

THIS HAS HAPPENED

Nan Carroll, private secretary to John Curtis Morgan, attorney, is in love with her employer. Morgan, however, is deeply in love with his beautiful wife, Iris. Nan decides to resign, but lingers when she hears Morgan is to defend a supposed friend, Bert Crawford.

RIVAL WIVES

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by Anne Austin Author of The Black Pigeons

from the office with a huge florist's box under his arm. Along the mass of long-stemmed yellow roses she had found the lone gardenia, had adjusted it later in the buttonhole of his dinner coat with trembling fingers, while he smiled down upon her—his eyes almost as shy as her own. Oh, he was trying to "play up," trying so hard to make her feel like other brides.

Estelle and Mrs. O'Brien had gone into raptures over her new evening dress of ivory taffeta, the long "period costume" skirt embroidered with a deep border of golden poppies.

Quite as a matter of course John Curtis Morgan led the way into the drawing room. Curtis dragging at his hand and chattering blithely, Nan forced her reluctant feet to follow them into the room dominated by Iris Morgan's beautiful, almost life-size portrait. She had not long to wonder what the reverend feeling that she had at last touched bottom, after plunging through countless fathoms of despair.

Before her husband had time to answer, Nan's clear, friendly little laugh rang out. "I know what I think, young Curtis, my lad!" she cried, her voice convincingly soft and firm. "I think it's time for you to go to bed or you'll get a black mark on your health chart tomorrow!"

It was a potent threat. The child released his father's hand and came toward his new mother, obediently, his eyes fixed upon the portrait of the wife who had deserted him.

Nan was about to turn and flee, unable to endure more, when her husband caught the faint rustle of her taffeta skirt. He was instantly upon his feet, a smile of welcome routing the brooding melancholy from his distinguished, austere face.

"If he says, 'Alone—at last! I'll scream,' Nan said to herself as she waited for him to reach her. "For we aren't alone! We'll never be alone as long as she sits there, mocking us, smiling, gloating because she knows he'll always be hers!"

When Nan returned to the drawing room ten minutes later, the feel of Curtis' kisses still upon her lips she found her husband half-sitting, half-lying in his own particular armchair beside the fireplace, his head thrown back, his narrow face pale as the portrait of the wife who had deserted him.

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"Glad you're here, Nan?" he asked at last, huskily. "Yes," she could not manage more just then, with her whole body trembling to his touch.

His arm lightened about her shoulders. "I'm happier than I've been for a long time, Nan dear. It hasn't been a very orthodox wedding day, has it?" he added regretfully. "But—the worst is over, I think. Curtis—. . . of course you know he adores you," he blundered on, his voice thick with embarrassment.

"No," Nan said simply, but her voice sounded cold, oh, why didn't he kiss her? She had waited so long. Nothing would matter, nothing could hurt very deeply, if he loved her, even a little.

"I—it's rotten luck that we had to postpone our trip," her husband went on, haltingly. "Poor little Nan! Precious little Nan!" and he laid his cheek against her shining brown hair, his arm crushing her shoulders with sudden vehemence.

and Nan's heart plunged. "I'm afraid I've grown rather fond of the little guest room, as we still call it. If you'll permit me to share your bath—you're taking the big guest room, Curtis tells me—I'll promise always to leave it spick and span for you."

Above the roaring of blood in her ears Nan heard Estelle's voice, as if from a great distance: "A telephone call for you, Mr. Morgan. A lady. She says her name is Mrs. Nina Blackhull."

John Curtis Morgan exclaimed incredulously: "I wonder if this means that she's on her stepson's side. Will you excuse me, Nan?"

Nan sat motionless on the little sofa, waiting. She had the curious feeling that she had at last touched bottom, after plunging through countless fathoms of despair.

Nan forced herself to show an eagerly interested face when her husband rejoined her. "There seems to be a conspiracy against our being together today," he grinned at her wryly. "The young widow of the murdered man is very mysterious, but she promises to talk fast enough if I'll come to see her this evening. I refused, of course."

Nan had not put work ahead of long for four years for nothing. She was not pretending when she interrupted excitedly: "Refused? But, John! What she has to tell may be of vital importance to David Blackhull. You should know what it is before the preliminary hearing tomorrow. I felt sure his stepmother was far more involved than you notice how he blushed and stammered when he mentioned her name!"

Morgan had undergone a change, too. Gone was the embarrassed, harassed bridegroom, torn between an old love and a new loyalty. This was the man who had married and served for four years—the keen lawyer, meeting her eyes unflinchingly, with admiration and respect.

"Yes. Go on. Thank God for Nan's womanly intuition," he grinned, a corner of his mouth quivering down in the way Nan loved. "Well, I can guess why Nina Blackhull is so unhappy. She's Drastic to know how much David told. It'll bet anything she vamped the youngster until he lost his head. Probably the old man saw or heard something that gave them away, and—why, that's the reason she'd left for Chicago in such a hurry!"

Nan concluded triumphantly. "But the will, which old Blackhull made after she left, and after he knew whatever it was that made her quarrel with his son, leaves everything but \$10,000 to Nina," Morgan pointed out. "That's so," Nan admitted. She propped her round little chin on her right fist and scowled at her husband. Then her face cleared, her eyes shining: "How? Sounds wild, I grant, but I've got a hunch it's pretty near correct! As I said before, Nina Blackhull vamps young David until he's mad about her. He forgets for a minute she's his father's wife and makes love to her. Probably old Blackhull was so sure of her, he made her his heir."

Beige Felt Is Different



Very different from last year's hats is a beige felt with dark brown ribbon and banding, with its brim flaring upward in front and on both sides.

103 Years Old



One hundred and three years old on Aug. 15, Galusha M. Cole of Pasadena, Calif., has had a 103rd birthday, but he still enjoys them as they are always attended by hundreds of his friends. Mr. Cole is shown above in his garden gathering delicacies for the all-day birthday feast.

Nan was surely tempted, but she shook her head. "No, John. You go alone. If Nina's the siren I think she's shed recent having me tag along. She wants to vamp some information out of you, and a—she was about to say 'wife' but she could not utter the sacred word so casually yet—a female lawyer would cramp her style dreadfully. No, you run along. I—I'm tired, anyway!"

"I must say you're anxious to get rid of me!" Morgan protested indignantly. "I'm not going to leave you—you merciful little slave-driver!" And he put an arm about her shoulders and hugged her close. "Oh, yes, you are!" Nan assured him, pushing him away with mock severity, when every nerve in her body clamored to have him hold her closer and closer. "I suppose the junior partner of this firm has some say-so! Go along! I'm crazy to find out if our theory has any basis in fact."

"Oh! All right," Morgan agreed abruptly, turning sharply away from her. For one precious moment Nan thought that he was hurt and angry with her for sending him away from her on their wedding night. But—she remained herself—she had touched bottom, leaving her close behind. Of course, for very decency, he had to pretend.

But hope had not been so completely crushed as Nan had believed. After her husband had gone, Nan sat quite still for many minutes, staring at her hands, like little pink cups, holding something infinitely precious. A kiss in the palm of each hand. Of course, for very decency, he had to pretend.

They Pay Up When Gillian Spots 'Em

Diligence of State Traffic Officer Roy Gillian rewarded Nevada with \$92.50 plus \$21.90 yesterday when a truck was found unloading a load of goods which it had brought from California.

Miss Hanson to Go To Overton Meeting

Miss Amy Hanson, deputy state school superintendent, will go to Overton tomorrow to conduct the Moapa and Virgin valley teachers' meeting preliminary to the opening of school.

Refusal to Take Wife To Parade Caused Threat of Killing

A husband's refusal to drop his work in the basement of his home to accompany his wife to a parade brought forth from her a threat to kill him.

At a recent convention in Seattle

of old-timers who took part in the gold rush of '98, one of the dance hall girls told of the hardships of the hike across the mountains with all her hand-hall costumes strapped on her back. She could carry it all in her pocket nowadays.

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