

The BLIND MAN'S EYES

BY
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Illustrations by R.H. Livingstone

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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 Conroy, 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 Hayward, which he claims. It warns him he is being followed.

CHAPTER V.—Passing through the car, Conroy notices Dorne's hand hanging outside the berth. He ascends to the bell 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 Santolne, 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 Santolne to withhold the documents which he is in serious danger, though innocent of the crime against her father. He feels the girl believes him.

CHAPTER IX.—Santolne recovers sufficiently to question Eaton, who refuses to reveal his identity. The financier refuses Eaton to accompany him to the Santolne 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 being admitted to the house is a remarkable stroke of luck. The girl agrees to aid him. He becomes deeply interested in Harriet Santolne, and she in him.

CHAPTER XI.—Harriet tells Eaton she and Donald Avery act as "eyes" to Santolne, reading him the documents on which he bases his judgments. While walking with her, two men in an automobile deliberately attempt to run her down. He escapes with slight injuries. The girl recognizes one of the men as having been on the train on which they came from Seattle.

CHAPTER XII.—Santolne questions Eaton closely, but the latter is reticent. The blind man tells him he convinced the attack made on him on the train was the result of an error, the attacker having planned to kill Eaton. Santolne tells Harriet she is to take charge of certain papers connected with the "Latron properties," which had hitherto been in Avery's charge.

CHAPTER XIII.—Avery seeks to influence Harriet, as his wife is to give the papers to him. She refuses. Harriet is beginning to feel that her love belongs to Eaton.

CHAPTER XIV.—At the country club Eaton reveals a remarkable proficiency at polo, seemingly to Avery's gratification. Eaton induces Harriet to allow him to leave the grounds for a few minutes that night.

CHAPTER XV.—That night Eaton invades Santolne's library, seeking the papers he is determined to possess. There he finds two men, one of whom he recognizes with bewildered surprise, on the same errand. The three men engage in a pistol duel.

CHAPTER XVI.—Aroused by the shooting, Santolne descends to the library. The combatants are there, but silent. Wallace Blatchford arrives and is on the point of informing Santolne of the identity of one of the intruders when he is shot and instantly killed. The fighters escape. The safe has been rifled and important papers taken.

(Continued from last week.)

"He is dead," Santolne said. "They shot him! They were three, at least. One was not with the others. They fired at each other, I believe, after one shot him." Santolne's hand was still in Blatchford's. "I heard them follow." He told shortly how he had gone down, how Blatchford had entered and been shot kneeling, heard the ordering and organizing of others for the pursuit; now women servants from the other part of the house were taking charge of affairs in the room. There had been no signal heard, Santolne was told, upon any of the bells which he had tried to ring from his room. Eaton was the only person from the house who was missing.

"They came, at least some of them came"—Santolne had risen, fighting down his grief over his cousin's death—"for what was in your safe, Harriet."

"I know; I saw it open."
"What is gone?" Santolne demanded.

He heard her picking up the contents of the safe from the floor and carrying them to the table and examining them.

"Why—nearly all the formal papers seem to be gone; lists and agreements relating to a dozen different things."
"None of the correspondence?"
"No; that all seems to be here."

Santolne was breathing quickly; the trust for which he had been ready to die—for which Blatchford had died—seemed safe.

"We don't know whether he got it, then, or not!" It was Avery's voice

which broke in upon him; Santolne merely listened.

"He? Who?" He heard his daughter's challenge.

"Why, Eaton. It is plain enough what happened here, isn't it?" Avery answered. "He came here to this room for what he was after—for what he has been after from the first—whatever that may have been! He came prepared to force the safe and get it! But he was surprised—"

"By whom?" the blind man asked.

"By whoever it is that has been following him. I don't attempt to explain who they were, Mr. Santolne; for I don't know. But—whatever they were—in doing this, he laid himself open to attack by them. They were watching—saw him enter here. They attacked him here. Wallace switched on the light and recognized him; so he shot Wallace and ran with whatever he could grab up of the contents of the safe, hoping that by luck he'd get what he was after."

"It isn't so—it isn't so!" Harriet denied.

Her father checked her; he stood an instant thoughtful. "Who is directing the pursuit, Donald?" he asked.

Avery went out at once. The blind man turned to his daughter.

"Now, Harriet," he commanded. She understood that her father would not move till she had seen the room for him.

"There was some sort of a struggle near my safe," she said. "Chairs—everything there is knocked about."

"Yes."
"There is also blood there—a big spot of it on the floor."

"I found that," said Santolne.

"There are bullet marks everywhere—above the mantel, all about."

"How was the safe opened?"

"The combination has been cut completely away; there is an instrument connected with the electric-light fixture which seems to have done the cutting. There is a hand-drill, too—I think it is a hand-drill. The inner door has been drilled through, and the catches drawn back."

"Who is this?"

The valet, who had been sent to Eaton's room, had returned with his report. "Mr. Eaton went from his room fully dressed, sir," he said to Santolne, "except for his shoes. I found all his shoes in his room."

During the report the blind man felt his daughter's grasp on his arm become tense and relax and tighten again. Then, as though she realized she was adding to his comprehension of what she had already betrayed, she suddenly took her hand from her father's arm. Santolne let the servants, at his daughter's direction, help him to his room. His daughter stood beside him while the nurse washed the blood-spotsches from his hands and feet. When the nurse had finished he still felt his daughter's presence; she drew nearer to him.

"Father?" she questioned.

"Yes."

"You don't agree with Donald, do you?—that Mr. Eaton went to the study to get something, and that whoever has been following him found him there and interrupted him and he killed Cousin Wallace?"

Santolne was silent an instant. "That seems the correct explanation, Harriet," he evaded. "It does not fully explain; but it seems correct as far as it goes. If Donald asks you what my opinion is, tell him it is that."

He felt his daughter shrink away from him.

The blind man made no move to draw her back to him; he lay perfectly still; his head rested flat upon the pillows; his hands were clasped tightly together above the coverlet. He had accused himself, in the room below, because, by the manner he had chosen to treat Eaton, he had slain the man he loved best and had forced a friendship with Eaton on his daughter which, he saw, had gone further than mere friendship; it had gone, he knew now, even to the irretrievable between man and woman—had brought her, that is, to the state where, no matter what Eaton was or did, she must suffer with him! But Santolne was not accusing himself now; he was feeling only the fulfillment of that threat against those who had trusted him with their secrets, which he had felt vaguely after the murder of Gabriel Warden and, more plainly with the events of each succeeding day, ever since. For that threat, just now, had culminated in his presence in purposeful, violent action; but Santolne in his blindness had been unable—and was still unable—to tell what that action meant.

CHAPTER XVII

Pursuit.

Harriet Santolne, clad only in a heavy robe over her nightgown and in slippers, went from her father's bedroom swiftly down into the study

again; what she was going to do there she did not definitely know. She heard, as she descended the stairs, the steward in the hall outside the study calling up the police stations of the neighboring villages and giving news of what had happened and instructions to watch the roads; but as she reached the foot of the stairs, a servant closed the study doors. The great, curtained room in its terrifying darkness was brightly lighted, empty, absolutely still. She had given directions that, except for the removal of Blatchford's body, all must be left as it was in the room till the arrival of the police. She stood an instant with hands pressed against her breast, staring down at the spots upon the floor. Was one of them Eaton's?

Something within her told her that to him, to help him, was all she felt just now. It was Donald Avery's and her father's accusation of Eaton that had made her feel like this. She had been feeling, the moment before Donald had spoken, that Philip Eaton had played upon her that evening in making her take him to his confederate in the ravine in order to plan and consummate something here. Above her grief and horror at the killing of her cousin and the danger to her father—had risen the anguish of her guilt with Eaton, the agony of her betrayal. But their accusation that Eaton had killed Wallace Blatchford, seeing him all that way; all there was of her seemed to have risen in denial of that. Before her eyes, half shut, she saw again in the body of her cousin Wallace lying in his blood on the floor, with her father kneeling beside it, his blind eyes raised in helplessness to the light; but she saw now another body too—Eaton's—not here—lying somewhere in the bare, wind-swept woods, shot down by those pursuing him.

She looked at the face of the clock and then down to the pendulum to see whether it had stopped; but the pendulum was swinging. The hands stood at half past one o'clock; now she recalled that, in her first wild gaze about the room when she rushed in with the others, she had seen the hands showing a minute or so short of twenty minutes past one. Not quite a quarter of an hour had passed since the alarm! The pursuit could not have moved far away. She reopened the window through which the pursuers had passed and stepped out into the dark lawn. A half mile down the beach she heard shouts and a shot; she saw dimly through the night in that direction a boat without lights moving swiftly out upon the lake.

Her hands clenched and pressed against her breast; she stood straining at the sounds of the man-hunt. It had turned west, it seemed; it was coming back her way, but to the west of the house. She crossed the lawn toward the garage. A light suddenly shone out there, and she went on.

The wide door at the car driveway was pushed open, and someone was within working over a car. His back was toward her, and he was bent over the engine, but, at the glance, she knew him and recoiled, gasping. It was Eaton. He turned at the same instant and saw her.

"Oh; it's you!" he cried to her.

Her heart, which almost had ceased to beat, raced her pulses again. At the sound she had made on the driveway, he had turned to her as a hunted thing, cornered, desperate, certain that whoever came must be against him. His cry to her had recognized her as the only one who could come and not be against him; it had hailed her with relief as bringing him help. He could not have cried out so at that instant at sight of her if he had been guilty of what they had accused. Now she saw too, as he faced her, blood flowing over his face; blood soaked a shoulder of his coat, and his left arm dangling at his side; but now, as he threw back his head and straightened in his relief at finding it was she who had surprised him, she saw in him an exultation and excitement she had never seen before—something which her presence alone could not have caused. Tonight, she sensed vaguely, something had happened to him which had changed his attitude toward her and everything else.

"Yes; it's I!" she cried quickly and rushed to him. "It's I! It's I!" wildly

she reassured him. "You're hurt!" She touched his shoulder. "You're hurt! I knew you were!"

He pushed her back with his right hand and held her away from him. "Did they hurt your father?"

"Hurt Father? No."
"But Mr. Blatchford—"

"Dead," she answered dully.

"They killed him, then!"

"Yes; they—" She iterated. He was telling her now—unnecessarily—that he had had nothing to do with it; it was the others who had done that.

He released her and wiped the blood from his eyes with the heel of his hand. "The poor old man," he said. "—the poor old man!"

She drew toward him in the realization that he could find sympathy for others even in such a time as this.

"Where's the key for the battery and magnet—the key you start the car with?"

She ran to a shelf and brought it to him; he used it and pressed the starting lever. The engine started and he sprang to the seat. His left arm still hanging useless at his side, he tried to throw in the gears with his right hand; but the mechanism of the car was strange to him. She leaped up beside him.

"Move over!" she commanded. "It's this way!"

He slipped to the side and she took the driving seat, threw in the gears expertly, and the car shot from the garage. She switched on the electric headlights as they dashed down the driveway and threw a bright white glare upon the roadway a hundred yards ahead to the gates. Beyond the gates—the public place ran north and south.

"Which way?" she demanded of him, slowing the car.

"Stop!" he cried to her. "Stop and get out! You mustn't do this!"

"You could! Not pass alone," she said. "Father's men would close the gates upon you."

"The men? There are no men there now—they went to the beach—before! They must have heard something there! It was their being there that turned them—the others back. They tried for the lake and were turned back and got away in a machine; I followed—back up here!"

Harriet Santolne glanced at the face of the man beside her. She could see his features only vaguely; she could see no expression; only the position of his head. But now she knew that she was not helping him to run away; he was no longer hunted—at least he was not only hunted; he was hunting others too. As the car rolled down upon the open gates and he strained forward in the seat beside her, she knew that what he was feeling was a wild eagerness in this pursuit.

"Right or left—quick!" she demanded of him. "I'll take one or the other."

"Right," he shot out. "There are their tracks!" He pointed for her.

"How do you know those are their tracks?" she asked him.

"I told you, I followed them to where they got their machine."

"Who are they?"

"The men who shot Mr. Blatchford." "Who are they?" she put to him directly again.

He waited, and she knew that he was not going to answer her directly. Suddenly he caught her arm. The road had forked, and he pointed to the left; she swung the car that way again seeing as they made the turn. The tire-tracks they were following. The car raced up a little hill and now again was descending; the headlights showed a bridge over a ravine.

"Slow! Stop!" her companion commanded.

She raced the car on; he put his hand on the wheel and with his foot tried to push hers from the accelerator; but she fought him; the car swayed and all but ran away as they approached the bridge. "Give it to me!" she screamed to him and wrenched the car about. It was upon the bridge and across it; they skidded upon the mud of the road again, they could hear the bridge cracking behind.

"Harriet!" he pleaded with her.

She steered the car on, recklessly, her heart thumping with more than the thrill of the chase. "They're the men who tried to kill you, aren't they?" she rejoined. The speed at which they were going did not permit her to look about; she had to keep her eyes on the road at that moment when she knew within herself and was telling the man beside her that she from that moment must be at one with him. For already she had said it; as she risked herself in the pursuit, she thought of the men they were after not chiefly as those who had killed her cousin but as those who had threatened Eaton.

"What do I care what happens to me, if we catch them?" she cried to him.

"Harriet!" he repeated her name again.

"Phillip!"

She felt him shrink and change as she called the name. It had been clear to her, of course, that, since she had known him, the name he had been using was not his own. Often she had wondered what his name was; now she had to know. "What should I call you?" she demanded of him.

"My name," he said, "is Hugh."
"Hugh!" she called it.

"Hugh—" She waited for the rest; but he told no more. "Hugh!" she whispered to herself again his name now. "Hugh!"

The breeze brought the smell of seasoned wood burning.

"It's right across the road!" Hugh announced as they neared it.

"It's the bridge over the next ravine," Harriet said. Her foot already was bearing upon the brake, and the power was shut off; the car coasted on slowly. For both could see now that the wooden span was blazing from end to end; it was old wood, swift to burn and going like tinder. There was no possible chance for the car to cross it. The girl brought the machine to a stop fifty feet from the edge of the ravine; the fire was so hot that the gasoline tank would not be safe nearer. She gazed down at the tire-marks on the road.

"They crossed with their machine," she said to Hugh.

"And fired the bridge behind. They must have poured gasoline over it and lighted it at both ends."

She sat with one hand still straining at the driving wheel, the other playing with the gear lever.

"There's no other way across that ravine, I suppose," Hugh questioned her.

"The other road's back more than a mile, and two miles about." She threw in the reverse and started to turn. Hugh shook his head. "That's no use."

"No," she agreed, and stopped the car again. Hugh stepped down of the ground.

The double glare from the headlights of a motor came through the tree-trunks as the car topped and came swiftly down a rise three quarters of a mile away and around the last turn back on the road; another pair of blinding lights followed. There was no doubt that this must be the pursuit from Santolne's house. Eaton stood beside Harriet, who had stayed in the driving-seat of the car.

"I'm going just beside the road here," he said to her, quietly. "I'm armed, of course. If those are your people, you'd better go back with them. I'm sure they are; but I'll wait and see."

She caught his hand. "No; no!" she cried. "You must get as far away as you can before they come! I'm going back to meet and hold them!" She threw the car into the reverse, backed and turned it and brought it again onto the road. He came beside her again, putting out his hand; she seized it. Her hands for an instant clung to it, his to hers.

"You must go—quick!" she urged; "but how am I to know what becomes of you—where you are? Shall I hear from you—shall I ever see you?"

"No news will be good news," he said, "until—"

"Until what?"

"Until—" And again that unknown something which a thousand times—it seemed to her—had checked his word and action toward her made him

wait.

Harriet went into the house and toward her own rooms; a maid met and stopped her on the stairs.

"Mr. Santolne sent word that he wishes to see you as soon as you come in, Miss Santolne."

Harriet went toward her father's room, without stopping at her own—wet with the drive through the damp night and shivering now with its chill. Her father's voice answered her knock with a summons to come in.

"Where have you been, Daughter?" he asked.

"I have been driving with Mr. Eaton in a motor," she said.

"Helping him to escape?" A spasm crossed the blind man's face.

"He said not; he—he was following the men who shot Cousin Wallace."

The blind man lay for an instant still. "Tell me," he commanded finally. She told him, beginning with her discovery of Eaton in the garage and ending with his leaving her and with Donald Avery's finding her in the motor; and now she held back one word only—his name which he had told her. Hugh. Her father listened intently.

"You and Mr. Eaton appear to have become rather well acquainted, Harriet," he said. "Has he told you nothing about himself which you have not told me? You have seen nothing concerning him, which you have not told?"

Her mind went quickly back to the polo game; she felt a flush, which his blind eyes could not see, dyeing her cheeks and forehead.

The blind man waited for a moment; he put out his hand and pressed the bell which called the steward. Neither spoke until the steward came. "Fairley," Santolne said then, quietly, "Miss Santolne and I have just agreed that for the present all reports regarding the pursuit of the men who entered the study last night are to be made direct to me, not through Miss Santolne or Mr. Avery."

"Very well, sir."

She still sat silent after the steward had gone; she thought for an instant her father had forgotten her presence; then he moved slightly.

"That is all, dear," he said quietly. (To be Continued.)

CHAPTER XIX

Waiting.

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Natural Inquiry.

Miss Yvonne, a clever English actress, tells a story of an actress friend of hers whose little four year old daughter one day inquired of her:

"Why do you go to the theatre, mummy?"

"Oh, to get bread and butter," she was told.

Next day the child had tea with the landlady.

"So you've been to the theatre, have you?" she inquired in her knowing little way.

"No. Why?" asked the woman.

"Then how did you get this bread and butter?"

For Sale.—A three piece bed-room suite of bird's eye maple; in very good condition. Inquire at this office.



"Until I Come to You As—As You Have Never Known Me Yet!"



"You're Hurt!" She Touched His Shoulder.

she reassured him. "You're hurt!" She touched his shoulder. "You're hurt! I knew you were!"

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"Hurt Father? No."
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