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ever, when she learns Morgan is to whose picture they gazed. defend a supposed friend, Bert Nan was powerless to move to-

Morgan wins Crawford's acquittal. lowed closely by Iris, Morgan's wife, who writes Morgan she will never Reference to Crawford, hatred.

Nan saves Morgan from despair six months she acts as long-distance housekeeper for him, winning the love of little Curtis, Morgan's son, and bringing comfort to

Iris and asks her to marry him. They are prevented from going on their honeymoon by the unexpected arrival of a pleading client. Nan didn't know you was there," Estelle urges Morgan to accept the case.

prepares to leave, but Morgan inter- ma'am cepts her, confesses he adores her but has believed she married him out of pity.

The next morning. Iris returns, apparently descried by Crawford. She feigns unconsciousness and illness in an effort to bring Morgan te his knees. Nan, determined to fight, has the doctor remove Iris to a hospital. At the office that day, Nan remembers a letter proving Iris' perfidy-but no, she can not fight that way! In her room that night, she locks the door.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY CHAPTER XXXVIII

It was 6 o'clock when Nan Morgan, in a tempest of unreasoning and had deserted. fury and fear... locked.. her.. doors against any attempt her husband might make to bring to her his load of despair and newly revived love for his first wife.

"She shan't haunt this room, too. as she does every other room in the

She was trembling with the fury of her own determination, but her ears betrayed her by straining to catch the faintest sound which would indicate that he was trying to come to her. After many minutes she heard him open his door. Breathlessly she waited, savagely eager to have him turn the knob of her door and find it locked.

She herself was suffering so terribly that it gave her a fierce, perverse pleasure to think of his being hurt, too. Kneeling down before that woman who had never loved him and who had deserted him! Nan clenched her hands as her eyes stared at the doorknob. Going to the hospital twice in one day to see her, when she wasn't really sick at all, but just shamming to win his sympathy! He'd always been wax in Iris' hands. Well, let him be hurt now! It would serve him right. She had been hurt enough, God knew! But her straining eyes told Nan that he had not touched the knob of her door.

She neard water running; faint. familiar sounds which told her he was getting out his shaving things. She could see every step of the pro-cess as if she were in the bathroom beside him. The way he stretched his upper lip in a comical grimace; the brooding gravity in his deep-set black eyes, which saw nothing funny in the facial contortions a man makes when he shaves himself. The infinite care with which he circled the safety razor about the little wn mole on his right cheek. Oh! Nan caught her breath in agony. vas terrible to love a man so much. Only this morning she had stood close beside him as he shaved. so close that his elbow joggled her ribs and made her double up in a childish fit of giggling. And now

She waited until she heard him re-enter his own room, then with a great effort, Nan went about her own dressing for dinner. The amber chiffon. He liked it, but why try to please him now? He wouldn't notice what she had on. His eyes would be tuned in upon a vision of Iris, lying in appealing helplessness upon a hospital bed, her fragility clothed in an exquisitely colored, subtly scented negligee.

Even as her hairbrush gave furious punctuation to her defiance, Nan knew deep down in her heart, that if John Curtis Morgan wanted wife, she would do so. He would be of love as late as this morning. the last court of appeal. If he decided against her, there would be and lowering his eyes. "They were no fight left in her.

until she had heard her husband so miunutes ago I telephoned the hosdown, slowly, like an old man. It was their custom to assemble in the drawing room, there to wait for Estelle's summons to the dining room. It took all her courage to cross the threshold, and so strong had been her premonition of what she would find when she did so that she felt no surprise, only an overwhelming

John Curtis Morgan and his son stood before the fireplace, looking absurdly like each other, in spite of the difference in their sizes. Consciously or unconsciously, Curtis had duplicated his father's pose-feet planted wide apart, hands thrust into trousers pickets, shoulders



hunched, head lowered, but eye Nan Carroll, finding herself in taised to Iris Morgan's breath love with her employer, John Curtis takingly beautiful portrait. How Morgan, lawyer, decides to resign, closely kin those two were! Father Her resignation is postponed, how- and son, by virtue of the woman a

ward them. She was an interloper It would be indecent to intrude upon Crawford leaves town at once, fol- their tragic brooding. All fight melted out of her for the moment giving way to a nauseating self whom Morgan does not suspect, is her way" into John Curtis Morgan's home, into his grief, into the affections of his son, so that marriage by forcing him into his work. For with her had come to seem inevitable, he and the child would have been free to welcome Iris home What did it matter that they had been better off without her? If a man who ironically thinks only of they preferred sickness to health, misery to peace, Iris to Nan, why shouldn't they have them? People never thanked you for doing things for their good.

"Oh, excuse me, Mrs. Morgan, apologized as she almost bumped Their farcical marriage continues into the frozen little figure in the for three months. Hysterically, Nan doorway. "Dinner is served.

> two before the fireplace started, the man guiltily. The 7year-old boy stared at Nan as if ne had never seen her before, a strange hostility in his liquid black eyes. There was a deep flush on his Nan's heart contracted sharply with anxiety. Did he have a fever? Why was he staring at her like that? Had Iris already begun to poison the child against her? But why ask? She had known Iris was going to fight with every weapon he could lay hands on, and of course the child would be the most potent, next to the terrific appeal which she had always made to the senses of the man she never loved

Hello, dear!" her husband greeted her constrainedly, as he came forward to take her arm, "Sorry I couldn't meet you for lunch."

apparently cheerful casualness. We went to the hospital to see my mother," Curtis cut in, his voice sounding oddly mature and childishly belligerent. "She-" 'Nan asked me a question, son,'

the father reproved him sternly, but

laid a hand on the boy's shoulder. "Haven't you seen the afternoon paper, Nan? The trial is adjourned until January 9." No need now to pretend interest. "Adjourned? Why? cried: What happened? You don't mean

Brainerd wasn't ready? Or do you suppose he'd got wind of what we're going to spring?" Morgan was obviously grateful for her interest and for a chance to think and talk of something else besides the amazing return of his divorced wife. He drew out a chair

for Nan with his usual meticulous

politeness, as he answered: Oh, no, nothing like that. re impanelling the jury, agreed upon four men, when about 3 o'clock this afternoon Brainerd got word that his star witness, the butler, Edgars, had been stricken with acute appendicitis and rushed to the hospital for an emergency opera-He's in pretty bad shape, I understand. Naturally the trial couldn't proceed without him, and Judge Bunce granted an adjournment until the old man is in a condition to be brought to the court-

"Good heavens!" Nan said slowly. 'It will be more of a blow for us if the poor old man dies than for the prosecution.

room-if he survives."

True," Morgan agreed. "But still we have the goods on Nina Blackhull, even without the butler's testimony as to her relations with the chauffeur, Bassett. But naturally what he was willing to tell us on cross-examination would have been Brainerd, of mighty important. course, can use Edgars' testimony before the grand jury, as to Blackhull's quarrel with David, the boy's leaving in his car at 2 o'clock in the morning, and the finding of the body. I hope we'll have our chance at him, though."

Where is he-which hospital?" Nan demanded, as she made a pretense of eating her soup. 'He's at St. Luke's too, where

Curtis answered the mother is." "Father went to talk to question. the doctor about him while I stayed with mother." Again that curious. direct glance of hostility from the her to relinquish him to his first black eyes which had been so full "Yes," Morgan agreed, flushing

operating then. No one could say She did not descend the stairs how it would turn out, but a few pital and the poor old man has come out of the ether all right. If there are no serious complications he'll pull through, Dr. Matthews

> "I'm glad," Nan said in a low detachment. else to add, nothing whatever to talk

about For Iris was as much a member of that constrained group as if she sat on the vacant fourth side of the table. Nan felt that the insolent blue-green eyes were mocking them

"Don't want any spinach and carots-and-peas," Curtis said suddenly, iolently thrusting aside the vegetable dish from which Estelle was about to serve him.

Morgan snapped out of a period of brooding abstraction to frown upon his son. "Eat what's put before you, Curtis," he commanded

plump with health. "Mother says I don't have to eat things I don't like! Sides she gave me all the chocoyou took her. I aren't hungry!"

to show furious anger. The two who were so alike and yet so differ- now so that I-we-can afford to- opened the door wide, not to take

glared at each other. "Then eave the table!" the father ordered avagely. "And go straight to bed. You know you're not permitted to at between meals and that-" The child's howl of rage cut across

his father's furious rebuke. Involuntarily, Nan reached out a hand and laid it soothingly upon Jurtis' clenched fist. "Please, John! Curtis, darling,. you ion't want to lose your gold star for a periect Health Chart, do you? If you aren't hungry, you can skip dessert, but Nan does want you to eat the vegetables-Won't eat them!" Curtis scream-

pushing his plate so violently that part of the food spilled upon the immaculate white cloth. "Don't have to do what you tell me to You ain't got any right to boss me! Mother says-"Go to your room!" the father

roared, rising and bending over the child as if his clenched fists longed "And stay there till you're ready to apologize to Nan and to promise to obey her implicit-Do you understand? Nan shrank into her chair, every

nerve outraged by the scene, the like of which had never taken place in that home since she had become its Helpless,y, she watched the child scramble out of his chair and run howling from the room. "I'm sorry, Nan." Morgan apologized stiffly, extreme pallor sud-

denly taking the place of the flush of anger Nan nodded dumbly and the mis rable meal progressed in silence. Dishes were brought and removed

their delicious contents scarcely ouched by either. It came to an end at last and the two who had been so close moved together, but miles apart, toward the drawing For a few minutes they talked constrainedly, unnaturally, about the Blackhull case, then abruptly Mor-

about which either of them could "I-Nan, we'd better face this "How did the trial progress? Any thing, hadn't we? I've got to talk to jurors chosen?" Nan asked, with you about Iris."

gan introduced the only subject

CHAPTER XXXIX Nan's cold hands gripped each

other convulsively against the amber chiffon of her lap. "It's come at last. He's going to tell me it was all a mistake, that he doesn't love me, and wants to be free to take Iris back," she told herself dully. "Yes, John.' she agreed aloud, in

a voice that sounded flat and cold to her own ears.

They were seated side by side on now." the small sofa, whose back was were uttered, she could have bitten turned upon Iris' portrait above the her tongue in two. Would he in-Morgan had chosen the seat. Nan felt his eyes upon her, in a swift, apraising glance which she could not bring herself to meet. After all, it was up to him. There was nothing for her to do but wait. The man cleared his throat ner-

vously, then suddenly she felt his hand, big and warm and comforting, close about her own.

sorry I am that this had to happen, began with slow heaviness. Nan felt a surge of pity for him, but she could not force her fingers to unlock and curl about his. Not yet. "I would have protected you if I could. You've been-so wonderful today, this morning-" he floundered on.

She wanted to help him, tried to say, "I'll be more wonderful still I'll give you your freedom as soon as it can be arranged," but the words stuck in her throat.

He cleared his throat again, as if the words he was forcing himself to say rasped it sorely. "Iris is-sick, Nan, and penniless. She's had arotten time of it, it seems. She didn't tell me-much, but I gathered she had tried to go on the stage and had failed. No training, you know, and not-not so young as beginners

Nan forced herself to nod, by way encouragement. Not so young! That was an odd thing to say in connection with Iris. She didn't seem to have any age, to be beauty and lure incarnate. But she must be-Nan calculated swiftly. Yes, Iris must be at least 29, perhaps older, for she and Morgan had been married nine years before, and Iris

admitted to 28. She could have made the chorus, of course," Morgan went on, with obvious pain and reluctance. "But even the chorus requires arduous training, and Iris wanted to be a dramatic star, or nothing." "Of course." Nan agreed toneless-

entirely without malice. 'Well, she didn't make the grade. couldn't get a part, spent all her money to buy into a show, in which she had been promised a part. The producers turned out to be crooks and got away with her money and what others had put up.

"So that's the story she's told him." Nan reflected, with curious "It's a good story, and voice. There seemed to be nothing one which can't possibly be checked up on and found to be false." Aloud cheerfully through the keyhole, "I'll she said, still in that toneless voice:

"Thanks, dear," he answered, with tightened over hers. have to do something for her. Iwe-can't let her-want." 'Of course not,' 'Nan agreed. Hope

began to lift its head. cried huskily, and Nan knew that tears were in his eyes. "I think

you're the best woman, the most understanding woman in the world." "Thank you, John," Nan responded, but her voice still sounded cold the door. "Cop wants me to come and flat. She was thinking tiredly in," she laughed, her voice very "I won't!" Curtis shouted, the despairingly: "No man ever loved a feverish flush deeping alarmingly on woman because she was good, not the face which had once been so even because she was understanding. thin and anemic and now was A man loves a woman, because - ly. A bolt shot back. The door good or wicked, understanding or

Morgan seemed glad of the chance thoughts to give him attention. "My-our-income is large enough

Nan stiffened and raised her head. friends again.

She could bear no more of this. you wish to, without feeling that you bed. have to consult me. Whatever you

She felt his eyes sweep over her again, questioningly, appealingly. But still she could not meet them, was afraid to face the despair she vas sure they held. Oh, why couldn't she be supremely generous, "I had thought-" Morgan floun-

lesire not to know the detailsthat a-a monthly provision ofsay, \$400 a month She has been used to-a degree of luxury, and has no judgment at all about money-" "Anything you say," Nan interrupted firmly, as she rose from the "Now, I think I'll go up to Curtis. He'll be ill if I don't get him calmed down before his bed-

time, poor darling. . . . By the way.'

casualness, "has-his mother asked hat he be given to her?" She felt rather than saw that Morgan flushed darkly. His voice was thick and low as he answered: 'At first, of course. She was-quite hysterical about it. But-this afternoon she was much more reasonable. In fact, she-agreed that it would be better for the child not to taken from his father. Under the circumstances, she thought I

could do more for the boy than she

would be able to do." "And you swallowed that whole, Nan reflected, with bitter disgust 'Can't you see what her game is? in the first place, she doesn't want o be bothered with taking care of the child, and in the second, she knows he is a much more potent eapon against me in this house than he could possibly be in hers.' loud, however, she said coldly "Of course she knows that the court gave you custody of the child.'

Out of the corner of her eye she saw Morgan bow his head upon his Yes-she knows that. But if she insisted. I would let her have him, Nan, no matter how much I should suffer from losing him. A child and his mother should not be

She left him," Nan could not forbear reminding him. "She admits that," Morgan said "We-mustn't be too hard heavily. on her, dear. She has-paid pretty

high for her-mistake." Nan turned sharply so that he should not see the cynical smile which twisted her childish mouth. After a moment she was able to say, with geniune feeling: "I'm glad she has been generous about Curtis. It But as soon as the words terpret those words as a veiled inlirect bid for his sympathy and for his loyalty? She would die rather than plead for the continuation of a relationship that had become

"I must go to Curtis now,' she said hastily. "Then I think I'll go to bed, John. I'm-tired. I'll say good night now--"

She was about to walk away from him without offering him even her hand when she heard him spring to his feet. His arms closed about her, held her close against his breast. But to save her life she could not relax in his arms, although every nerve in her body clamored for her to forget pride and cling to this man whether he loved her as much as he loved the other woman,

"Dear little Nan!" he muttered huskily, his lips against her hair, "You're wonderful. . . . You'll be patient with me, won't you, dear? I-need you-

Why didn't he say, "Nan, it's you I love. I'm sorry for Iris, but I love you. You're my wife." Since he hadn't said those words or anything like them, Nan's body remained stiff and unyielding. "Of course. John," she answered in a voice that sounded impatient. The man's arms dropped as if she had struck them from her.

'Good night, Nan dear," he said slowly, heavily, like a man weary unto death.

"Good night, John. You'll call the hospital again tonight to see how Edgars is, won't you? It would be terrible to have him die, when he could help young David so much." His low-voiced "Yes" followed her out of the room, up the stairs, its weary sadness nagging at her ears, knocking at her heart.

She found the door of Curtis' room locked, or rather bolted, for the boy had not been trusted with a key, lest he lose it. She knelt down, after trying the door, and called softly through the keyhole: "It's Nan, darling. I've come to tell you a story before you go to There was no answer for a full

minute, while Nan waited, trembling. Had the boy as well as the father cast her out of his heart? Then a tear-choked voice called out angrily: "Go 'way!" "All right, darling," she called

go if you want me to, but I really thought you'd like to hear how the Wright boys made the first airplane ouching gratitude. His hand I'd been thinking of letting you and "So-I-we'll Little Pat make one like it-only smaller of course.' Lucky she'd been reading the

story of the Wright boys only last week! She couldn't lose Curtis. she are a darling!" Morgan couldn't. She loved him too much and needed him now so desperately. There was the thud of a heavy body, the rush of padded paws across the floor, then the welcoming whimper of a dog sniffing at tender and coaxing

ing, reluctantly at first, then eageropened a crack and one black eye selfish-she enslaves his senses, and drowned in tears, studied Nan with John has admitted that Iris— "But a heartbreaking mixture of longing lates I wanted out of that big box Morgan was speaking again, and and hostility. "All right. C'mon in." Nan pushed down her despairing a hiccuppy little voice invited ungraciously

She was careful, when the child

to—" Embarrassment dragged his him in her arms, not to let him see Dupray and Foley how much she wanted him to

"Can me and Little Pat make a "Please, John," she said clearly, airplane, honest?" he demanded susfirmly, "do anything for Iris that piciously, as he climbed back into

"You may try with all your might, do will be right in my eyes, natur- for you'll have the materials and the plans to work from," Nan laughed, and pushed down an uncomfortable feeling of shame. This was the first time she had ever tried to bribe the Was she stooping to Iris' methods? "Now shall I tell you just how the Wright brothers set about ouilding their first plane?"

She perched on the side of his bed, but still refrained from touchlered on, regardless of her obvious ing the boy, who listened with growing eagerness, the hostile gleam slowly dying out of his eyes. She had her reward when, the exciting tale finished, his hot little hand inched shyly toward hers. Sudden! the fingers closed convulsively over

Nan, that you won't let my nother come home?" she added, with every appearance of

Nan's heart stood still for an in . stant. What could she say? Was that old law before-before she he old enough to be told a part of the truth? No matter. . . . She

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which he has moved.

"Curtis, darling, Nan can't explain all the reasons, but your father can't have two wives. Itit's against the law. So you see dear, if your mother comes back Nan will have to leave."

The black eyes widened in be wilderment, and the beautiful, curl mouth, so like Iris', trembled. "Bu I want both of you, and I bet Fathe does, too," Curtis insisted stub bornly. "It's a silly old law. Listen, Nan, did Mother know about

(To Be Continued)

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