



One of the boats ordered by the Department of Railways and Canals, and now being sent north to take soundings at Port Nelson, one of the much-talked-of terminals for the Hudson's Bay Railway. The boat is here seen at Buffalo ready for shipment to Halifax.

THE BLIND MAN'S EYES

BY WILLIAM McHARG AND EDWIN BALMER

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CHAPTER X.

The Blind Man's Eyes.

HALF an hour later, Connery unlocked the door of Eaton's compartment, entered and closed the door behind him. He had brought in Eaton's travelling bag and put it down.

"You understand," said the conductor, "that when a train is stalled like this it is considered as if under way. So I have local police power, and I haven't exceeded my rights in putting you under arrest."

"I don't recall that I have questioned your rights," Eaton answered shortly.

"I thought you might question it now. I'm going to search you. Are you going to make trouble or needn't I send for help?"

"I'll help you," Eaton took off his coat and vest and handed them over. The conductor put them on a seat while he felt over his prisoner for weapons or other concealed objects. Eaton handed him a pocket-knife, and the key to his travelling-bag—he had no other keys—from his trousers pockets. The conductor discovered nothing else. He found a pencil—but no papers or memorandum book—a plain gold watch, unengraved, and a bill-fold containing seven hundred dollars in United States bank-notes in the vest. Connery wrote out a receipt for the money and handed it to his prisoner. He returned the other articles. In the coat, the conductor found a handkerchief and in another pocket the torn scraps of the telegram delivered to Eaton in his berth.

"That's the one we had the fuss over in the dining car," Eaton volunteered, as the conductor began fitting the scraps together.

"You forgot to completely destroy it, eh?"

"What was the use?" Eaton took up the other's point of view. "You had a copy anyway."

"You might have wanted to get rid of it since the discovery of the murder."

"Murder?"

"I guess it's the same thing." The conductor dropped the scraps into an envelope and put it in his pocket. He examined the coat for a tailor's name.

"That coat was copied by a Chinaman in Amoy from the coat I had before. Before the new one was made, I took out the name of the other tailor so it wouldn't be copied, too,"

Eaton remarked in explanation of the lack of any mark. Connery handed back the coat, went out and locked the door behind him.

Eaton opened his travelling bag and checked over the contents. He could tell that everything in it had been again carefully examined, but nothing more had been taken except the small Chinese-English dictionary; that was now gone. There had been nothing in the bag to betray any other identity than the one he had given. Eaton put the bag away and went back to his seat by the window.

The clear, bright day was drawing toward its dusk; there had been no movement or attempt to move the train all day. About six o'clock, as people began passing forward to the diner, Connery appeared again with a waiter from the dining car bearing a tray with dinner.

"This is 'on' the Department of Justice, Conductor?" Eaton tried to ask lightly.

"The check is a dollar twenty. If you want this, I'll charge it against your money which I have."

"Make it a dollar, forty-five then," Eaton directed. "Remember the waiter."

The black boy grinned and spread the table.

"How is Mr. —" Eaton began.

"Dorne?" Connery put in sharply.

"Thanks," said Eaton. "I understand. How is he?"

Connery did not answer, and with the waiter left him, locking him in again. At ten, Connery came once more with the porter of the car, and the conductor stood by silently while the porter made up the berth. Eaton went to bed with the car absolutely still, with only the wall of snow outside his window and no evidence of any one about but a subdued step occasionally passing the door. Though he had had nothing to do all the long, lonely hours of the evening but to think, Eaton lay awake thinking. He understood definitely now that whatever action was to be taken following his admission of his presence at Warden's, a charge of murder or of assault to kill—dependent upon whether Santoine died or seemed likely to recover—would be made against him at the first city they reached after the train had started again. He would be turned over to the police; inquiry would be made; then—he shrank from going further with these thoughts.

The night again was very cold; it

was clear, with stars shining; toward midnight wind came; but little snow drifted now, for the cold had frozen a crust. In the morning, from somewhere over the snow-covered country, a man and a boy appeared at the top of the shining bank beside the train. They walked beside the sleepers to the dining car, where, apparently, they disposed of whatever they had brought in the bags they carried; they came back along the cars and then disappeared.

As he watched them, Eaton felt the desperate impulse to escape through the window and follow them; but he knew he surely would be seen; and even if he could get away unobserved, he would freeze; his overcoat and hat had been kept by Connery. The conductor came after a time and let in the porter, who unmade the berth and carried away the linen; and later, Connery came again with the waiter bringing breakfast. He had brought a magazine, which he dropped upon the seat beside Eaton; and he stood by until Eaton had breakfasted and the dishes were carried away.

"Want to talk yet?" he asked.

"No."

"Is there anything else you want?" he asked.

"I'd like to see Miss Santoine."

Connery turned away.

"You will tell Miss Santoine I have something I want to say to her?" Eaton asked more definitely.

Connery turned back. "If you've anything to say, tell it to me," he bade curtly.

"It will do no good to tell it to you. Will you tell her what I asked?"

"No," said Connery.

AT noon, when they brought Eaton's luncheon, he repeated his request and was again refused; but less than an hour afterward Connery came to his door again, and behind Connery, Eaton saw Harriet Santoine and Avery. Eaton jumped up, and as he saw the girl's pale face, the color left his own.

"Miss Santoine has asked to speak to you," Connery announced; and he admitted Harriet Santoine and Avery, and himself remaining outside in the aisle, closed the door upon them.

"How is your father?" Eaton asked the girl.

"He seems just the same; at least, I can't see any change, Mr. Eaton." She said something in a low tone to Avery, who nodded; then she sat down opposite Eaton, and Avery seated him-

self on the arm of the seat beside her. "Can Dr. Sinclair see any difference?" Eaton asked.

"Dr. Sinclair will not commit himself except to say that so far as he can tell the indications are favorable. He seems to think—" The girl choked; but when she went on, her blue eyes were very bright and her lips did not tremble. "Dr. Sinclair seems to think, Mr. Eaton, that Father was found just in time, and that whatever chance he has for recovery came from you. Mr. Avery and I had passed by the berth; other people had gone by. Sometimes Father had insomnia and wouldn't get to sleep till late in the morning; so I—and Mr. Avery too—would have left him undisturbed until noon. Dr. Sinclair says that if he had been left as long as that, he would have had no chance at all for life."

"He has a chance, then, now?"

"Yes; but we don't know how much. The change Dr. Sinclair is expecting may be either for better or worse. I—I wanted you to know, Mr. Eaton, that I recognize—that the chance Father may have come through you, and that I am trying to think of you as the one who gave him the chance."

THE warm blood flooded Eaton's face, and he bowed his head. She, then, was not wholly hostile to him; she had not been completely convinced by Avery.

"What was it you wanted to tell Miss Santoine?" Avery challenged.

"What did Miss Santoine want to tell me?"

"What she has just told you."

Eaton thought for a moment. The realization that had come to him just now that something had kept the girl from condemning him as Avery and Connery had condemned him, and that somehow, for some reason, she must have been fighting within herself to-day and last night against the proof of his guilt, flushed him with gratitude and changed the attitude he had thought it was going to be necessary for him to take in this talk with her. As he looked up, her eyes met his; then she looked quickly away. Avery moved impatiently and repeated his question:

"What was it you wanted to say?"

"Are they looking for any one, Miss Santoine—any one besides me in connection with the attack upon your father?"

She glanced at Avery and did not answer. Avery's eyes narrowed. "We are quite satisfied with what we have been doing," he answered.

"Then they are not looking, Miss Santoine!"

Her lips pressed together, and again it was Avery who answered. "We have not said so."

"I must assume it, then," Eaton said to the girl without regarding Avery. "I have been watching as well as I could since they shut me up here, and I have listened, but I haven't found any evidence that anything more is being done. So I'm obliged to assume that nothing is being done. The few people who know about the attack on your father are so convinced and satisfied that I am the one who did it that they aren't looking any further. Among the people moving about on the train, the—the man who made the attack is being allowed to move about; he could even leave the train, if he could do so without being seen and was willing to take his chance in the snow; and when the train goes on, he certainly will leave it!"

Harriet Santoine turned questioning-ly to Avery again.

"I am not asking anything of you, you see," Eaton urged. "I'm not asking you to let me go or to give me any—any increase of liberty which might make it possible for me to escape. I—I'm only warning you that Mr. Avery and the conductor are making a mistake; and you don't have to have any faith in me or any belief that I'm telling the truth when I say that I didn't do it! I'm only warning you, Miss Santoine, that you mustn't let them stop looking! Why, if I had done it, I might very likely have had an accomplice whom they are going to let escape. It's only common sense, you see."

"That is what you wanted to say?" Avery asked.

"That is it," Eaton answered.