

# 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 when a messenger summons him to the embassy, where a beautiful young woman asks for 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 is brewing in Washington, and Grimm goes to the state ball for information. His attention is called to Miss Isabel Thorne, who with her companion, disappears. A shot is heard and Senor Alvarez of the Mexican legation is found wounded. Grimm is assured Miss Thorne did it; he visits her, demanding knowledge of the affair, and arrests Pietro Petrozinni. Miss Thorne visits an old bomb-maker, and they discuss a wonderful experiment. Fifty thousand dollars is stolen from the office of Senor Rodriguez, the minister from Venezuela, and while detectives are investigating the robbery Miss Thorne appears as a guest of the legation. Grimm accuses her of the theft; the money is restored, but a new mystery occurs in the disappearance of Monsieur Boiesegur, the French ambassador. Elusive Miss Thorne reappears, bearing a letter which states that the ambassador has been kidnapped and demanding ransom. The ambassador returns and again strangely disappears. Later he is rescued from an old house in the suburbs.

### CHAPTER XVI.

#### Letters From Jail.

For two weeks Signor Pietro Petrozinni, known to the Secret Service as an unaccredited agent of the Italian government, and the self-confessed assassin of Senor Alvarez of the Mexican legation, had been taking his ease in a cell. He had been formally arraigned and committed without bail to await the result of the bullet wound which had been inflicted upon the diplomatist from Mexico at the German Embassy Ball, and since then, undisturbed and apparently careless of the outcome, he had spent his time in reading and smoking. He had answered questions with only a curt yes or no when he deigned to answer them at all; and there had been no callers or inquiries for him. He had abruptly declined a suggestion of counsel.

Twice each day, morning and night, he had asked a question of the jailer who brought his simple meals. "How is Senor Alvarez?" "He is still in a critical condition."

The answer was always the same. Whereupon the secret agent would return to his reading with not a shadow of uneasiness or concern on his face.

Occasionally there came a courteous little note from Miss Thorne, which he read without emotion, afterward casting them aside or tearing them up. He never answered them. And then one day there came another note which, for no apparent reason, seemed to stir him from his lethargy. Outwardly it was like all the others, but when Senor Petrozinni scanned the sheet his eyes lighted strangely, and he stood staring down at it as though to hide a sudden change of expression in his face. His gaze was concentrated on two small splotches of ink which, at the end of the message, had scratched as Miss Thorne had signed her name.

The guard stood at the barred door for a moment, then started to turn away. The prisoner stopped him with a quick gesture.

"Oh, Guard, may I have a glass of milk, please?" he asked. "No, I prefer it tepid."

He thrust a small coin between the bars; the guard accepted it and passed on. Then, still standing at the door, the prisoner read the note again:

"My Dear Friend: I understand, from an indirect source, that there has been a marked improvement in Senor Alvarez's condition, and I am hastening to send you the good news. There is every hope that within a short while, if he continues to improve, we can arrange a ball bond, and you will be free until the time of trial, anyway."

"Might it not be well for you to consult an attorney at once? Drop me a line to let me know you received this."

Sincerely,  
"ISABEL THORNE."

Finally the prisoner tossed the note on a tiny table in a corner of his cell, and resumed his reading. After a time the guard returned with the milk.

"Would it be against the rules for me to write an answer to this?" queried Signor Petrozinni, and he indicated the note.

"Certainly not," was the reply. "If I might trouble you, then, for pen and ink and paper?" suggested the signor and he smiled a little. "Believe me, I would prefer to get them for myself."

"I guess that's right," the guard grinned good-naturedly. Again he went away and the prisoner sat thoughtfully sipping the milk. He took half of it, then lighted a cigarette, puffed it once or twice and permitted the light to die. After a little

there came again the clatter of the guard's feet on the cement pavement, and the writing materials were thrust through the bars.

"Thank you," said the prisoner. The guard went on, with a nod, and a moment later the signor heard the clangor of a steel door down the corridor as it was closed and locked.

He leaned forward in his chair with half-closed eyes, listening for a long time, then rose and noiselessly approached the cell door. Again he listened intently, after which he resumed his seat. He tossed away the cigarette he had and lighted a fresh one, afterward holding the note over the flame of the match. Here and there, where the paper charred in the heat, a letter or word stood out from the bare whiteness of the paper, and finally a message complete appeared between the innocuous ink-written lines. The prisoner read it greedily:

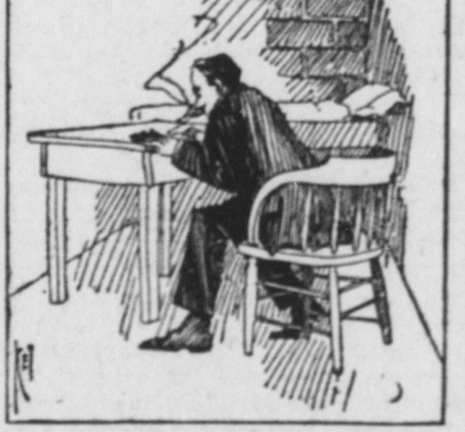
"Am I privately informed there is little chance of Alvarez's recovery. Shall I arrange escape for you, or have ambassador intercede? Would advise former, as the other might take months, and meeting to sign treaty alliance would be dangerously delayed." Signor Petrozinni permitted the sputtering flame to ignite the paper, and thoughtfully watched the blaze destroy it. The last tiny scrap dropped on the floor, burned out, and he crushed the ashes under his heel. Then he began to write:

"My Dear Miss Thorne: Many thanks for your courteous little note. I am delighted to know of the improvement in Senor Alvarez's condition. I had hoped that my impulsive act in shooting him would not end in a tragedy. Please keep me informed of any further change in his condition. As yet I do not see the necessity of consulting an attorney, but later I may be compelled to do so."

### "PIETRO PETROZINNI."

This done the secret agent carefully cleaned the ink from the pen, wiping it dry with his handkerchief, then thrust it into the half empty glass of milk. The fluid clung to the steel nib thinly; he went on writing with it, between the lines of ink:

"I am in no danger. I hold credentials to United States, which, when presented, will make me responsible only to the Italian government as special



The Prisoner Read It Greedily.

cial envoy, according to international law. Arrange escape for one week from tonight; use any money necessary. Make careful arrangements for the test and signing of compact for two nights after."

Again the prisoner cleaned the steel nib, after which he put it back in the bottle of ink, leaving it there. He waved the sheet of paper back and forth to dry it, and at last scrutinized it minutely, standing under the light from the high-up window of his cell. Letter by letter the ink evaporated, leaving the sheet perfectly clean and white except for the ink-written message. This sheet he folded, placed in an envelope, and addressed.

Later the guard passed along the corridor, and Signor Petrozinni thrust the letter out to him.

"Be good enough to post that, please," he requested. "It isn't sealed. I don't know if your prison rules require you to read the letters that go out. If so, read it, or have it read, then seal it."

For answer the guard dampened the flap of the envelope, sealed it, thrust it into his pocket and passed on. The secret agent sat down again, and sipped his milk meditatively.

One hour later Mr. Grimm, accompanied by Johnson, came out of a photographer's dark room in Pennsylvania Avenue with a developed negative which he sat on a rack to dry. At the end of another hour he was sitting at his desk studying, under a magnifying glass, a finished print of the negative. Word by word he was writing on a slip of paper what his magnifying glass gave him and so,

curiously enough, it came to pass that Miss Thorne and Chief Campbell of the Secret Service were reading the hidden, milk-written message at almost the identical moment.

"Johnson got Petrozinni's letter from the postman," Mr. Grimm was explaining. "I opened it, photographed it, sealed it again and re-mailed it. There was not more than half an hour's delay; and Miss Thorne can not possibly know of it." He paused a moment. "It's an odd thing that writing such as that is absolutely invisible to the naked eye, and yet when photographed becomes decipherable in the negative."

"What do you make of it?" Mr. Campbell asked. The guileless blue eyes were alive with eagerness.

"Well, he's right, of course, about not being in danger," said Mr. Grimm. "If he came with credentials as special envoy this government must respect them, even if Senor Alvarez dies, and leave it to his own government to punish him. If we were officially aware that he has such credentials I doubt if we would have the right to keep him confined; we would merely have to hand him over to the Italian embassy and demand his punishment. And, of course, all that makes him more dangerous than ever."

"Yes, I know that," said the chief a little impatiently. "But who is this man?"

"Who is this man?" Mr. Grimm repeated as if surprised at the question. "I was looking for Prince Benedetto d'Abuzzi, of Italy. I have found him."

Mr. Campbell's clock-like brain ticked over the situation in detail. "It's like this," Mr. Grimm elucidated. "He has credentials which he knows will free him if he is forced to present them, but I imagine they were given him more for protection in an emergency like this than for introducing him to our government. As the matter stands he can't afford to discover himself by using those credentials, and yet, if the Latin compact is signed, he must be free. Remember, too, that he is accredited from three countries—Italy, France and Spain."

Mr. Grimm was silent for a moment. "Naturally his escape from prison would preserve his incognito, and at the same time permit him to sign the compact."

"There was silence for a long time. 'I believe the situation is without precedent,' said Mr. Campbell slowly. 'The special envoy of three great powers held for attempted—'

"Officially we are not aware of his purpose, or his identity," Mr. Grimm reminded him. "I" he escaped it would clarify the situation tremendously."

"If he escaped!" repeated Mr. Campbell musingly.

"But, of course, the compact would not be signed, at least in this country," Mr. Grimm went on tentatively.

Mr. Campbell gazed straight into the listless eyes of the young man for a minute or more and gradually full understanding came home to him. Finally he nodded his head.

"Use your own judgment, Mr. Grimm," he directed.

### CHAPTER XVII.

#### A Call on the Warden.

The restful silence of night lay over the great prison. Here and there in the grim corridors a guard dozed in the glare of an electric light; and in the office, too, a desk light glimmered where the warden sat at his desk, poring over a report. Once he glanced up at the clock—it was five minutes of eleven—and then he went on with his reading.

After a little the silence was broken by the whir of the clock and the first sharp stroke of the hour; and at just that moment the door from the street opened and a man entered. He was rather tall and slender, and a sinister black mask hid his face from the quickly raised eyes of the warden. For a bare fraction of a second the two men stared at each other, then, instinctively, the warden's right hand moved toward the open drawer of his desk where a revolver lay, and his left toward several electrically connected levers. The intruder noted both gestures, and, unarmed himself, stood silent. The warden was first to speak.

"Well, what is it?" "You have a prisoner here, Pietro Petrozinni," was the reply, in a pleasant voice. "I have come to demand his release."

The warden's right hand was raised above the desk top, and the revolver in it clicked warningly.

"You have come to demand his release, eh?" he queried. He still sat motionless, with his eyes fixed on the black mask. "How did you pass the outside guard?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

### Central African Tree.

A remarkable tree has been discovered about the region of Lake Chad, Africa. Its power of increase in every way is remarkable. In a few months an extensive tract of land, we read, became an impenetrable forest. In one season it is said to grow to the height of from four to five meters; in other words, from 13 to over 16 feet.

Its foliage is said to resemble the mimosa and its branches are thorny. The wood can be cut into planks, and the natives work it up into canoes. The Tihho mission has utilized the wood for making tables and doors.

### Birds' Nest Soup.

Old books of travel represent the Asiatics as putting the nests into soups and stews. This is entirely erroneous. The birds which make these

nests use, among other materials, long strands of tough, whitish seaweed, the strands forming the outer shell or basket of the nest, and by their stickiness assist in securing it to the rock.

By the time the birds have emigrated, these bits of seaweed are washed clean by rains and are dried in the sun. Then is when they are extracted by Chinese gatherers and made into parcels for sale.

They form strips about eight inches long, somewhat of the appearance of Iceland moss, light, shiny, translucent and of no positive taste.

### Peace of Mind.

A tranquil heart is the life of the flesh, but envy is the rottenness of the bones.—Proverbs of Solomon xiv: 30.

## CAN'T FIND HAPPINESS

OLD MONEYBAGS IS BOTH A PLUTOCRAT AND PAUPER.

He Has Amassed Great Wealth and Lost All That Was Best in Him.

Dun and Bradstreet rate him rich. His name works magic at the bank. His check is good for millions. His vaults are stuffed with stocks and bonds. But his dollars have an actual value of five cents each.

He is bloated with riches and writhing in poverty—he's a plutocrat and a pauper at the same time.

Fate has made an ass of him—she has given him all the cash he asked for, but she omitted the formula that gives it value.

He has the lock, but he can't find the key—he doesn't know what to do with his money.

He is a lineal descendant of King Midas—he learned the golden touch, but he can't control its power. In his madness for millions he has transmuted all the realities of life into useless trash.

He placed his springtime in the minting press—he turned all his hopes and all his visions into coin—stamped all the tenderness out of his heart and milled the peace of his soul.

Year by year he went on amassing wealth and just as steadily losing all that was best in him. All that was kindly—all that was joyous—he turned to dust.

Now in his silver age he is yearning for his golden youth.

There is an ache that he doesn't understand—a hungry hole in his breast where godly heritages shriveled and died from disuse.

He can't enjoy himself—he isn't trained for the job.

His rapacity destroyed his capacity to comprehend the big message.

He owns a yacht, but it's a drifting argosy with dead sails—with all his wealth he can't make it carry him into the land of dreams.

He can't see—he can't hear—he's dulled his eye—made him color-blind—none of the wonders of life has a meaning.

For him the mountain summits are bare—the flowers have died on the slopes and the north winds have locked the brooks and silenced the waterfall.

He is a man without illusions—a moral cripple—a Croesus starving in his treasure vaults.

When you were wrapping yourself in ideals, he was rapping our ideas.

You have only sold your services—he has put every drop of his blood into the market—and the joke of it all is that he had to wait until winter before he found that every dollar is not the same size—that its purchasing power varies with the individual.

He has overpaid. No man gets out of existence more than his legitimate allotment. If he gains in one direction, he loses a compensating something in another way.

The price of the king's crown is heavy with heartache. The meanest subject in his kingdom can marry as he wills, but the mightiest of monarchs must mate at the dictate of the state.

The embezzler defaults with property that he did not earn, but from that moment every hour of every day is haunted with the dread of detection.

The roisterer indulges himself in every whim and witfulness, but settles the bill when his wasted vitality exposes him to disease against which the continent man has stored sufficient energy to defend himself.

Old John Moneybags has the price of every form of enjoyment, but he can't locate the trails that lead to happiness.

It isn't the size of a man's roll, but the size of a man's soul that counts.—Woman's World.

### Good Luck Alloyed.

A howl from the upper story brought the mother to her feet. Rude laughter intermingled with the howling and the duet threatened to become a trio, with the bucolic bread-earner trying to earn bread in his study.

"Mummy, mummy," cried Elsie, meeting her on the stairs, "please come up and spank Dick."

"What has he been doing?" asked her mother.

"We are playing at weddings," sobbed Elsie, "and Dick threw rice all over me."

"But you mustn't cry over that," soothed the fond parent. "Rice brings good luck to the bride, you know."

Little Elsie opened her eyes wide as she held out her sopping pinafore, and asked:

"What, mummy—when it's in pudding?"—Answers.

### Turn About.

At Cumberland, Md., the colored servants as a rule go to their own homes at night. The cook in the family of the Episcopal clergyman not only does this, but of late has arrived at the rectory too late to cook breakfast. Hence her mistress lately told her for each breakfast missed there would be a reduction in her weekly wages. Dinah passively assented to this, but next day the mistress heard the maid next door say to her:

"Pears to me you get to work mighty late."

"I gets to work when I get ready," was the reply.

"How does you manage about de breakfast?"

"Oh, I pays de missus to cook de brekfus."—Housekeeping Magazine.

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##### 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.

##### FOR COUNTY COMMISSIONER.

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

##### FOR REGISTER.

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

##### FOR RECORDER.

We are authorized to announce that William A. Stover, of Potter township, is a candidate for the office of Recorder of Centre county, subject to the decision of the Democratic primary election to be held Saturday, September 30th.

##### FOR DISTRICT ATTORNEY.

We are authorized to announce that Frank W. Strobe, of Philadelphia borough, is a candidate for the office of County Treasurer, subject to the decision of the Democratic primaries 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 decision of the Democratic party.

### REPUBLICAN.

#### FOR COUNTY COMMISSIONER.

TO EDITOR REGISTER—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, Port Matilda, Pa.

#### TO EDITOR REGISTER—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, Formerly of Bender township.

#### FOR REGISTER.

TO EDITOR REGISTER—I hereby announce myself as a candidate for Register 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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