

# The BLIND MAN'S EYES

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(Continued from last week.)

## SYNOPSIS

**CHAPTER I.**—Gabriel Warden, Seattle capitalist, tells his butler he is expecting a caller, to be admitted without question. He informs his wife of danger that threatens him if he pursues a course he considers the only honorable one. Warden leaves the house in his car and meets a man whom he takes into the machine. When the car returns home, Warden is found dead, murdered, and alone. The caller, a young man, has been at Warden's house, but leaves unobserved.

**CHAPTER II.**—Bob Connery, conductor, receives orders to hold train for a party. Five men and a girl board the train. The father of the girl, Mr. Dorne, is the person for whom the train was held. Philip D. Eaton, a young man, also boarded the train. Dorne tells his daughter and his secretary, Don Avery, to find out what they can concerning him.

**CHAPTER III.**—The two make Eaton's acquaintance. The train is stopped by snowdrifts.

He gave the negro the keys, and himself waited to prevent anyone from entering the car at his end. Looking through the glass of the door, he saw the young man Eaton standing in the vestibule of the car next ahead. Connery hesitated; then he opened the door and beckoned Eaton to him.

"Will you go forward, please," he requested, "and see if there isn't a doctor—"

"You mean the man with red hair in my car?" Eaton inquired.

"That's the one." Eaton started off without asking any questions. The porter, having locked the rear door of the car, returned and gave Connery back the keys. Connery still waited, until Eaton returned with the red-haired man. He let them in and locked the door behind them.

"You are a doctor?" Connery questioned the red-haired man.

"I am a surgeon; yes."

"That's what I wanted. Doctor—"

"My name is Sinclair. I am Douglas Sinclair of Chicago."

Connery nodded. "I have heard of you." He turned then to Eaton. "Do you know where the gentleman is who belongs to Mr. Dorne's party?"

"He is in the observation car," Eaton answered.

"Will you go and get him? The car door is locked. The porter will let you in and out. Something serious has happened here—to Mr. Dorne. Get Mr. Avery. If you can, without alarming Mr. Dorne's daughter."

Eaton nodded understandingly and followed the porter, who, taking the keys again from the conductor, let him out at the rear door of the car and reclosed the door behind him. Eaton went on into the observation car.

Without alarming Harriet Dorne, he got Avery away and out of the car.

"Is it something wrong with Mr. Dorne?" Donald Avery demanded as Eaton drew back to let Avery precede him into the open part of the car.

"So the conductor says."

Avery hurried forward toward the berth where Connery was standing beside the surgeon. Connery turned toward him.

"I sent for you, sir, because you are the companion of the man who had this berth."

Avery pushed past him, and leaped forward as he looked past the surgeon. "What has happened to Mr. Dorne?"

"You see him as we found him, sir."



"You See Him as We Found Him, Sir."

Connery stared down nervously beside him.

Avery leaned inside the curtains and recoiled. "He's been murdered!"

"It looks so, Mr. Avery. Yes; if he's dead, he's certainly been murdered," Connery agreed. "You can tell"—Connery avoided mention of President Jarvis' name—"tell anyone who asks you, Mr. Avery, that you saw him just as he was found."

He looked down again at the form in the berth, and Avery's gaze followed his; then, abruptly, it turned away. Avery stood clinging to the curtain, his eyes darting from one to another of the three men.

"Will you start your examination now, Doctor Sinclair?" Connery suggested.

The surgeon, before examining the man in the berth more closely, lifted the shades from the windows. Everything about the berth was in place undisturbed; except for the mark of the savage blow on the side of the man's head, there was no evidence of anything unusual. It was self-evident that, whatever had been the motives of the attack, robbery was not one; whoever had struck had done no more than reach in and deliver his murderous blow; then he had gone on.

Sinclair made first an examination of the head; completing this, he unbuttoned the pajamas upon the chest, loosened them at the waist and prepared to make his examination of the body.

"How long has he been dead?" Connery asked.

"He is not dead yet. Life is still present," Sinclair answered guardedly. "Whether he will live or ever regain consciousness is another question."

"One you can't answer?"

"The blow, as you can see"—Sinclair touched the man's face with his left finger-tips—"fell mostly on the cheek and temple. The cheekbone is fractured. He is in a complete state of coma; and there may be some fracture of the skull. Of course, there is some concussion of the brain."

Any inference to be drawn from this as to the seriousness of the injuries was plainly beyond Connery. "How long ago was he struck?" he asked.

"Some hours. Since midnight, certainly; and longer ago than five o'clock this morning."

"Could he have revived half an hour ago—say within the hour—enough to have pressed the button and rung the bell from his berth?"

Sinclair straightened and gazed at the conductor curiously. "No, certainly not," he replied. "That is completely impossible. Why did you ask?"

Connery avoided answer. But Avery pushed forward. "What is that? What's that?" he demanded.

"Will you go on with your examination, Doctor?" Connery urged.

"You said the bell from this berth rang recently!" Avery accused Connery.

"The pointer in the washroom, indicating a signal from this berth, was turned down a minute ago," Connery had to reply. "A few moments earlier all pointers had been set in the position indicating no call."

"That was before you found the body?"

"That was why I went to the berth—yes," Connery replied; "that was before I found the body."

"Then you mean you did not find the body," Avery charged. "Someone passing through this car a minute or so before you, must have found him!"

Connery attended without replying. "And evidently that man dared not report it and could not wait longer to know whether Mr. Dorne was really dead; so he rang the bell!"

"Ought we keep Doctor Sinclair any longer from the examination, sir?" Connery now seized Avery's arm in appeal. "The first thing for us to know is whether Mr. Dorne is dying. Isn't it?"

Connery checked himself; he had won his appeal. Eaton, standing quietly watchful, observed that Avery's eagerness to accuse now had been replaced by another interest which the conductor's words had recalled. Whether the man in the berth was to live or die—evidently that was momentarily to affect Donald Avery one way or the other.

"Of course, by all means proceed with your examination, Doctor," Avery directed.

As Sinclair again bent over the body Avery leaned over also; Eaton gazed down, and Connery—a little paler than before and with lips tightly set.

## CHAPTER VI

"Isn't This Basil Santone?"

The surgeon, having finished loosening the pajamas, pulled open and carefully removed the jacket part, leaving the upper part of the body of the man in the berth exposed. Conductor Connery turned to Avery.

"You have no objection to my taking a list of the articles in the berth?"

Avery seemed to oppose; then, apparently, he recognized that this was an obvious part of the conductor's duty. "None at all," he replied.

Connery gathered up the clothing, the glasses, the watch and purse, and laid them on the seat across the aisle. Sitting down, then, opposite them, he examined them, and, taking everything from the pockets of the clothes, he began to catalogue them before

Avery. He counted over the gold and banknotes in the purse and entered the amount upon his list.

"You know about what he had with him?" he asked.

"Very closely. That is correct. Nothing is missing," Avery answered. The conductor opened the watch.

"The crystal is missing."

Avery nodded. "Yes; it always—that is, it was missing yesterday."

Connery looked up at him, as though slightly puzzled by the manner of the reply; then, having finished his list, he rejoined the surgeon.

Sinclair was still bending over the naked torso. It had been a strong, healthy body; Sinclair guessed his age at fifty. As a boy, the man might have been an athlete—a college track-runner or oarsman—and he had kept himself in condition through middle age.

There was no mark or bruise upon the body, except that on the right side and just below the ribs there now showed a scar about an inch and a half long and of peculiar crescent shape. It was evidently a surgical scar and had completely healed.

Sinclair scrutinized this carefully and then looked up to Avery. "He was operated on recently?"

"About two years ago."

"For what?"

"It was some operation on the gall bladder."

"Performed by Kuno Garrt?"

Avery hesitated. "I believe so." He watched Sinclair more closely as he continued his examination. Connery touched the surgeon on the arm.

"What must be done, Doctor? And where and when do you want to do it?"

Sinclair, however, it appeared, had not yet finished his examination. "Will you pull down the window curtains?" he directed.

As Connery, reaching across the body, complied, the surgeon took a



"He Was Operated On Recently."

matchbox from his pocket, and glancing about at the three others as though to select from them the one most likely to be an efficient aid, he handed it to Eaton. "Will you help me, please? Strike a light and hold it as I direct—then draw it away slowly."

He lifted the partly closed eyelid from one of the eyes of the unconscious man and nodded to Eaton: "Hold the light in front of the pupil."

Eaton obeyed, drawing the light slowly away as Sinclair had directed, and the surgeon dropped the eyelid and exposed the other pupil.

"What's that for?" Avery now asked.

"I was trying to determine the seriousness of the injury to the brain. I was looking to see whether light could cause the pupil to contract. There was no reaction."

Avery started to speak, checked himself—and then he said: "There could be no reaction. I believe, Doctor Sinclair."

"What do you mean?"

"His optic nerve is destroyed."

"Ah! He was blind?"

"Yes, he was blind," Avery admitted.

"Blind!" Sinclair ejaculated. "Blind, and operated upon within two years by Kuno Garrt!" Kuno Garrt operated only upon the all-rich and powerful or upon the completely powerless and poor; the unconscious man in the berth could belong only to the first class of Garrt's clientele. The surgeon's gaze again searched the features in the berth; then it shifted to the men gathered about him in the aisle.

"Who did you say this was?" he demanded of Avery.

"I said his name was Nathan Dorne," Avery evaded.

"No, no!" Sinclair jerked out impatiently. "Isn't this—?" He hesitated, and finished in a voice suddenly lowered: "Isn't this Basil Santone?"

Avery, if he still wished to do so, found it impossible to deny.

"Basil Santone!" Connery breathed. To the conductor alone, among the four men standing by the berth, the name seemed to have come with the sharp shock of a surprise; with it had come an added sense of responsibility and horror over what had happened to the passenger who had been confined to his care, which made him wince as he once more repeated the name to himself and stared down at the man in the berth.

Conductor Connery knew Basil Santone only in the way that Santone was known to great numbers of other people—that is, by name but not by sight.

Basil Santone at twenty-two had been graduated from Harvard, though blind. His connections—the far-

more of well-to-do southern stock—his possession of enough money for his own support, made it possible for him to live idly if he wished; but Santone had not chosen to make his blindness an excuse for doing this. He had at once settled himself to his chosen profession, which was law. He had not found it easy to get a start in this, and he had succeeded only after great effort in getting a place with a small and unimportant firm. Within a short time, well within two years, men had begun to recognize that in this struggling law firm there was a powerful, clear, compelling mind.

Santone, a youth living in darkness, unable to see the men with whom he talked or the documents and books which must be read to him, was beginning to put the stamp of his personality on the firm's affairs. A year later his name appeared with others of the firm; at twenty-eight his was the leading name. He had begun to specialize long before that time, in corporation law; he married shortly after this. At thirty the firm name represented to those who knew his particulars only one personality, the personality of Santone; and at thirty-five—though his indifference to money was proverbial—he was many times a millionaire. But except among the small and powerful group of men who had learned to consult him, Santone himself at that time was utterly unknown.

Consulted continually by men concerned in great projects, immersed day and night in vast affairs, capable of living completely as he wished—he had been, at the age of forty-six, great but not famous, powerful but not publicly known. At that time an event had occurred which had forced the blind man out unwillingly from his obscurity.

This event had been the murder of the great western financier, Matthew Latron. There had been nothing in this affair which had in any way shadowed dishonor upon Santone. So much as in his role of a mind without personality Santone ever fought, he had fought against Latron; but his fight had been not against the man but against methods. There had come then a time of uncertainty and unrest; public consciousness was in the process of awakening to the knowledge that strange things, approaching close to the likeness of what men call crime, had been being done under the unassuming name of business. Scandal—financial scandal—breathed more strongly against Latron than perhaps against any of the other western men. He had been among their biggest; he had his enemies, of whom impersonally Santone might have been counted one, and he had his friends, both in high places; he was a world figure. Then, all of a sudden, the man had been struck down—killed, because of some private quarrel, men whispered, by an obscure and till then unheard-of man.

The trembling wires and cables, which should have carried to the waiting world the expected news of Latron's conviction, carried instead the news of Latron's death; and disorder followed. The first public concern had been, of course, for the stocks and bonds of the great Latron properties; and Latron's bigness had seemed only further evidenced by the stanchness with which the Latron banks, the Latron railroads and mines and public utilities stood firm even against the shock of their builder's death. Assured of this, public interest had shifted to the trial, conviction and sentence of Latron's murderer; and it was during this trial that Santone's name had become more publicly known. Not that the blind man was suspected of any knowledge—much less of any complicity—in the crime; the murder had been because of a purely private matter; but in the eager questioning into Latron's circumstances and surroundings previous to the crime, Santone was summoned into court as a witness.

The blind man, led into the court, sitting sightless in the witness chair, revealing himself by his spoken, and even more by his withheld, replies as one of the unknown guides of the destiny of the Continent and as counselor to the most powerful—himself till then hardly heard of but plainly one of the nation's "uncrowned rulers"—had caught the public sense. The fate of the murderer, the crime, even Latron himself, lost temporarily their

interest in the public curiosity over the personality of Santone.

It had been reported for some days that Santone had come to Seattle directly after Warden's death; but when this was admitted, his associates had always been careful to add that Santone, having been a close personal friend of Gabriel Warden, had come purely in a personal capacity, and the impression was given that Santone had returned quietly some days before. The mere prolonging of his stay in the West was more than suggestive that affairs among the powerful were truly in such state as Warden had proclaimed; this attack upon Santone, so similar to that which had slain Warden, and delayed within eleven days of Warden's death, must be of the gravest significance.

Connery stood overwhelmed for the moment with this fuller recognition of the seriousness of the disaster which had come upon this man entrusted to his charge; then he turned to the surgeon.

"Can you do anything for him here, Doctor?" he asked.

The surgeon glanced down the car. "That stateroom—is it occupied?"

"It's occupied by his daughter."

"We'll take him in there, then."

The four men lifted the inert figure of Basil Santone, carried it into the drawing room and laid it on its back upon the bed.

"I have my instruments," Sinclair said. "I'll get them; but before I decide to do anything, I ought to see his daughter. Since she is here, her consent is necessary before any operation on him."

"Miss Santone is in the observation car," Avery said. "I'll get her."

The tone was in some way false—Eaton could not tell exactly how. Avery started down the aisle.

"One moment, please, Mr. Avery!" said the conductor. "I'll ask you not to tell Miss Santone before any other passenger that there has been an attack upon her father. Wait until you get her inside the door of this car."

"You yourself said nothing, then, that can have made her suspect it?" Eaton asked.

Connery shook his head; the conductor, in doubt and anxiety over exactly what action the situation called for—unable, too, to communicate any hint of it to his superiors to the west because of the wires being down—clearly had resolved to keep the attack upon Santone secret for some time. "I said nothing definite even to the trainmen," he replied; "and I want you gentlemen to promise me before you leave this car that you will say nothing until I give you leave."

His eyes shifted from the face of one to another, until he had assured himself that all agreed. As Avery left the car, Eaton found a seat in one of the end sections near the drawing room. He did not know whether to ask to leave the car, or whether he ought to remain; and he would have gone except for recollection of Harriet Santone. Then the curtain at the end of the car was pushed further aside, and she came in.

She was very pale, but quite controlled, as Eaton knew she would be.



"Can You Do Anything for Him Here, Doctor?" He Asked.

She looked at Eaton, but did not speak as she passed; she went directly to the door of the drawing room, opened it and went in, followed by Avery. The door closed, and for a moment Eaton could hear voices inside the room—Harriet Santone's, Sinclair's, Connery's.

The conductor then came to the door of the drawing room and sent the porter for water and clean linen; Eaton heard the rip of linen being torn, and the car became filled with the smell of antiseptics.

Donald Avery came out of the drawing room and dropped into the seat across from Eaton. He seemed deeply thoughtful—so deeply, indeed, as to be almost unaware of Eaton's presence. And Eaton, observing him, again had the sense that Avery's absorption was completely in consequences to himself of what was going on behind the door—in how Basil Santone's death or continued existence would affect the fortunes of Donald Avery.

A long time passed—how long, Eaton could not have told; he noted only that during it the shadows on the snowbank outside the window appreciably changed their position. Finally the door opened, and Harriet Santone came out, paler than before, and now not quite so steady.

Eaton rose as she approached them; and Avery leaped up, all concern and sympathy for her immediately she appeared. He met her in the aisle and took her hand.

"Was it successful, dear?" Avery asked.

She shut her eyes before she answered, and stood holding to the back of a seat; then she opened her eyes, saw Eaton and recognized him and sat down in the seat where Avery had been sitting.

"Doctor Sinclair says we will know in four or five days," she replied to Avery; she turned then directly to Eaton. "He thought there probably was a clot under the skull, and he operated to find it and relieve it. There was one, and we have done all we can; now we may only wait. Doctor Sinclair has appointed himself nurse; he says I can help him, but not just yet. I thought you would like to know."

"Thank you; I did want to know," Eaton acknowledged. He moved away from them, and sat down in one of the seats further down the car.

Soon he left for his own car, and as the door was closing behind him, a sound came to his ears from the car he just had left—a young girl suddenly crying in abandon. Harriet Santone, he understood, must have broken down for the moment, after the strain of the operation; and Eaton halted as though to turn back, feeling the blood drive suddenly upon his heart. Then, recollecting that he

had no right to go to her, he went on.

## CHAPTER VII

Suspicion Fastens on Eaton.

Eaton found his car better filled than it had been before, for the people shifted from the car behind had been scattered through the train. Keeping himself to his section, he watched the car and outside the windows for signs of what investigation Connery and Avery were making. Whoever had attacked Santone must still be upon the train, for no one could have escaped through the snow. No one could now escape. Avery and Connery and whoever else was making investigation with them evidently were not letting anyone know that an investigation was being made. Eaton went to lunch; on his way back from the diner, he saw the conductors with papers in their hands questioning a passenger. They evidently were starting systematically through the cars, examining each person; they were making the plea of necessity of a report to the railroad offices of names and addresses of all held up by the stoppage of the train.

Eaton started toward the rear of the train.

"A moment, sir!" Connery called. Eaton halted. The conductor confronted him.

"Your name, sir?" Connery asked.

"Philip D. Eaton."

Connery wrote down the answer. "Your address?"

"I—have no address. I was going to a hotel in Chicago—which one I hadn't decided yet."

"Where are you coming from?"

"From Asia."

"That's hardly an address, Mr. Eaton!"

"I can give you no address abroad. I had no fixed address there. I was traveling most of the time. I arrived



"Your Name, Sir?" Connery Asked.

in Seattle by the Asiatic steamer and took this train."

"Ah! you came on the Tamba Maru."

Connery made note of this, as he had made note of all the other questions and answers. Then he said something to the Pullman conductor, who replied in the same low tone; what they said was not audible to Eaton.

"You can tell us at least where your family is, Mr. Eaton," Connery suggested.

"I have no family."

"Friends, then?"

"I—I have no friends."

"Nowhere?"

"Nowhere."

Connery pondered for several moments. "The Mr. Hillward—Lawrence Hillward, to whom the telegram was addressed which you claimed this morning, your associate who was to have taken this train with you—will you give me his address?"

"I don't know Hillward's address."

"Give me the address, then, of the man who sent the telegram."

"I am unable to do that, either."

Connery spoke again to the Pullman conductor, and they conversed audibly for a minute. "That is all, then," Connery said finally.

He signed his name to the sheet on which he had written Eaton's answers, and handed it to the Pullman conductor, who also signed it and returned it to him; then they went on to the passenger now occupying Section Four, without making any further comment.

Eaton told himself that there should be no danger to himself from this inquiry, directed against no one, but including comprehensively everyone on the train. When the conductors had left the car, he put his magazine away and went into the men's compartment to smoke and calm his nerves. His return to America had passed the bounds of recklessness; and what a situation he would now be in if his actions brought even serious suspicions against him! He finished his first cigar and was debating whether to light another, when he heard voices outside the car, and opening the window and looking out, he saw Connery and the brakeman struggling through the snow and making, apparently, some search. Presently Connery passed the door of the compartment carrying something loosely wrapped in a newspaper in his hands. Eaton finished his cigar and went back to his seat in the car.

(To be Continued.)

—Although Armistice day is more than four years past, distinguished service medals are still being handed out occasionally.