



ELUSIVE ISABEL

by JACQUES FUTRELLE

ILLUSTRATIONS by M.G. Kettner

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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 advised Miss Thorne did it; he visits her, demanding knowledge of the affair, and arrests Pietro Petrosini. 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 Boissegur the French ambassador.

CHAPTER XII.—(Continued.)

"Monsieur," he went on, and there was a tense note in his voice. "The ambassador of France had disappeared, gone, vanished? We searched the house from the cellar to the servants' quarters, even the roof, but there was no trace of him. The hat he usually wore was in the hall, and all his other hats were accounted for. You may remember, Monsieur, that Tuesday was cold, but all his top-coats were found in their proper places. So it seems, Monsieur, and repression ended in a burst of excitement, "If he left the embassy he did not go out by either door, and he went without hat or coat!" He stopped helplessly and his gaze alternated inquiringly between the benevolent face of the chief and the expressionless countenance of Mr. Grimm.



Her Hand Still Rested on the Switch.

and the stenographer saw the ambassador after ten o'clock in the morning?" "Oul, Monsieur, 'est—' Monsieur Rigolot began excitedly. "I beg pardon, I believe that is correct." "You saw him about ten, you say; therefore no one except the stenographer saw him after ten o'clock?" "That is also true, as far as I know." "Any callers? Letters? Telegrams? Telephone messages?" "I made inquiries in that direction, Monsieur," was the reply. "I have the words of the stenographer at the door and of the servants at the door and of the stenographer that there were no callers, and the statement of the stenographer that there were no telephone calls or telegrams. There were only four letters for him personally. He left them all on his desk—here they are."

her that if Monsieur Boissegur signed the letters Tuesday night he was, at least, alive; and if he came or sent for the cigarettes Wednesday night, he was still alive. I shall call at the embassy this afternoon. No, it isn't advisable to go with you now. Give me your latch-key, please."

CHAPTER XIII.

A Conference in the Dark. The white rays of the distant arc

light filtered through the half-drawn velvet hangings and laid a faintly illumined path across the ambassador's desk; the heavy leather chairs were mere impalpable blotches in the shadows; the cut-glass knobs of a mahogany cabinet caught the glint of light and reflected it dimly. Outside was the vague, indefinable night drone of a city asleep, unbroken by any sound that was distinguishable, until finally there came the distant boom of a clock. It struck twice.

Seated on a couch in one corner of the ambassador's office was Mr. Grimm. He was leaning against the high arm of leather, with his feet on the seat, thoughtfully nursing his knees. His attitude indicated anything except sheer comfort. It was that he was listening. He had been there for two hours, wide-awake, and absolutely motionless. Five, ten, fifteen minutes more passed, and then Mr. Grimm heard the grind and whirl of an automobile a block or so away, coming toward the embassy. Now it was in front.

"Honk! Honk-on-onk!" It called plaintively. "Honk-on-onk! Honk!"

The signal! At last! The automobile went rushing on, full tilt, while Mr. Grimm removed his feet from the seat and dropped them noiselessly to the floor. Thus, with his hands on his knees, and listening, listening with every faculty strained, he sat motionless, peering toward the open door that led into the hall. The car was gone now, the sound of it swallowed up in the distance, still he sat there. It was obviously some noise in the house for which he was waiting.

Minute after minute passed, and still nothing. There was not even the whisper of a wind-stirred drapery. He was about to rise, when, suddenly, with no other noise than that of the sharp click of the switch, the electric lights in the room blazed up brilliantly. The glare dazzled Mr. Grimm with its blinding flood, but he didn't move. Then softly, almost in a whisper: "Good evening, Mr. Grimm."

It was a woman's voice, pleasant, unshrilled, perfectly modulated. Mr. Grimm certainly did not expect it now, but he knew it instantly—there was not another quite like it in the wide, wide world—and though he was still blinking a little, he came to his feet courteously.

"Good morning, Miss Thorne," he corrected gravely. Now his vision was clearing, and he saw her, a graceful figure, silhouetted against the rich green of the wall draperies. Her lips were curled the least bit, as if she might have been smiling, and her wonderful eyes reflected a glint of—of—was it amusement? The folds of her evening dress fell away from her, and one bare, white arm was extended, as her hand still rested on the switch.

"And you didn't hear me?" still in the half-whisper. "I didn't think you would. Now I'm going to put out the lights for an instant, when you pull the shades down, and then—then we must have a conference."

The switch snapped. The lights died as suddenly as they had been born, and Mr. Grimm, moving noiselessly, visited each of the four windows in turn. Then the lights blazed brilliantly again.

"Just for a moment," Miss Thorne explained to him quietly, and she handed him a sheet of paper. "I want you to read this—read it carefully—then I shall turn out the lights again. They are dangerous. After that we may discuss the matter at our leisure."

Mr. Grimm read the paper while Miss Thorne's eyes questioned his impassive face. At length he looked up indolently, listlessly, and the switch snapped. She crossed the room and sat down; Mr. Grimm sat beside her.

"I think," Miss Thorne suggested tentatively, "that that accounts perfectly for Monsieur Boissegur's disappearance."

"It gives one explanation, at least," Mr. Grimm assented musingly. "Kidnapped—held prisoner—fifty thousand dollars demanded for his safety and release." A pause. "And to whom, may I ask, was this demand addressed?"

"To Madame Boissegur," replied Miss Thorne. "I have the envelope in which it came. It was mailed at the general post office at half-past one o'clock this afternoon, so the canceling stamp shows, and the envelope was addressed, as the letter was written, on a typewriter."

"And how," inquired Mr. Grimm, after a long pause, "how did it come into your possession?" He waited a little. "Why didn't Monsieur Rigolot report this development to me this afternoon when I was here?"

"Monsieur Rigolot did not inform you of it because he did not know of it himself," she replied, answering the last question first. "It came into my possession directly from the hands of Madame Boissegur—she gave it to me."

"Why?" Mr. Grimm was peering through the inscrutable darkness, straight into her face—a white daub in the gloom, shapeless, indistinct.

"I have known Madame Boissegur for half a dozen years," Miss Thorne continued, in explanation. "We have been friends that long. I met her in Tokyo, later in Berlin, and within a few weeks, here in Washington. You see I have traveled in the time I have been an agent for my government."

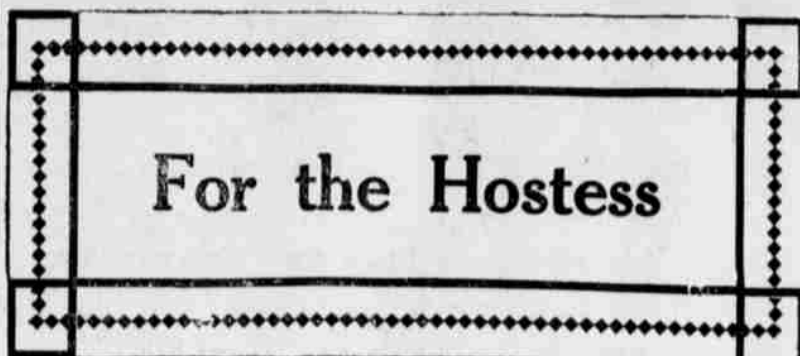
Well, Madame Boissegur received this letter about half-past four o'clock this afternoon; and about half-past five she sent for me and placed it in my hands, together with the singular details following upon the ambassador's disappearance. So, it would seem that you and I are allies for this once, and the problem is already solved. There merely remains the task of finding and releasing the ambassador."

Mr. Grimm sat perfectly still. "And why," he asked, slowly, "are you here now?"

"For the same reason that you are here," she replied readily, "to see for myself if the person who twice came here at night—once for the ambassador's letters and once for his cigarettes—would, by any chance, make another trip. I knew you were here, of course."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

The Other Way Around. Mr. Angus—"If you knew how to cook we could save money." Mrs. Angus—"If you knew how to save money we could employ a cook!"



For the Hostess

Guessing Contests for Porch Parties.

Girls who have been to recent afternoon porch parties tell me of these contests which were used while the hostess was putting the last finishing touches to her refreshments. For the first one cards were passed having bumble bees in water color on the first page, and the second page revealed the following questions, all to be answered by words ending in "sting":

- 1, a sting that cures fatigue; 2, a sting that cures hunger; 3, a sting that tidies your room; 4, a sting that makes you laugh; 5, a sting that cooks your meat; 6, a sting unwise people indulge in; 7, a sting that browns your bread; 8, a sting that spoils your tools; 9, a sting that makes you read a book through; 10, a sting that tries; 11, a sting that adapts; 12, a sting that shop-keepers dislike; 13, a sting we observe in Lent; 14, a sting tea experts do; 15, a winter sport.

These are the correct answers: 1, resting; 2, feasting; 3, dusting; 4, festivity; 5, roasting; 6, broasting; 7, coasting; 8, rusting; 9, interesting; 10, testing; 11, adjusting; 12, trusting; 13, fasting; 14, tasting; 15, coasting.

Honey cookies and lead tea were served and the prize was a cake of honey from the hostess's own bee hive.

This contest was used at what the hostess termed "an informal porch tea." The cards passed were white, with quaint little tea pots and cups and saucers painted on them with the following queries done in gilt paint:

- 1, T before a girl's name forms a cat; 2, T before a beverage forms a story; 3, T before craft forms a small pie; 4, T before shower forms a line of cars; 5, T before foolhardy forms rubbish; 6, T before a request forms labor; 7, T before a gun forms something trivial; 8, T before regret forms sincerity; 9, T before everything forms height; 10, T before to rest forms to plague; 11, T before a mistake forms freight; 12, T before humor forms to blame; 13, T before finish forms watchfulness; 14, T before competent forms a piece of furniture; 15, T before embrace forms a criminal; 16, T before a useless plant forms a river in Scotland; 17, T before a contest of speed forms a mark; 18, T placed before a very hard substance growing on the head of some animals forms a spine.

Answers: 1, tabby; 2, tale; 3, tart; 4, train; 5, trash; 6, taak; 7, trifle; 8, true;

For Garden Party



THE gown on the seated figure is of plunk linn. The skirt is ornamented in front with a band of the material, embroidered in maderia embroidery; it is finished with two boucres, ornamented with the same embroidery and made with fine tucks.

The corsage forms wide revers ornamented with embroidery and bordered with pink satin, of which the girdle is also made. The guimpe and the ornamental cuffs are of lace.

The skirt of the other gown is of white mousseline de soie, covered with a tunic of old blue mousseline de soie which is finished with a fagoted hem.

The corsage is of lace arranged in fichu fashion and forms a sash end, finished with pearl fringe. The fichu is edged with blue satin, of which the girdle is also made. The plastron is of guipure finished at the neck with a double ruffle of lace.

A Pretty Table. Take a round piece of wood twice the size of the mouth of a coffee cup, a piece of the stout limb of a poplar that has been topped would be nice; saw it about the height you would like your table, allowing for the thickness of two barrel ends, one for the top, one for the foot, which may be smaller, which would be much better.

Fasten each of them securely with two clamps of wood, leaving room between to nail them on to the large log. Nail on each end of the chunk with a few stout wire nails, leaving the clamps on the side that goes into the leg. One barrel end will be for a foot, the other for a top. Take a piece of cretonne or furniture cotton; pleat it very fully and tack it on around the top with preventive tacks and in half way between the top and bottom with a piece of old bright ribbon, tying a bow on the front side; then tuck under every three pleats to the foot; cover the top with any old discarded piece of goods you have and cover with a center piece.

Answers.



TEMPERANCE NOTES

PRESENT IS AGE OF LAXITY

Every Man is Inclined to Be Law Unto Himself, and Thinks Most of "Having Good Time."

Christians believe that Christ took human form and lived a human life in order to rescue each one of them which regarded them, and enable them to develop their nobler selves. His work of salvation was to a large extent effected by putting before men the idea of a life of self-control. He desired his disciples to recognize that they also were sons of God, and to live in obedience to the promptings of the divine element within them, and thus to rescue themselves from the lusts of the flesh and become true men living the life of fruitful sons of God. The man who is unable to control his appetites and passions is a slave and not a free man. A true man must be master of himself. One great object for which the church exists is for the discipline of life, by helping men to strive for the mastery of self, for temperance and self-control in all things. We live in an age of laxity, writes the dean of Worcester, Eng., in the Temperance. Every man is inclined to be a law unto himself, and thinks most of doing as he likes—"having a good time" as the phrase goes. Drunkenness is a national vice. The obligation to worship is largely neglected, and the idea of Christianity as a disciplined life is weakened.

Earnest-minded men in these days have to face this condition of things, and consider how men can be brought to realize the necessity of self-control in the scriptural sense of self-control—of living a disciplined life. How can it be done? Not by taking men out of the world. The ultimate failure of many monastic attempts teaches that. But if men moved by the spirit of God, of self-denial and self-sacrifice, to combat any life unworthy of the sons of God, are to remain in the world, they need to be banded together that they may have the sustaining support and fellowship and association of those who are like-minded. That is why it is in these days societies are formed instead of monasteries. Looking at the nation as it is, we cannot, if we are honest, fail to see that all the agencies destructive of self-denial the greatest is the habit of drinking alcohol. In taking it men intensify the powers of the beast in themselves, and lessen their powers of resistance by weakening the will. Of all the physical causes which produce moral defects, the consumption of alcohol in any form is the most widespread and disastrous. In all periods of history, and among all races of men where alcohol in any form has been produced and passed into consumption, it has had the effect of capturing and subduing men's wills, breaking down self-restraint, and producing physical and moral degradation. Temperance reform lies at the bottom of all political, social, and religious progress. Drink is the curse of the country; it destroys the lives of one in twenty of the population. The temperance movement is a religious movement, and derives its power from a strong faith in God and the obligations of the sons of God, and in the belief that anything which leads to self-control and discipline is furthering the purposes of God. The Rechabites believed in self-denial and discipline. They had ever been foremost in the fighting ranks, and they had always combined enthusiasm with practical wisdom. Let us thank God for what has been accomplished, but let what has been done be only an incentive to further advance. And it must never be forgotten that Christian discipleship involves the discipline of the whole life—discipline and self-denial with regard to other evils, other vices, other weaknesses and tendencies of human nature. Let us, therefore, associate with others who recognize the need of self-discipline in other directions than that of indulgence in drink.

Good to Wash With. On a recent occasion Professor Koecker of Bern said: "You will be astonished to hear that I am a great friend of alcohol, though I have experienced myself that when I have to do much and good work I must not drink alcohol at all, and I have frequently to tell my patients not to drink it. I appreciate to the highest degree what temperance societies have been doing for the welfare of humanity. Your National Temperance league is fighting against in one way the application of alcohol. But we use alcohol a great deal—to wash our hands and to disinfect them, but we are afraid to introduce it in the body. The only rational use of alcohol is outside the body."

MADAME MERRILL

Jeremiah Tried and Acquitted

LESSON TEXT—Jeremiah 21. MEMORY VERSES—13-14. GOLDEN TEXT—"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?"—Psa. 27:1.

TIME—Josiah was slain in battle B. C. 608, in the 21st year of his reign. Jehoahaz his son began to reign the same year and reigned eleven years, B. C. 608 to 607. PLACE—Jerusalem and Judah. JEREMIAH began to prophesy B. C. 626, in the 13th year of Josiah, soon after Josiah began his first reforms; and he prophesied 30 years, to B. C. 596, the year that the Temple was destroyed and Jerusalem burned to the ground.

We turn now from the career and character of a good boy who became a good king, to a bad young man who became a bad king; while the same prophet who aided the first for 13 years tried now to stem the tide of evil favored by the other during the 11 years of his reign.

Thirteen years of labors to make his people serve and obey God have passed since Josiah entered upon his great reform. The Pharaoh Necho of Egypt marched along the seacoast of Palestine northward to meet the armies of Assyria. Foolishly and needlessly espousing the Assyrian cause, Josiah met him at Megiddo on the plain of Edraelon, was defeated and killed. Professor Kent calls this disaster unquestionably the most tragic event in Hebrew history. The reform party at once placed upon the throne Josiah's third son, Jehoahaz, 23 years old, evidently because he resembled his father, but as soon as the victorious Necho returned from the Euphrates he reversed the arrangement, carried Jehoahaz in chains to Egypt after a reign of only three months, and left on the throne his elder brother, Eliakim, 25 years old, rightly judging him to be of a character more suited to his purpose. In token of vassalage Eliakim changed his name (in form, but not in significance) to Jehoiakim, "Jehovah raiseth up." He proved to be a tyrant, of whom Jeremiah speaks always in condemnation. His magnificent palace, built by forced labor, his murder of the prophet Uriah and his persecution of Jeremiah show his character.

Jeremiah was a native of Anathoth, a little village three and one-half miles northwest from Jerusalem. His father was Hilkiah, a priest (not the high priest who was Josiah's aid). He was of a retiring, exquisitely sensitive nature, and yet had a spiritual courage that triumphed over all weakness, and compelled his body to the most difficult and dangerous duties. He never failed. He was the butt of ridicule and scorn. He was publicly whipped. He was misrepresented as an enemy. He was imprisoned several times. But he kept right on.

He was like an elm tree, whose branches yield to every breeze, but which no storm, not even one that upheaves rocks from their beds, can cause to move one hair's breadth from its place in the ground. It is no wonder that he was sometimes discouraged, disappointed, almost despairing. He has been called "the weeping prophet" because he lived in such dark and evil times, but the only wonder is that he ever had such glorious gleams of hope, and that his prophetic eye ever pierced through the darkness of the night tempest and saw the silver lining beyond, and the rays of the coming dawn. He was a "moralist" rather than an optimist. He saw the evil, but he was ever working to make it better. Like a doctor in a hospital he looked at disease from the curative standpoint.

In the beginning of Jehoahaz's reign (B. C. 608) Jeremiah makes an earnest appeal to the leaders and the people, almost like an inaugural address, or the annual sermon preached in Boston on the inauguration of the governor of the state. The prophet stands in the court of the temple. The people not only of the city but of the surrounding country are flocking into the court to join in the worship. The reform was halting. The kingdom was impoverished by the heavy fine of 100 talents of silver and one of gold (\$220,000) which Necho of Egypt had imposed. It was a fitting time for an earnest appeal to repentance.

Jerusalem was acquitted by the princes. They realized that he had been the spokesman of God. Then some of the elders, the leading people, instanced the case of the good king Hezekiah. He did not slay the prophet Micah, who boldly threatened the destruction of Jerusalem—that its site would become a plowed field, and the temple a heap of ruins, unless they repented. Hezekiah did not kill Micah, but on the contrary he led his people to repentance, and the Lord averted the danger.

The verses following tell us of another prophet who fled from danger to Egypt, was followed by the emissaries of Jehoahaz, brought back and executed. This story is meant to show how serious Jeremiah's danger was and perhaps to contrast Jeremiah's faith and courage with the timidity of Uriah, who yet did not escape his enemies, but found a sad end.

It is the strong adverse wind that makes the kite fly high toward heaven, provided that it is held fast by its cord. Without the strong adverse winds would simply blow it to its fall and ruin. A heart fixed in God and duty—held fast to them by a strong faith—can rise to the highest usefulness, can overcome every temptation.

Revival work and decision days, wisely used, are the most effective reinforcements of the common powers that move to the choice of the better life. One of the strongest influences against choosing the right lies in the gang spirit, the power of a popular leader and a band of associates. We need to counteract this downward power by the atmosphere, the motive power, of a number of people filled with the same spirit and moving in the same direction.

A constable who had recently joined a Rechabite Tent sent in his resignation, giving his reason that being a Rechabite he could no longer carry out his duties. The commissioner said: "Why, that does not interfere with your duties as a constable." "Yes, sir, it does," said the man, "for if I saw a drunken man in the street I could not arrest him, because I have to refrain from touching anything containing intoxicating liquors."