

The BLIND MAN'S EYES

BY
WILLIAM MACHARG AND EDWIN BALMER

Illustrations by R.H. Livingstone

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SYNOPSIS

CHAPTER I—Gabriel Warden, Seattle capitalist, tells his boiler 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 Connelly, 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.

(Continued from last week.)

Dorne tumbled in his inner pocket and brought out a card-case, which he opened, and produced a card. Connelly, glancing at the card while the other still held it, saw that it was President Jarvis' visiting card, with the president's name in engraved block letters; across its top was written briefly in Jarvis' familiar hand, "This is the passenger"; and below it was signed with the same scrawl of initials which had been on the note Connelly had received that morning—"H. R. J."

Connelly's hand shook as, while trying to recover himself, he took the card and looked at it more closely, and he felt within him the sinking sensation which follows an escape from danger. He saw that his too ready and too assured assumption that Eaton was the man to whom Jarvis' note had referred, had almost led him into the sort of mistake which is unpardonable in a "trusted" man; he had come within an ace, he realized, of speaking to Eaton and so betraying the presence on the train of a traveler whose journey his superiors were trying to keep secret.

"You need, of course, hold the train no longer," Dorne said to Connelly.

"Yes, sir; I received word from Mr. Jarvis about you, Mr. Dorne. I shall follow his instructions fully." As he went forward again after the train was under way, Connelly tried to recollect how it was that he had been led into such a mistake, and defending himself, he laid it all to old Sammy. But old Sammy was not often mistaken in his identifications. If Eaton was not the person for whom the train was held, might he be someone else of importance? Now as he studied Eaton, he could not imagine what had made him accept this passenger as a person of great position. It was only when he passed Eaton a third time, half an hour later, when the train had long left Seattle, that the half-shaped hazards and guesses about the passenger suddenly sprang into form. Allowing for a change of clothes and a different way of brushing his hair, Eaton was exactly the man whom Warden had entrusted

his house and who had come there and waited while Warden, away in his car, was killed.

Connelly was walking back through the train, absent-minded in trying to decide whether he could be at all sure of this; and trying to decide what he should do if he felt sure, when Mr. Dorne stopped him.

"Conductor, do you happen to know," he questioned, "who the young man is who took Section Three in the car forward?"

Connelly gasped; but the question put to him the impossibility of his being sure of any recognition from the description. "He gave his name on his ticket as Philip D. Eaton, sir," Connelly replied.

"Is that all you know about him?"

"Yes, sir."

"If you find out anything about him, let me know," Dorne bade.

"Yes, sir," Connelly determined to let nothing interfere with learning more of Eaton; Dorne's request only gave him added responsibility.

Dorne, however, was not depending upon Connelly alone for further information. As soon as the conductor had gone, he turned back to his daughter and Avery upon the seat opposite.

"Avery," he said in a tone of direction, "I wish you to get in conversation with this Philip Eaton. It will probably be useful if you let Harriet talk with him too. She would get impressions helpful to me which you can't."

The girl started with surprise but recovered at once. "Yes, Father," she said.

"What, sir?" Avery ventured to protest.

CHAPTER III

Miss Dorne Meets Eaton.

Dorne motioned Avery to the aisle, where already some of the passengers, having settled their belongings in their sections, were beginning to wander through the cars seeking acquaintances or players to make up a card game. Eaton took from a bag a handful of cigars with which he filled a plain, uninitialed cigar case, and went toward the club and observation car in the rear. As he passed through the sleeper next to him—the last one—Harriet Dorne glanced up at him and spoke to her father; Dorne nodded but did not look up.

The observation room was nearly empty. The only occupants were a young woman who was reading a magazine, and an elderly man. Eaton chose a seat as far from these two as possible.

He had been there only a few minutes, however, when, looking up, he saw Harriet Dorne and Avery enter the room. They passed him, engaged in conversation, and stood by the rear door looking out into the storm. It was evident to Eaton, although he did

not watch them, that they were arguing something; the girl seemed insistent, Avery irritated and unwilling. Her manner showed that she won her point finally. She seated herself in one of the chairs, and Avery left her. He wandered, as if aimlessly, to the reading table, turning over the magazines there; abandoning them, he gazed about as if bored; then, with a wholly casual manner, he came toward Eaton and took the seat beside him.

"Totten weather, isn't it?" Avery observed somewhat ungraciously.

Eaton could not well avoid a reply. "It's been getting worse," he commented, "ever since we left Seattle."

"We're running into it, apparently." Again Avery looked toward Eaton and waited.

"Yes—lucky if we get through."

The conversation on Avery's part was patently forced; and it was equally forced on Eaton's; nevertheless it continued. Avery introduced the war and other subjects upon which men, thrown together for a time, are accustomed to exchange opinions. But Avery did not do it easily or naturally; he plainly was of the caste whose pose it is to repel, not seek, overtures toward a chance acquaintance. His lack of practice was perfectly obvious when at last he asked directly: "Beg pardon, but I don't think I know your name."

Eaton was obliged to give it. "Mine's Avery," the other offered; "perhaps you heard it when we were getting our berths assigned."

And again the conversation, enjoyed by neither of them, went on. Finally the girl at the end of the car rose and passed them, as though leaving the car. Avery looked up.

"Where are you going, Harry?"

"I think someone ought to be with Father."

"I'll go in just a minute." She had halted almost in front of them. Avery, hesitating as though he did not know what he ought to do, firmly arose; and as Eaton observed



She Had Halted Almost in Front of Them.

that Avery, having introduced himself, appeared now to consider it his duty to present Eaton to Harriet Dorne, Eaton also arose. Avery murmured the names, Harriet Dorne, resting her hand on the back of Avery's chair, joined in the conversation. As he replied easily and interestedly to a comment of Eaton's, Avery suddenly reminded her of her father. After a minute, when Avery—still ungracious and still irritated over something which Eaton could not guess—rather abruptly left them, she took Avery's seat; and Eaton dropped into his chair beside her.

Now, this whole proceeding—though within the convention which, forbidding a girl to make a man's acquaintance directly, says nothing against her making it through the medium of another man—had been so unnaturally done that Eaton understood that Harriet Dorne deliberately had arranged to make his acquaintance, and that Avery, angry and objecting, had been overruled.

She seemed to Eaton less alertly boyish now than she had looked an hour before when they had boarded the train. Her cheeks were smoothly rounded, her lips rather full, her lashes very long. He could not look up without looking directly at her, for her chair, which had not been moved since Avery left it, was at an angle with his own.

To avoid the appearance of studying her too openly, he turned slightly, so that his gaze went past her to the white turndown outside the windows.

"It's wonderful," she said, "isn't it?" "You mean the storm?" A twinkle of amusement came to Eaton's eyes. "It would be more interesting if it allowed a little more to be seen. At present there is nothing visible but snow."

"Is that the only way it affects you? An artist would think of it as a background for contrasts—a thing to sketch or paint; a writer as something to be written down in words." Eaton understood. She could not more plainly have asked him what he was.

"And an engineer, I suppose," he said, easily, "would think of it only as an element to be included in his formulas—an x, or an a, or a b, to be put in somewhere and square-rooted or squared so that the root-truss he was figuring should not buckle under its weight."

"Oh—so that is the way you were thinking of it?" "You mean," Eaton challenged her directly, "am I an engineer?" "Are you?"

"Oh, no; I was only talking in pure generalities, just as you were."

"Let us go on, then," she said gayly. "I see I can't conceal from you that I am doing you the honor to wonder what you are. A lawyer would think of it in the light of damage it might create and the subsequent possibilities of litigation." She made a little pause.

"A business man would take it into account, as he has to take into account all things in nature or human; it would delay transportation, or harm or aid the winter wheat."

"Or stop competition somewhere," he observed, more interested.

The flash of satisfaction which came to her face and as quickly was checked and faded showed him she thought she was on the right track.

"Business," she said, still lightly, "will—how is it the newspapers put it?—will marshal its cohorts; it will send out its generals in command of brigades of snowplows, its colonels in command of regiments of snow shovellers and its spies to discover and to bring back word of the effect upon the crops."

"You talk," he said, "as if business were a war."

"Isn't it like war, but war in higher terms?"

"In higher terms?" he questioned, attempting to make his tone like hers, but a sudden bitterness now was betrayed by it. "Or in lower?"

"Why, in higher," she declared, "demanding greater courage, greater devotion, greater determination, greater self-sacrifice. Recruiting officers can pick any man off the streets and make a good soldier of him, but no one



Eaton Went Into the Men's Compartment of His Car, Where He Sat Smoking Till After the Train Was Under Way Again.

could be so sure of finding a satisfactory employee in that way. Doesn't that show that daily life, the everyday-business of earning a living and bearing one's share in the workaday world, demands greater qualities than war?"

Her face had flushed eagerly as she spoke; a darker, livid flush answered her words on his.

"But the opportunities for evil are greater, too," he asserted almost fiercely. "How many of those men you speak of on the streets have been liberated, mercilessly, even savagely sacrificed to some business expediency, their future destroyed, their hope killed?" Some storm of passion, whose meaning she could not divine, was sweeping him.

"You mean," she asked after an instant's silence, "that you, Mr. Eaton, have been sacrificed in such a way?" "I am still talking in generalities," he denied ineffectively.

He saw that she sensed the untruthfulness of these last words. Her smooth young forehead and her eyes were shadowy with thought. Eaton was uneasily silent. Finally Harriet Dorne seemed to have made her decision.

"I think you should meet my father, Mr. Eaton," she said. "Would you like to?"

He did not reply at once. He knew that his delay was causing her to study him now with great surprise.

"I would like to meet him, yes," he said, "but"—he hesitated, tried to avoid answer without offending her, but already he had affronted her—"but not now, Miss Dorne."

She stared at him, rebuffed and chilled. "You mean—" The sentence, obviously, was one she felt it better not to finish. As though he recognized that now she must wish the conversation to end, he got up. She rose stiffly.

"I'll see you into your car, if you're returning there," he offered.

Neither spoke, as he went with her into the next car; and at the section where her father sat, Eaton bowed silently, nodded to Avery, who coldly returned his nod, and left her. Eaton went on into his own car and sat down, his thoughts in mad confusion.

How near he had come to talking to this girl about himself, even though he had felt from the first that that was what she was trying to make him do! Was he losing his common sense? Was the self-command on which he had so counted that he had dared to take this train deserting him? He felt that he must not see Harriet Dorne again alone. In Avery he had recognized, by that instinct which so strangely divines the personalities one meets, an enemy from the start; Dorne's attitude toward him, of course, was not yet defined; as for Harriet Dorne—he could not tell whether she was prepared to be his enemy or friend.



"Give Me a Three, if You Have One," He Requested of the Pullman Conductor.

Eaton went into the men's compartment of his car, where he sat smoking till after the train was under way again. The porter looked in upon him there to ask if he wished his berth made up now; Eaton nodded assent, and fifteen minutes later, dropping the cold end of his cigar and going out into the car, he found the berth ready for him. A half hour later the passage of someone through the aisle and the sudden dimming of the crack of light which showed above the curtains told him that the lights in the car had been turned down. Eaton closed his eyes, but sleep was far from him.

CITATION

In the circuit court of the state of Oregon for Multnomah county, department of probate.

In the matter of the guardianship of Catherine L. Overbeck and Richard H. Overbeck, minors.

Order to Show Cause

This cause coming on to be heard on the petition of Helen R. Overbeck, guardian of the estates of Catherine L. Overbeck and Richard H. Overbeck, minors, for a license and order permitting her to sell certain real property of the estates of said wards, and it appearing to the court that it is necessary and will be beneficial to the said wards and to their estates that the following described parcel of real property of the estates of said wards should be sold by said guardian, to-wit:

An undivided one-half of the following described tract in Clatsop county in the state of Oregon, to-wit: The south half of the northeast quarter and the southeast quarter of the northwest quarter and the northeast quarter of the southeast quarter of section twenty-four (24) in township four (4), north of range seven (7), west of the Willamette meridian. It is therefore ordered, That the next of kin of said wards and all persons interested in the estates of said wards shall appear before the above entitled court at the courtroom thereof in the city of Portland, Multnomah county, state of Oregon, on Thursday, February 8, 1923, at the hour of 9:30 o'clock in the forenoon of said day and show cause, if any there be, why a license should not be granted for the sale by said guardian of the above described real property of the estates of said wards.

It is further ordered, That a copy of this order be published for three successive weeks prior to said February 8, 1923, in The Catholic Sentinel, a newspaper of general circulation in Multnomah county, Oregon.

Dated this 9th day of January, 1923. GEORGE TAZWELL, Judge of the above entitled court. Date of first publication, January 11, 1923. Date of last publication, February 1, 1923.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the circuit court of the State of Oregon for the County of Multnomah probate department.

In the matter of the estate of Katherine MacDonald, deceased.

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned has been appointed administratrix of the estate of Katherine MacDonald, deceased, by the circuit court of the State of Oregon for Multnomah county, and has qualified. All persons having claims against said estate are hereby notified to present the same, duly verified as by law required, to the undersigned at suite 430 Worcester building, Portland, Or., within six months from the date hereof.

Dated and first published January 4, 1923. Last publication, February 1, 1923. CARLOTTA O'CONNOR, Administratrix.

P. J. BANNON, Attorney.

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