

The BLIND MAN'S EYES

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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.

CHAPTER IV.—Eaton receives a telegram addressed to Lawrence Hillward, which he claims. It warns him he is being followed.

CHAPTER V.—Passing through the car, Connery notices Dorne's hand hanging outside the berth. He ascends Dorne's cell, which has recently rung. Perturbed, he investigates and finds Dorne with his skull crushed. He calls a surgeon, Dr. Sinclair, on the train.

CHAPTER VI.—Sinclair recognizes the injured man as Basil Santoline, who, although blind, is a peculiar power in the financial world as adviser to "big interests." His recovery is a matter of doubt.

CHAPTER VII.—Eaton is practically placed under arrest. He refuses to make explanations as to his previous movements before boarding the train, but admits he was the man who called on Warden the night the financier was murdered.

CHAPTER VIII.—Eaton pleads with Harriet Santoline to withhold judgment, telling her he is in serious danger, though innocent of the crime against her father. He feels the girl believes him.

CHAPTER IX.—Eaton recovers sufficiently to question Eaton, who refuses to reveal his identity. The financier requires Eaton to accompany him to the Santoline home, where he is in the position of a semi-prisoner.

CHAPTER X.—Eaton meets a resident of the house, Wallace Blatchford, and a young girl, Mildred Davis, with whom apparently he is acquainted, though they conceal the fact. Eaton's mission is to secure certain documents which are vital to his interests, and his being admitted to the house is a remarkable stroke of luck. The girl agrees to aid him. He becomes deeply interested in Harriet Santoline, and sits in his room.

(Continued from last week.)

She halted suddenly as she saw him and grew very pale, and her gloved hands went swiftly to her breast and pressed against it; she caught herself together and looked swiftly and fearfully about her and out into the hall. Seeing no one but herself, she came a step nearer.

"Hugh!" she breathed. Her surprise was plainly greater than his own had been at sight of her; but she checked herself again quickly and looked warningly back at the hall; then she fixed on him her blue eyes—which were very like Eaton's, though she did not resemble him closely in any other particular—as though waiting his instructions.

"Stay where you are, Edith," he whispered. "If we hear anyone coming, we are just passing each other in the hall."

"I understand; of course, Hugh! But you—you're here! In his house!"

"Even lower, Edith; remember I'm Eaton—Philip Eaton."

"Of course; I know; and I'm Miss Davis here—Mildred Davis."

"They let you come in and out like this—as you want, with no one watching you?"

"No, no; I do stenography for Mr. Avery sometimes, as I wrote you. That is all. When he works here, I do his typing; and some even for Mr. Santoline himself. But I am not confidential yet; they send for me when they want me."

"Then they 'eat for you today?'"

"No; but they have just got back, and I thought I would come to see if anything was wanted. But never mind about me; you—how did you get here? What are you doing here?"

Eaton drew further back into the alcove as some one passed through the hall above. The footsteps ceased overhead; Eaton, assured no one was coming down the stairs, spoke swiftly to tell her as much as he might in their moment. "He—Santoline—wasn't taken ill on the train, Edith; he was attacked."

"Attacked?" Her lips barely moved. "He was almost killed; but they concealed it, Edith—pretended he was only ill. I was on the train—you know, of course; I got your wire—and they suspected me of the attack."

"You? But they didn't find out about you, Hugh?"

"No; they are investigating. Santoline would not let them make anything public. He brought me here while he is trying to find out about me. So I'm here, Edith—here! Is it here too?"

Again steps sounded in the hall above. The girl swiftly busied herself with gloves and hat; Eaton stood stark in suspense. The servant above—it was a servant they had heard before, he recognized now—merely crossed from one room to another overhead. Now the girl's lips moved again.

"It?" She formed the question noiselessly.

"The draft of the new agreement." "It either has been sent to him, or it will be sent to him very soon—here."

"Where will it be when it is here?" "Where? Oh!" The girl's eye went to the wall close to where Eaton stood; she seemed to measure with them a definite distance from the door and a point shoulder high, and to resist the impulse to come over and put her hand upon the spot. As Eaton followed her look, he heard a slight and muffled click as if from the study; but no sound could reach them through the study doors and what he heard came from the wall itself.

"A safe?" he whispered.

"Yes; Miss Santoline—she's in there, isn't she?—closed it just now. There are two of them hidden behind the books, one on each side of the door."

Eaton tapped gently on the wall; the wall was brick; the safe undoubtedly was backed with steel.

"The best way is from inside the room," he concluded.

She nodded. "Yes. If you—" "Look out!"

Someone now was coming downstairs. The girl had time only to whisper swiftly, "If we don't get a chance to speak again, watch that vase." She pointed to a bronze antique which stood on a table near them.

"When I'm sure the agreement is in the house, I'll drop a glove-button in that—a black one, if I think it'll be in the safe on the right, white on the left. Now go."

Eaton moved quietly on and into the drawing room. Avery's voice immediately afterward was heard; he was speaking to Miss Davis, whom he had found in the hallway. Eaton was certain there was no suspicion that he had talked with her there; indeed, Avery seemed to suppose that Eaton was still in the study with Harriet Santoline. It was her lapse, then, which had let him out and had given him that chance; but it was a lapse, he discovered, which was not likely to recur.

From that time, while never held strictly in restraint, he found himself always in the sight of someone.

Eaton let himself think, idly, about Harriet—how strange her life had been—that part of it at least which was spent, as he had gathered most of her waking hours of recent years had been spent, with her father, Strange, almost as his own life! And what a wonderful girl it had made of her—clever, sweet, lovable, with more than a woman's ordinary capacity for devotion and self-sacrifice.

But, if her service to her father was not only on his personal side but if also she was intimate in his business affairs, must she not therefore have shared the cruel code which had terrorized Eaton for the last four years and kept him an exile in Asia and which, at any hour yet, threatened to take his life? A grim set came to Eaton's lips; his mind went again to his own affairs.

CHAPTER XII

The Man From the Train.

In the supposition that he was to have less liberty, Eaton proved correct. Harriet Santoline, to whose impulses had been due his first privileges, showed toward him a more constrained attitude the following morning. She did not suggest hostility, as Avery constantly did; nor, indeed, was there any evidence of retrogression in her attitude toward him; she seemed merely to be maintaining the same position; and since this seemed difficult if they were often together, she avoided him. Eaton understood that Santoline, steadily improving but

not yet able to leave his bed, had taken up his work again, propped up by pillows; one of the nurses had been dismissed; the other was only upon duty. But Eaton did not see Santoline at all; and though he learned that Miss Davis or another stenographer, whose name was West, came daily to the house, he never was in a position again to encounter any outsider either coming or going.

There was no longer room for Eaton to doubt that Harriet had the confidence of her father to almost a complete extent. Now that Santoline was ill, she worked with him daily for hours; and Eaton learned that she did the same when he was well. But Avery worked with the blind man too; he, too, was certainly in a confidential capacity. Was it not probable then that Avery, and not Harriet, was entrusted with the secrets of dangerous and ugly matters; or was it possible that this girl, worshipping her father as she did, could know and be sure that, because her father approved these matters, they were right?

A hundred times a day, as Eaton saw or spoke with the girl or thought of her presence near by, this obsessed him. A score of times during this

casual talk upon meeting at meals or elsewhere, he found himself turned toward some question which would aid him in determining what must be the facts; but each time he checked himself, until one morning—it was the fifth after his arrival at Santoline's house—Harriet was taking him for his walk in the garden before the house. She had just told him, at his inquiry, that her father was very much stronger that morning, and her manner more than ever evidenced her pride in him.

They walked on slowly. "I wish you could tell me more about yourself, Mr. Eaton."

"I wish so too," he said. "Then why can you not?" She turned to him frankly; he gazed at her a moment and then looked away and shook his head. Did she know all of what was known even under her father's roof; and if she knew all, would she then loathe or defend it? A motor sped near, halted and then speeded on again; Eaton, looking up, saw it was a runabout with Avery alone in it; evidently, seeing them in the road, Avery had halted to protest, then thought better of it and gone on. But other motors passed now with people who spoke to Harriet and who stopped to inquire for her father and wish him well.

"Your father does not seem to be one of the great men without honor in his own neighborhood," Eaton said

unsettled. There was trouble at that time between some of the big eastern and big western men, and at the same time the government was prosecuting the trusts. Nobody knew what the outcome of it all would be; many of the biggest men who consulted Father were like men groping in the dark. I don't suppose you would remember the time by what I say; but you would remember it, as nearly everybody else does by this: it was the time of the murder of Mr. Latron."

"Yes; I remember that," said Eaton; "and Mr. Avery came to you at that time?"

"Yes; just at that time I was thrown from my horse, and could not do as much as I had been doing, so Mr. Avery was sent to Father."

"Then Mr. Avery was reading to him at the time you spoke of—the time of the Latron murder?"

"No; Mr. Avery came just afterward. I was reading to him at that time."

"The papers must have been a good deal for a girl of eighteen."

"At that time, you mean? They were; but Father dared trust no one else."

"Mr. Avery handles those matters now for your father?"

"The continuation of what was going on then? Yes; he took them up at the time I was hurt and so has kept on looking after them; for there has been plenty for me to do without that; and those things have all been more or less settled now. They have worked themselves out as things do, though they seemed almost unsolvable at the time. One thing that helped in their solution was that Father was able, that time, to urge what was just, as well as what was advisable."

"You mean that in the final settlement of them no one suffered?"

"No one, I think—except, of course, poor Mr. Latron; and that was a private matter not connected in any direct way with the question at issue. Why do you ask all this, Mr. Eaton?"

"I was merely interested in you—in what your work has been with your father, and what it is," he answered quietly.

They had been following the edge of the road, she along a path worn in the turf, he on the edge of the road itself and nearer to the tracks of the motors. Suddenly she cried out and clutched at him. As they had stopped, she had heard the sound of a motor approaching them rapidly from behind. Except that this car seemed speeding faster than the others, she had paid no attention and had not turned. Instantaneously, as she had cried and pulled upon him, she had realized that this car was not passing; it was directly behind and almost upon him. She felt him spring to the side as quickly as he could; but her cry and pull upon him were almost too late; as he leaped, the car struck. The blow was glancing, not direct, and he was off his feet and in motion when the wheel struck; but the car hurled him aside and rolled him over and over.

As she rushed to Eaton, the two men in the rear seat of the car turned their heads and looked back, but without checking its speed or swerving, the car dashed on and disappeared down the roadway.

She bent over Eaton and took hold of him. He struggled to his feet and, dazed, tottered so that she supported him. As she realized that he was not greatly hurt, she stared with horror at the turn in the road where the car had disappeared.

"Why, he tried to run you down! He meant to! He tried to hurt you!" she cried.

"No," Eaton denied. "Oh, no, I don't think so. It must have been an accident. He was frightened when he saw what he had done."

"It wasn't at all like an accident!" she persisted. "It couldn't have been an accident there and coming up from behind the way he did! No; he meant to do it! Did you see who was in the car—who was driving?"

He turned to her quickly. "Who?" he demanded.

"One of the people who was on the train! The morning Father was hurt. Don't you remember—a little man, nervous, but very strong; a man almost like an ape?"

He shuddered and then controlled himself. "Yes, I remember a fellow the conductor tried to seat me opposite."

"This was the same man!" Eaton shook his head. "That could hardly be; I think you must be mistaken."

"I am not mistaken; it was that man!"

"Still, I think you must be," he again denied.

She stared, studying him. "Perhaps I was," she agreed; but she knew she had not been. "I am glad, whoever it was, he didn't injure you. You are all right, aren't you?"

"Quite," he assured. "Please don't trouble about it, Miss Santoline."

They walked back rather silently, she appreciating how passionately she had expressed herself for him, and he quiet because of this and other thoughts too.

They found Donald Avery in front of the house looking for them as they came up. Eaton succeeded in walking without limping; but he could not conceal the marks on his clothes.

"Harriet, I've just come from your father; he wants you to go to him at once," Avery greeted. "Good morning Eaton. What's happened?"

"Carelessness," Eaton deprecated. "Got rather in the way of a motor and was knocked over for it."

Harriet did not correct this to Avery. She went up to her father; she was still trembling, still sick with horror at what she had seen—an attempt to kill one walking at her side. She stopped outside her fa-

ther's door to compose herself; then she went in.

The blind man was propped up on his bed with pillows into almost a sitting position; the nurse was with him.

"What did you want, Father?" Harriet asked.

He had recognized her step and had been about to speak to her; but at the sound of her voice he stopped the words on his lips and changed them into a direction for the nurse to leave the room.

He waited until the nurse had left and closed the door behind her. Harriet sat that, in his familiarity with her tones and every inflection of her voice, he had sensed already that something unusual had occurred; she repeated, however, her question as to what he wanted.

"That does not matter now, Harriet. Where have you been?"

"I have been walking with Mr. Eaton."

"What happened?" She hesitated. "Mr. Eaton was almost run down by a motorcar."

"Ah! An accident?" She hesitated again. "Mr. Eaton said it was an accident," she answered.

"But you?"

"It did not look like an accident, Father. It—it showed intention."

"You mean it was an attack?"

"Yes; it was an attack. The man in the car meant to run Mr. Eaton down; he meant to kill him or to hurt him terribly. Mr. Eaton wasn't hurt. I called to him and pulled him—he jumped away in time."

"To kill him, Harriet? How do you know?"

She caught herself. "I—I don't know, Father. He certainly meant to injure Mr. Eaton. When I said 'kill' him, I was telling only what I thought."

"That is better. I think so too."

"That he meant to kill Mr. Eaton?"

"Yes."

She watched her father's face; often when relating things to him, she was aware from his expression that she was telling him only something he already had figured out and expected or even knew; she felt that now.

"Father, did you expect Mr. Eaton to be attacked?"

"Expect? Not that exactly; it was possible; I suspected something like this might occur."

"And you did not warn him?"

The blind man's hands sought each other on the coverlet and clasped together. "It was not necessary to warn him, Harriet; Mr. Eaton already knew. Who was in the car?"

"Three men."

"Had you seen any of them before?"

"Yes, one—the man who drove."

"Where?"

"On the train."

The color on Santoline's face grew brighter. "Describe him, dear."

He waited while she called together her recollections of the man.

"I can't describe him very fully, Father," she said. "He was one of the people who had berths in the forward sleeping car. I can recall seeing him only when I passed through the car—I recall him only twice in that car and once in the diner."

"That is interesting," said Santoline.

"What, Father?"

"That in five days upon the train you saw the man only three times."

"You mean he must have kept out of sight as much as possible?"

"Have you forgotten that I asked you to describe him, Harriet?"

She checked herself. "Height about five feet five," she said, "broad-shouldered, very heavily set; I remember he impressed me as being unusually muscular. His hair was black; I can't recall the color of his eyes; his cheeks were blue with a heavy beard closely shaved. I remember his face was prognathous, and his clothes were spotted with dropped food. It seems hard for me to recall him and I can't describe him very well."

"But you are sure it was the same man in the motor?"

"Yes. He seemed an animal sort of person, small, strong, and not particularly intelligent. It seems hard for me to remember more about him than that."

"That is interesting."

"What?"

"That it is hard for you to remember him very well."

"Why, Father?"

Her father did not answer. "The other men in the motor?" he asked.

"I can't describe them—I—I was excited about Mr. Eaton."

"Thank you, dear. Bring Eaton to me."

"He has gone to his room to fix himself up."

"I'll send for him, then." Santoline pressed one of the buttons beside his bed to call a servant; but before the bell could be answered, Harriet got up.

"I'll go myself," she said.

She went out into the hall and closed the door behind her; she waited until she heard the approaching steps of the man summoned by Santoline's bell; then, going to meet him, she sent him to call Eaton in his rooms, and she still waited until the man came back and told her Eaton had already left his rooms and gone downstairs. She dismissed the man and went to the head of the stairs, but her steps slowed there and stopped. She knew that the blind man's thought in regard to Eaton had taken some lumens stride; but she did not know what that stride had been, or what was coming now when her father saw Eaton.

She went on slowly down the stairs, and when halfway down, she saw Eaton in the hall below her. He was standing beside the table which held

the bronze antique vase; he seemed to have taken something from the vase and to be examining it. She halted again to watch him; then she went on, and he turned at the sound of her footsteps. She could see, as she approached him, what he had taken from the vase, but she attached no importance to it; it was only a black button from a woman's glove—one of her own, perhaps, which she had dropped without noticing. He tossed it indifferently toward the open fireplace as he came toward her.

"Father wants to see you, Mr. Eaton," she said.

He looked at her intently for an instant and seemed to detect some strangeness in her manner and to draw himself together; then he followed her up the stairs.

CHAPTER XIII

It Grows Plain.

Basil Santoline's bedroom was so nearly sound-proof that anything going on in the room could not be heard in the hall outside it, even close to the double doors. Eaton, as they approached these doors, listened vainly, trying to determine whether anyone was in the room with Santoline; then he quickened his step to bring him beside Harriet.

"One moment, please, Miss Santoline," he urged.

She stopped. "What is it you want?"

"Your father has received some answer to the inquiries he has been having made about me?"

"I don't know, Mr. Eaton."

"Is he alone?"

"Yes."

Eaton thought a minute. "That is all I wanted to know, then," he said.

Harriet opened the outer door and knocked on the inner one. Eaton heard Santoline's voice at once calling to come in, and as Harriet opened the second door, he followed her into the room.

"Am I to remain, Father?" she asked.

"Yes," Santoline commanded.

Eaton waited while she went to a chair at the foot of the bed, and sent herself—her clasped hands resting on the footboard and her chin upon her hands—in a position to watch both Eaton and her father while they talked; they Eaton sat down.

"Good morning, Eaton," the blind man greeted him.

"Good morning, Mr. Santoline," Eaton answered.

Santoline was lying quietly upon his back, his head raised on the pillows, his arms above the bed-covers, his finger-tips touching with the fingers spread.

"You recall, of course, Eaton, our conversation on the train," Santoline said evenly.

"Yes."

"I want to call your attention in a certain order to some of the details of what happened on the train. You had rather a close call this morning, did you not?"

"Rather, I was careless."

"You were careless?" Santoline smiled derisively. "Perhaps you were—in one sense. In another, however, you have been very careful, Eaton. You have been careful to act as though the attempt to run you down could not have been a deliberate attack; you were careful to call it an accident; you were careful not to recognize any of the three men in the motor."

"I had no chance to recognize any of them, Mr. Santoline," Eaton replied easily. "I did not see the car coming; I was thrown from my feet; when I got up, it was too far away for me to recognize anyone."

"Perhaps so; but were you surprised when my daughter recognized one of them as having been on the train with us?"

Eaton hesitated, but answered almost immediately:

"Your question doesn't exactly fit the case. I thought Miss Santoline had made a mistake."

"But you were not surprised; no. What would have been a surprise to you, Eaton, would have been—if you had had a chance to observe the men—to have found that none of them—none of them had been on the train!"

Eaton started and felt that he had colored. How much did Santoline know? Had the blind man received, as Eaton feared, some answer to his inquiries, which had revealed, or nearly revealed, Eaton's identity? Or was it merely that the attack made on Eaton that morning had given Santoline new light on the events that had happened on the train and particularly—Eaton guessed—on the cipher telegram which Santoline claimed to have translated.

"You assume that, Mr. Santoline," he asserted, "because—" He checked himself and altered his sentence. "Will you tell me why you assume that?"

"That that would have surprised you? Yes; that is what I called you in here to tell you."

As Santoline waited a moment before going on, Eaton watched him anxiously. The blind man turned himself on his pillows so as to face Eaton more directly.

(To be Continued.)

Bound to Qualify.

The rules were strict at the college. Accordingly when Mr. Foster arrived to take Miss Joy out in his car, it was with very mixed feelings that she mentioned the matter to the principal.

"You know, Miss Joy," said that personage, "I only allow the students to go out with their fiancés. Are you engaged to Mr. Foster?"

"No-no," was the reply; "but if you will let me go, I shall be by the time we get back!"—London Answers.

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"Every One Who Knows Father Likes and Admires Him!" She Rejoiced.