorized to announce that D. A. J. Birch, of Walker township, will be a candidate for the office of Recorder of Centre county, subject to the decision of the Democratic voters of the county as expressed at the general primaries to be held Saturday, September 30, 1911.

**FOR DISTRICT ATTORNEY.** We are authorized to announce that J. M. Keic hline is a candidate for the office of District Attorney, subject to the usage of the Democratic party.

We are authorized to announce that D. Paul Fortney, of Bellefonte, is a candidate for the office of District Attorney, subject to the usage of the Democratic party.

We are authorized to announce that J. Kennedy, of Bellefonte, is a candidate for the office of District Attorney, subject to the action of the Democratic voters at the primary election to be held September 30.

**FOR PROTHONOTARY.** We are authorized to announce that D. R. Foreman, of the Borough of Bellefonte, is a candidate for the office of Prothonotary, subject to the usage of the Democratic party.

**REPUBLICAN.**

**FOR COUNTY COMMISSIONER.**

**TO EDITOR REPORTER.**—I hereby announce myself as a candidate for County Commissioner, subject to the decision of the Republican voters at the primaries to be held Sept. 30, 1911. JACOB WOODRING, Fort Matilda, Pa.

**TO EDITOR REPORTER.**—I hereby announce myself as a candidate for County Commissioner, subject to the decision of the Republican voters at the primaries to be held Sept. 30, 1911. HARRY E. ZIMMERMAN, Springtownship.

**FOR REGISTER.** I hereby announce myself as a candidate for Registrar of Centre county, subject to the decision of the Republican voters at the primaries to be held Sept. 30, 1911. EDWARD J. WILLIAMS, Unionville, Pa.

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