

The Romance of Elaine

SEQUEL TO THE EXPLOITS OF ELAINE

A Detective Novel and a Motion Picture Drama
By ARTHUR B. REEVE
The Well-Known Novelist and the Creator of the "Craig Kennedy" Stories

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THIRTY-FIFTH EPISODE

In Del Mar's Cottage.

It was early the following morning that, very excited, Elaine and I showed Aunt Josephine the photograph which we had snapped and developed by using Kennedy's trick method.

"But who is it?" asked Aunt Josephine examining the print carefully and seeing nothing but a face masked and with a pair of hands before it, a seal ring on the little finger of one hand.

"Oh, I forgot that you hadn't seen the ring before," explained Elaine. "Why, we knew him at once, in spite of everything, by that seal ring—Mr. Del Mar!"

"Mr. Del Mar!" repeated Aunt Josephine, looking from one to the other of us, incredulously.

"I saw the ring at his bungalow and on his own finger," reiterated Elaine positively.

"But what are you going to do now?" asked Aunt Josephine.

"Have him arrested, of course," Elaine replied.

Still talking over the strange experience of the night before, we went out on the veranda.

"Well, of all the nerve!" exclaimed Elaine, catching sight of a man coming up the gravel walk. "If that isn't Henry, Mr. Del Mar's valet!"

The valet advanced as though nothing had happened and indeed I suppose that as far as he knew nothing had happened or was known to us. He bowed and handed Elaine a note which she tore open quickly and read.

"Would you go?" she asked, handing the note to me.

It read:

Dear Miss Dodge—
If you and Mr. Jameson will call on me today, I will have something of interest to tell you concerning my investigations in the case of the disappearance of Craig Kennedy.

Sincerely,
M. DEL MAR.

"Yes," I asserted, "I would go."
"Tell Mr. Del Mar we shall see him as soon as possible," nodded Elaine to the valet, who bowed and left quickly.

Aunt Josephine shook her head sagely in protest. But Elaine waved all her protestations aside and ran into the house to get ready for the visit.

Half an hour later two saddle horses were brought around to the front of Dodge Hall and Elaine and I sallied forth.

In his rooms at the St. Germain, cluttered with test tubes and other paraphernalia which indicated his scientific tendencies, Professor Arnold entered and threw off his hat, lighting a cigarette and waiting impatiently.

He had not as long to wait as he had expected. A knock sounded at the door and he opened it. There was Smith handcuffed and forced in by the two policemen.

"Good work," commended Arnold, at once setting to work to search the prisoner who fumed but could not resist.

"What have we here?" drawled Arnold in mock courtesy and surprise as he found and drew forth from Smith's pocket a bundle of papers, which he hastily ran through.

"Ah!" he muttered, coming to Del Mar's note, which he opened and read. "What's this? 'A. A. L. N. Y. Closely watched. Must act soon or all will be discovered. M.' Now, what's all that?"

Arnold pondered the text deeply. "You may take him away, now," he concluded, glancing up from the note to the officers. "Thank you."

"All right, sir," they returned, prodding Smith along out.

Still studying the note, Arnold sat down at the desk. Thoughtfully he picked up a pencil. Under the letters A. A. L. he slowly wrote "Anti-American League" and under the initial M the name, "Martin."

"Now is the time, if ever, to use that new telephotograph instrument which I have installed for the war department in Washington and carry around with me," he said to himself, rising and going to a closet.

He took out a large instrument composed of innumerable coils and a queer battery of selenium cells. It was the receiver of the new instrument by which a photograph could be sent over a telegraph wire.

Downstairs, in the telegraph room of the hotel, Arnold secured the services of one of the operators.

"I wish you'd send this message right away to Washington," he said, handing in a blank he had already written.

The clerk checked it over:
U. S. War Department,
Washington, D. C.

Wire me immediately photograph and personal history of Martin arrested two years ago as head of Anti-American League. ARNOLD.

As the message was ticked off, Arnold attached his receiving telephotograph instrument to another wire.

It was a matter scarcely of seconds before a message was flashed back to Arnold from Washington:

Martin escaped from Fort Leavenworth six months ago. Thought to be in Europe. Photograph follows. EDWARDS.

"Very well," nodded Arnold with satisfaction. "I think I know what is going on here now. Let us wait for the photograph."

He went over to the new selenium telephotograph and began adjusting it. Far away, in Washington, in a room in the war department where Arnold had already installed his system for the secret government service, a clerk was also working over the sending part of the apparatus.

No sooner had the clerk finished his preparations and placed a photograph in the transmitter than the buzzing of the receiver which Arnold had installed announced to him that the marvelous transmission of a picture over a wire, one of the very newest triumphs of science, was in progress. In the little telegraph office of the St. Germain, the clerks and operators crowded about Arnold, watching breathlessly.

"By Jove, it works!" cried one, no longer skeptical.
Slowly a print was being evolved before their eyes as if by a spirit hand.

At last the transmission of the photograph was completed and the machine came to rest. Arnold almost tore the print from the receiver and held it up to examine it.

A smile of intense satisfaction crossed his face.

"At last!" he muttered.
There was a photograph of the man who had been identified with the arch-conspirator of two years before, Martin. Only, now he had changed his name and appeared in a new role.

It was Marcus Del Mar!

Already, in the library of the bungalow, Del Mar had summoned one of his trusted men and was talking to him, when Henry, the valet, re-entered after his trip to see us.

"They're coming as soon as they can," he reported.

Del Mar smiled a cynical smile. "Good!" he exclaimed triumphantly, then, looking about at the electrical fixtures, added to the man. "Let us see where to install the thing."

He walked over to the door and put his hand on the knob, then pointed back at the fixtures.

"That's the idea," he cried. "You can run the line from the brackets to this doorknob and the mat. How's that?"

"Very clever," flattered the man, putting on a heavy pair of rubber gloves.

Taking a pair of pliers and other tools from a closet in the library, he began removing the electrical fixture from the wall. As Del Mar directed, the man ran a wire from the fixture along the molding and down the side of a door, where he made a connection.

In the meantime, Del Mar brought out a wire mat and laid it in front of the door where anyone who entered or left would be sure to step on it. The various connections made, the man placed a switch in the concealment of a heavily curtained window and replaced everything as he found it.

Thus it was that Elaine and I came at last to Del Mar's bungalow, I must admit, with some misgivings.

Preparations for our reception had just been completed and Del Mar was issuing his final instructions to his man, when the valet, Henry, ran in hastily.

"They're here, sir, now," he announced excitedly.

"All right, I'm ready," nodded Del Mar, turning to his man again and indicating a place back of the folds of the heavy curtains by the window. "You get back there by that switch. Don't move—don't even breathe. Now, Henry, let them in."

As his valet withdrew, Del Mar gazed about his library to make sure that everything was all right. Just then the valet reappeared and ushered us in.

"Good morning," greeted Del Mar pleasantly. "I see that you got my note, and I'm glad you were so prompt. Won't you be seated?"

"I've something at last to report to you about Kennedy," he said a moment later, clearing his throat.

Aunt Josephine turned from us as Elaine and I rode off on our horses from Dodge hall, considerably worried.

Then an idea seemed to occur to her and she walked determinedly into the house.

"Jennings," she called to the butler, "have the limousine brought around from the garage immediately."

"Yes, ma'am," acquiesced the faithful Jennings, hurrying out.

It was only a few minutes later that the car pulled around before the door. Aunt Josephine bustled out and entered.

"Fort Dale," she directed the driver, greatly agitated. "Ask for Lieutenant Woodward."

Out at Fort Dale, Woodward was much astonished when an orderly announced that Aunt Josephine was waiting in her car to see him on very urgent business. He ordered that she be admitted at once.

"I hope there's nothing wrong?" he inquired anxiously, as he noted the excitement and the worried look on her face.

"I—I'm afraid there may be," she replied, sitting down and explaining what Elaine and I had done.

The lieutenant listened gravely. "And," she concluded, "they wouldn't listen to me, Lieutenant. Can't you follow them and keep them out of trouble?"

Woodward, who had been listening to her attentively, jumped up as she concluded. "Yes," he cried, sympathetically, "I can. I'll go myself with some of the men from the post. If they get into any scrape, I'll rescue them."

Almost before she could thank him, Woodward had hurried from his office, followed by her. On the parade grounds were some men. Quickly he issued his orders and a number of them sprang up as he detailed them off for duty. It was only a moment before they returned, armed. An instant later three large touring cars from the fort swept up before the office of Woodward. Into these the armed men piled.

"Hurry—to the Del Mar bungalow," ordered the lieutenant, jumping up with the driver of the first car. "We must see that nothing happens to Miss Dodge and Mr. Jameson."

They shot away in a cloud of dust, followed hard by the other two cars, dashing at a breakneck speed over the good roads.

In the narrow, wooded roadway near Del Mar's, Woodward halted his car and the soldiers all jumped out and gathered about him as hastily he issued his directions.

"Surround the house first," he ordered. "Then arrest anyone who goes in or out."

They scattered, forming a wide circle. As soon as word was passed that the circle was completed, they advanced cautiously at a signal from Woodward, taking advantage of every concealment.

Around in the kitchen back of Del Mar's, Henry, the valet, had retired to visit one of the maids. He was about to leave when he happened to look out of the window.

"What's that?" he muttered to himself.

He stepped back and peered cautiously through the window again. There he could see a soldier, moving stealthily behind a bush.

He drew back further and thought a minute. He must not alarm us.

Then he wrote a few words on a piece of paper and tore it so that he could hold it in his palm. Next he hurried from the kitchen and entered the study.

Del Mar had scarcely begun to outline to us a long and circumstantial pseudo-investigation into what he was pleased to hint had been the death of Kennedy, when we were interrupted again by the entrance of his valet.

"Excuse me, sir," apologized Henry, as Del Mar frowned, then noted that something was wrong.

As the valet said the words, he managed surreptitiously to hand to Del Mar the paper which he had written, now folded up into a very small space.

I had turned from Del Mar when the valet entered, apparently to speak to Elaine, but in reality to throw them off their guard.

Under that cover I was able to watch the precious pair from the tail of my eye. I saw Del Mar nod to the valet as though he understood that some warning was about to be conveyed. Although nothing was said, Del Mar was indicating by dumb show orders of some kind.

"I hope you'll pardon me, Miss Dodge," Del Mar deprecated, as the valet retreated toward the door to the

kitchen and pantry. "But, you see, I have to be housekeeper here, too, it seems."

Actually, though he was talking to us, it was in a way that enabled him, by palming something in his hand, I fancied, to look at it.

It must have been hard to read, for I managed by a quick shift at last to catch just a fleeting glimpse that it was a piece of paper he held in his hand.

What was it, I asked myself, that he should be so secret about it? Clearly, I reasoned, it must be something that was of interest to Elaine and myself. If I must act ever, I concluded, now was the time to do so.

Suddenly I reached out and snatched the note from his hand. But before I could read it Del Mar had sprung to his feet.

At the same instant a man leaped out from behind the curtains.

But I was on my guard. Already I had drawn my revolver and had them all covered before they could make another move.

"Back into that corner—by the window—all of you," I ordered, thinking thus to get them together, more easily covered. Then, handing the note, with my other hand, to Elaine, I said to her, "See what it says—quick."

Eagerly she took it and read aloud, "House surrounded by soldiers!"

"Woodward," I cried.
Still keeping them covered, I smiled quietly to myself and took one step after another slowly to the door. Elaine followed.

I reached the door and I remember that I had to step on a metal mat to do so. I put my hand behind me and grasped the knob about to open the door.

As I did so, the man who had jumped from behind the curtain suddenly threw down his upraised hands. Before I could fire, instantaneously in fact, I felt a thrill as though a million needles had been thrust into all parts of my body at once paralyzing every muscle and nerve. The gun fell from my nerveless hand, clattering to the floor.

The man had thrown an electric switch, which had completed a circuit from the metal mat to the door knob through my body and then to the light and power current of high power. There I was, held a prisoner, by the electric current!

At the same instant, also, Del Mar with an oath leaped forward and seized Elaine by the arms. I struggled with the doorknob but I could no more let go than I could move my feet off that mat. It was torture.

"Henry!" called Del Mar to the valet.

"Yes, sir."

"Open the cabinet. Give me the helmets and the suits."

The valet did so, bringing out a number of queer-looking headpieces with a single weird eye of glass in the front, as well as rubber suits of an outlandish design. While he was doing so, Del Mar stuffed a handkerchief into Elaine's mouth to keep her quiet.

By this time Del Mar, as well as the man from behind the curtains and the valet, were provided with suits, and one at a time holding Elaine, the others put them on.

Del Mar moved toward Elaine holding an extra helmet. He strapped it on her, then started to force her into a suit.

I struggled still, but in vain, to free myself from the doorknob and mat. It was more than I could stand, and I sank down, half conscious.

I revived only long enough to see that Del Mar had forced one of the suits on Elaine finally. Then he pressed a button hidden on the side of his desk and a secret panel in the wall opened. Picking up Elaine, he and the others hurried through into what looked like a dark passage and the panel closed.

They were gone. I put forth all my remaining strength in one last desperate struggle. Somehow, I managed to kick the wire mat from under my feet, breaking the contact.

I staggered toward the panel, but fell to the floor, unconscious.

Outside, the iron ring, as Woodward had planned it, of soldiers were looking about alert for any noise or movement. Suddenly, two of them who had been watching the grounds attentively signaled to each other that they saw something.

From the shrubbery emerged a most curious and uncouth figure, all in rags, with long, unkempt hair and beard, sallow complexion, and carrying a long staff. It might have been a tramp or a hermit, perhaps, who was making his way toward the house.

The two soldiers stole up noiselessly, close to him. Almost before he knew it, the hermit felt himself seized from behind by four powerful arms. Escape was impossible.

"Let me go," he pleaded. "Can't you see I'm harming no one?"

But the captors were obdurate. "Tell it to the lieutenant," they rejoined, grimly forcing him to go before them by twisting his arms. "Our orders were to seize anyone entering or leaving."

Protests were in vain. The hermit

was forced to go before Lieutenant Woodward who was just in the rear directing the advance.

"Well," demanded Woodward, "what's your business?"

For an instant the hermit stood mute. What should he do? He has reason to know that the situation must be urgent.

Slowly he raised his head so that Woodward could see not only that it was false but what his features looked like.

"Arnold!" gasped Woodward, startled. "What brings you here? Elaine and Jameson are in the house. We have it surrounded."

Half an hour before, in the St. Germain, Arnold had no sooner received the telephotograph than he hurried up to his room. From a closet he had produced another of his numerous disguises and quickly put it on. With scant white locks falling over his shoulders and long scraggly beard he had made himself into a veritable wild man. Then he had put on the finishing touches and had made his way toward Del Mar's.

A look of intense anxiety now flashed over Arnold's face as he heard Woodward's words.

"But," he cried, "there is an underground passage from the house to the shore."

"The deceit!" muttered Woodward, more alarmed now than ever. "Come, men—to the house," he shouted out his orders as they passed them around the line. "Arnold, lead the way!"

Together the soldier and the strange figure rushed to the front door of the bungalow. All was still inside. Heavy as it was, they broke it down and burst in.

"Walter, there's Walter!" cried Woodward as he saw me lying on the floor of the study when they ran in.

They hurried to me and, as quickly as they could, started to bring me around.

"Where's Elaine?" asked the strange figure of the hermit.

Weakly, I was able only to point to the panel. But it was enough. The soldiers understood. They dashed for it, looking for a button or an opening. Finding neither, they started to bang on it and batter it in with the butts of their guns.

It was only seconds before it was splintered to kindling. There was the passage. Instantly Woodward, the hermit, and the rest plunged into it utterly regardless of danger. On through the tunnel they went until at last they came, unmolested, to the end. There they paused to look about.

The hermit pointed to the ground. Clearly there were footprints, leading to the shore. They followed them on down to the beach.

"Look!" pointed the hermit.
Off in the water they could now see the most curious of sights. Four strangely helmeted creatures were wading out, each like a huge octopus-head, without tentacles.

Only a few seconds before Del Mar and his companions, carrying Elaine, had emerged from the secret entrance of the tunnel and had dashed for the shore of the promontory.

Stopping only an instant to consider what was to be done, Del Mar had seen someone also emerge from the tunnel.

"Come—we must get down there quickly," he shouted, hurriedly issuing orders, as all three, carrying Elaine, waded out into the water.

At sight of the strange figures, the soldiers raised their guns and a volley of shot rang out.

"Stop!" shouted the hermit, his hair streaming wildly as he ran before the guns and threw up as many as he could grasp with his outstretched arms. "Do you want to kill her?"

"Her?" repeated Woodward.

All stood there, wondering, gazing at the queer creatures.

What did it mean?

Slowly, they disappeared—literally under the water.

They were gone—with Elaine!
(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Pillows Generally Too High.

A family doctor writes: "I cannot give you a universal recipe for sound sleep, but let me tell you that in all the thousands of patients I have seen in bed I have never met with one who arranged his pillows hygienically. All too high, far too high. High pillows curve the spine, bend the neck, and thus prevent the free circulation of blood in the brain. You can never get the full value out of a night's sleep unless you fix your pillow so low that the head and neck are just on a level with the spine."

Rapid Growers.

Banana plantations will yield a continuous harvest for years without replanting. Nearly 200 hills, having 904 stalks, are allowed to the acre, yielding some 300 marketable bunches per year, the average profit per acre being near \$50 annually.

Guarding Against Fires in Austria.

As a preventive against fire Austrian laws require dwellings and business houses to be built throughout solid materials.