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**MURINE**  
For Your EYES

# The Blind Man's Eyes

By William MacHarg, Edwin Balmer

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### CHAPTER XIII—Continued.

Eaton was distinctly frightened by the revelation he just had had of Santoine's clear, implacable reasoning regarding him; for none of the blind man's deductions about him had been wrong—all had been the exact, though incomplete truth. It was clear to him that Santoine was close—much closer even than Santoine himself yet appreciated—to knowing Eaton's identity; it was even probable that one single additional fact—the discovery, for instance, that Miss Davis was the source of the second telegram received by Eaton on the train—would reveal everything to Santoine. And Eaton was not certain that Santoine, even without any new information, would not reach the truth unaided at any moment. So Eaton knew that he himself must act before this happened. But so long as the safe in Santoine's study was kept locked or was left open only while someone was in the room with it, he could not act until he had received help from outside; and he had not yet received that help; he could not hurry it or even tell how soon it was likely to come.

As his mind reviewed, almost instantaneously, these considerations, he glanced again at Harriet; her eyes, this time, met his, but she looked away immediately. As he went toward the door, she made no move to accompany him. He went out without speaking and closed the inner and the outer doors behind him; then he went down to Blatchford.

For several minutes after Eaton had left the room, Santoine thought in silence.

"Where are you, Harriet?" he asked at last.

She knew it was not necessary to answer him, but merely to move so that he could tell her position; she moved slightly, and his sightless eyes shifted at once to where she stood.

"How did he act?" Santoine asked. She reviewed swiftly the conversation, supplementing his blind impressions of Eaton's manner with what she herself had seen.

"What have been your impressions of Eaton's previous social condition, Daughter?" he asked. "You have talked with him, been with him—both on the train and here; have you been able to determine what sort of people he has been accustomed to mix with? Have his friends been business men? Professional men? Society people?"

The deep and unaccounted note of trouble in her father's voice startled her, in her familiarity with every tone and every expression. She answered his question: "I don't know, Father."

"I want you to find out."

"In what way?"

"You must find a way. I shall tell Avery to help." He thought for several moments, while she stood waiting. "We must have that motor and the men in it traced, of course. Harriet, there are certain matters—correspondence—which Avery has been looking after for me; do you know what correspondence I mean?"

"Yes, Father."

"I would rather not have Avery bothered with it just now; I want him to give his whole attention to this present inquiry. You yourself will assume charge of the correspondence of which I speak, Daughter."

"Yes, Father. Do you want anything else now?"

"Not of you; send Avery to me."

### CHAPTER XIV

**Donald Avery Is Moody.**

Harriet went down the stairs into the study; she passed through the study into the main part of the house and found Donald and sent him to her father; then she returned to the study. She closed and fastened the doors, and after glancing about the room, she removed the books in front of a wall-safe to the right of the door, slid back the movable panel, opened the safe and took out a bundle of correspondence. She closed safe and panel and put back the books; and carrying the correspondence to her father's desk, she began to look over it.

This correspondence—a considerable bundle of letters held together with wire clips and the two envelopes bound with tape which she had put into the safe the day before—made up the papers of which her father had spoken to her. These letters represented the contentions of willful, violent men. Ruin of one man by another—ruin financial, social or moral, or all three together—was the intention of the principals concerned in this correspondence; too often, she knew, one man or one group had carried out a fierce intent upon another; and sometimes, she was aware, these bitter feuds had carried certain of her father's clients further even than personal or family ruin; fraud, violence and—twice now—even murder were represented by this correspondence; for the papers relating to the Warden and the Latron murders were here. She had felt always the horror of this violent and ruthless side of the men with whom her father dealt; but now she knew that actual appreciation of the crimes that passed as business had been far from her. And

strangely, she now realized that it was not the attacks on Mr. Warden and her father—overwhelming with horror as these had been—which were bringing that appreciation home to her. It was her understanding now that the attack was not meant for her father but for Eaton.

Though Harriet had never believed that Eaton had been concerned in the attack upon her father, her denial of it had been checked and stifled because he would not even defend himself. She had not known what to think; she had seemed to herself to be waiting with her thoughts in abeyance; until he should be cleared, she had tried not to let herself think more about Eaton than was necessary. Though he was involved with her father in some way, she refused to believe he was against her father, but clearly he was not with him. How could he be involved, then, unless the injury he had suffered was some such act of man against man as these let-



She Removed the Books in Front of a Wall Safe to the Right of the Door.

ters and statements represented? She looked carefully through all the contents of the envelopes, but she could not find anything which helped her.

She pushed the letters away, then, and sat thinking. Mr. Warden, who appeared to have known more about Eaton than anyone else, had taken Eaton's side; it was because he had been going to help Eaton that Mr. Warden had been killed. Would not her father be ready to help Eaton, then, if he knew as much about him as Mr. Warden had known? But Mr. Warden, apparently, had kept what he knew even from his own wife; and Eaton was now keeping it from everyone—her father included. She felt that her father had understood and appreciated all this long before herself—that it was the reason for his attitude toward Eaton on the train and, in part, the cause of his considerate treatment of him all through.

So, instead of being estranged by Eaton's manner to her father, she felt an impulse of feeling toward him flooding her, a feeling which she tried to explain to herself as sympathy. But it was not just sympathy; she would not say even to herself what it was.

She got up suddenly and went to the door and looked into the hall; a servant came to her.

"Is Mr. Avery still with Mr. Santoine?" she asked.

"No, Miss Santoine; he has gone out."

"Thank you."

She went back, and bundling the correspondence together as it had been before, she removed the books from a shelf to the left of the door, slid back another panel and revealed a second wall-safe corresponding to the one to the right of the door from which she had taken the papers. The combination of this second safe was known only to her father and herself. She put the envelopes into it, closed it, and replaced the books. Then she went to her father's desk, took from a drawer a long typewritten report of which he had asked her to prepare a digest, and read it through; consciously concentrating, she began her work.

At three she heard Avery's motor, and went to the study door and looked out as he entered the hall.

"What have you found, Don?" she inquired.

"Nothing yet, Harry."

"You got no trace of them?"

"No; too many motors pass on that road for the car to be recalled particularly. I've started what inquiries are possible and arranged to have the road watched in case they come back this way."

He went past her and up to her father. She returned to the study and put away her work.

Dinner was served in the great Jacobean dining room, with walls paneled to the high ceiling, logs blazing in the big stone fireplace. As they seated themselves, she noted that Avery seemed moody and uncommunicative; something, clearly, had irritated and disturbed him; and as the meal progressed, he vented his irritation upon Eaton by affronting him

more openly by word and look than he had ever done before in her presence. She was the more surprised at his doing this now, because she knew that Donald must have received from her father the same instructions as had been given herself to learn whatever was possible of Eaton's former position in life.

Before Eaton's entrance into her life she had supposed that some time, as a matter of course, she was going to marry Donald. In spite of this, she had never thought of herself as apart from her father; when she thought of marrying, it had been always with the idea that her duty to her husband must be secondary to that to her father; she knew now that she had accepted Donald Avery not because he had become necessary to her but because he had seemed essential to her father and her marrying Donald would permit her life to go on much as it was.

Donald had social position and a certain amount of wealth and power; now suddenly she was feeling that he had nothing but these things, that his own unconscious admission was that to be worth while he must have them, that to retain and increase them was his only object in life. She had the feeling that these were the only things he would fight for; but that for these he would fight—fairly, perhaps, if he could—but, if he must, unfairly, despicably.

She had finished dinner, but she hesitated to rise and leave the men alone; after-dinner cigars and the fiction of the masculine conversation about the table were insisted on by Blatchford. As she delayed, looking across the table at Eaton, his eyes met hers; reassured, she rose at once; the three rose with her and stood while she went out. She went upstairs and looked in upon her father; he wanted nothing, and after a conversation with him as short as she could make it, she came down again.

No further disagreement between the two men, apparently, had happened after she left the table. Avery now was not visible. Eaton and Blatchford were in the music-room. With a repugnance against her father's orders which she had never felt before, she began to carry out the instructions her father had given her.

She noticed that Eaton was familiar with almost everything she had liked which had been written or was current up to five years before; all later music was strange to him. To this extent he had been of her world, plainly, up to five years before; then he had gone out of it.

She realized this only as something which she was to report to her father; yet she felt a keener, more personal interest in it than that. Harriet Santoine knew enough of the world to know that few men break completely all social connections without some link of either fact or memory still holding them, and that this link most often is a woman.

Toward ten o'clock Eaton excused himself and went to his rooms. She sat for a time, idly talking with Blatchford; then, as a servant passed through the hall and she mistook momentarily his footsteps for those of Avery, she got up suddenly and went upstairs. It was only after reaching her rooms that she appreciated that the meaning of this action was that she shrink from seeing Avery again that night. But she had been in her rooms only a few minutes when her

### CHAPTER XV

"You don't mind my calling you down, Harry; it is so long since we had even a few minutes alone together," he pleaded.

"What is it you want, Don?" she asked.

"Only to see you, dear—Harry." He took her hand again; she resisted and withdrew it. "I can't do any more work tonight, Harry. I find the correspondence I expected to go over this evening isn't here; your father has it, I suppose."

"No; I have it, Don."

"You?"

"Yes; Father didn't want you bothered by that work just now. Didn't he tell you?"

"He told me that, of course, Harry, and that he had asked you to relieve me as much as you could; he didn't say he had told you to take charge of the papers. Did he do that?"

"I thought that was implied. If you need them, I'll get them for you, Don. Do you want them?"

She got up and went toward the safe where she had put them; suddenly she stopped. What it was that she had felt under his tone and manner, she could not tell; it was probably only irritation at having important work taken out of his hands. But whatever it was, he was not openly expressing it—he was even being careful that it should not be expressed. And now suddenly, as he followed and came close behind her and her mind went swiftly to her father lying helpless upstairs, and her father's trust in her, she halted.

"We must ask Father," she said.

"Ask him!" he ejaculated. "Why?"

She faced him uncertainly, not answering.

"That's rather ridiculous, Harry, especially as it is too late to ask him tonight." His voice was suddenly rough in his irritation. "I have had charge of those very things for years; they concern the matters in which your father particularly confides in me. It is impossible that he meant you to take them out of my hands like this. He must have meant only that you were to give me what help you could with them! Harry, don't you see that you are putting me in a false position—wronging me? You are acting as though you did not trust me!"

"I do trust you, Don; at least I have no reason to distrust you. I only say we must ask Father."

"They're in your little safe?"

She nodded. "Yes."

"And you'll not give them to me?"

"No."

He stared angrily; then he shrugged and laughed and went back to his desk and began gathering up his scattered papers. She stood indecisively watching him. Suddenly he looked up, and she saw that he had quite conquered his irritation, or at least had concealed it; his concern now seemed to be only over his relations with herself.

"We've not quarreled, Harry?" he asked.

"Quarreled? Not at all, Don," she replied.

She moved toward the door; he followed and let her out, and she went back to her own rooms.

### Santoin's "Eyes" Fall Him.

Eaton, coming down rather late the next morning, found the breakfast room empty. He chose his breakfast from the dishes on the sideboard, and while the servant set them before him and waited on him, he inquired after the members of the household. Miss Santoine, the servant said, had breakfasted some time before and was now with her father; Mr. Avery also had breakfasted; Mr. Blatchford was not yet down. As Eaton lingered over his breakfast, Miss Davis passed through the hall, accompanied by a maid. The maid admitted her into the study and closed the door; afterward, the maid remained in the hall busy with some morning duty, and her presence and that of the servant in the breakfast room made it impossible for Eaton to attempt to go to the study or to risk speaking to Miss Davis. A few minutes later, he heard Harriet Santoine descending the stairs; rising, he went out into the hall to meet her.

"I don't ask you to commit yourself for longer than today, Miss Santoine," he said, when they had exchanged greetings, "but—for today—what are the limits of my leash?"

"Mr. Avery is going to the country club for lunch; I believe he intends to ask you if you care to go with him."

She turned away and went into the study, closing the door behind her. Eaton, although he had finished his breakfast, went back into the breakfast room. He did not know whether he would refuse or accept Avery's invitation; suddenly he decided. After waiting for some five minutes there over a second cup of coffee, he got up and crossed to the study.

"I beg pardon, Miss Santoine," he explained his interruption, "but you did not tell me what time Mr. Avery is likely to want me to be ready to go to the country club."

"About half-past twelve, I think."

"And what time shall we be coming back?"

"Probably about five."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)



"Will You Come Down for a Few Minutes, Please, Harry?"

house telephone buzzed, and answering it, she found that it was Donald speaking to her.

"Will you come down for a few minutes, please, Harry?"

Some strangeness in his tone perplexed her.

"Where are you?" she asked.

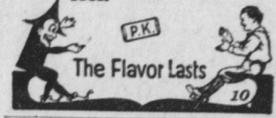
"In the study."

She went down at once. As he came to the study door to meet her, she saw that what had perplexed her in his tone was apparently only the remnant of that irritation he had showed at dinner. He took her hand and drew her into the study.

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Virtue is its own reward if it can corner some necessity. Adam had his foibles, but he never told anecdotes of his boyhood days.

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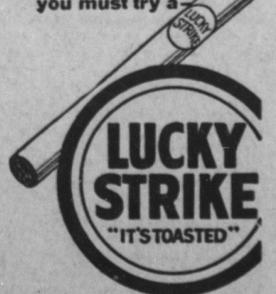
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