

THE BLIND MAN'S EYES

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CAN YOU GUESS EATON'S IDENTITY?

GABRIEL WARDEN, Seattle capitalist, is murdered while on his way to "right a great wrong" done a nameless young man. Warden, you must remember, was a contemporary of the famous Latron of "the Latron properties," who was murdered five years earlier.

Speculation is still rife, and the mysterious young man is still being sought, in the hope that his "wrongs" may show up the real murderer, when Conductor Connery of the famous Seattle-Chicago train, is notified by the road's president to hold the train one hour before starting, and to place himself at the utter disposal of whoever presents to him a certain card. He notes that five people board the train after its usual starting time. They turn out to be the famous blind lawyer-financier-magnate Basil Santoine, his secretary Avery, his daughter Harriet, a plump business man and young Eaton. Various incidents lead him to associate Eaton with the descriptions of the "wronged" young man.

The great train is snow-bound. In the re-arrangement of sleeping cars Basil Santoine's berth comes to occupy the same relative position in the train as young Eaton's. Santoine is discovered almost dead in his berth. Eaton is suspected and persists in refusing to tell who he is, or whence he comes, or who his friends are. Various incidents tend to make Eaton appear to be guilty. Avery, Santoine's secretary, seems eager to blame Eaton. Miss Santoine is compelled to stand by and see him locked up in the snow-bound train. To all questions Eaton gives a refusal.

Santoine, operated on on the train, recovers. Through his daughter he questions Eaton sharply. The train arrives in Chicago. Eaton is gently but firmly made a sort of guest-prisoner of Santoine's and taken to the great blind man's estate. Here he meets "Cousin Wallace," devoted to Santoine, also Miss Mildred Davis, an occasional stenographer for Avery. He and she form a league to get certain papers concealed in Santoine's library.

While out walking with Miss Harriet Santoine, Eaton is deliberately run down by a passing motor party of men. Eaton insists it was an accident. Miss Santoine believes otherwise and declares she recognized one of the occupants of the motor as the plump business man who seemed to be interested in Eaton on the train.

CHAPTER XIV.—(Continued.)

EATON stood an instant longer, studying Santoine, trying fruitlessly to make out what was passing in the blind man's mind. He was distinctly frightened by the revelation he had just 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 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 some one 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. He had seen Miss Davis several times as she passed through the halls going or coming for her work with Avery; but Blatchford had always been with him, and he had been unable to speak with her or to receive any signal from her.

AS his mind reviewed, almost instantaneously, these considerations, he glanced again at Harriet; her eyes, this time, met his, but she looked away immediately. He could not tell what effect Santoine's revelations had had on her, except that she seemed to be in complete accord with her father. 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. Harriet stayed motionless, watching him; the extent to which he had been shaken and disturbed by the series of events which had started with Warden's murder, came home strongly to her now that she saw him alone and now that his talk with her had shown partly what was in his mind.

"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 appreciations of Eaton's manner with what she herself had seen.

"What have been your impressions of Eaton's previous social condition, Daughter?" he asked.

She hesitated; she knew that her father would not permit the vague generality that Eaton was "a gentleman." "Exactly what do you mean, Father?"

"I don't mean, certainly, to ask whether he knows which fork to use at table or enough to keep his napkin on his knee; but 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 unconcealed 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."

She moved toward the door which led to the circular stair. Her father, she knew, seldom spoke all that was in his mind to any one, even herself; she was accustomed, therefore, to looking for meanings underneath the directions which he gave her, and his present order—that she should take charge of a part of their work which ordinarily had been looked after by

Avery—startled and surprised her by its implication that her father might not trust Avery fully. But now, as she halted and looked back at him from the door and saw his troubled face and his fingers nervously pressing together, she recognized that it was not any definite distrust of Avery that had moved him, but only his deeper trust in herself. Blind and obliged to rely on others always in respect of sight, and now still more obliged to rely upon them because he was confined helpless to his bed, Santoine had felt ever since the attack on him some unknown menace over himself and his affairs, some hidden agency threatening him and, through him, the men who trusted him. So, with instinctive caution, she saw now, he had been withdrawing more and more his reliance upon those less closely bound to him—even Avery—and depending more and more on the one he felt he could implicitly trust—herself. As realization of this came to her, she was stirred deeply by the impulse to rush back to him and throw herself down beside him and assure him of her love and fealty; but seeing him again deep in thought, she controlled herself and went out.

CHAPTER XV.

Donald Avery is Moody.

HARRIET went down the stair 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 the 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 wilful, powerful and sometimes ruthless and 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. There were in this connection the documents concerning the Warden and the Latron properties which her father had brought back with him from the Coast; there were letters, now more than five years old, which concerned the Government's promised prosecution of Latron; and, lastly, there were the two envelopes which had just been sent to her father concerning the present organization of the Latron properties.

She glanced through these and the others with them. 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. For when she had believed that some

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