

# Until Love Happens

MARGARET NICHOLS

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## SYNOPSIS

Worlds separate young Alison Van Dyke and Teresa, her glamorous half-sister. The latter, ambitious and domineering, was one of Washington's most successful interior decorators, while Alison and Kitty, their mother, lived quietly in Vermont. Alison was 16 at the time she came to Washington for Teresa's wedding and something happened to her heart when she met her sister's fiancé, attractive Sam Tarrant, quiet, idealistic newspaperman. The wedding reception was being held

at the home of Teresa's wealthy friend, kindly Edna Castine.

## CHAPTER THREE

Thanks to her mother, who walked bravely and proudly before her, her yellow curls in motion, Alison did not want to hide as she walked down the church aisle, her tanned hand through the arm of a young man she would later meet and know as Philip Spencer. With her long pale hair cascading to her shoulders and wearing a soft green velvet frock hastily acquired, this morning, this moment of looking and feeling grown up more nearly approached a moment of triumph than any she had ever known before.

She slid in the pew beside her mother, folded her tense hands, and absorbed surroundings that would forever be memorable to Teresa and Sam. It was all

so solemnly beautiful—the church, the organ playing softly, the masses of chrysanthemums and autumn leaves of all colors, the coming together of Sam and Teresa—that she wanted to cry. She did not know why their love seemed more sanctified and more filled with the substance of which dreams are made than any she had ever known. Flawless, these two about to be married. Perfect, their beginning together.

The music had changed to Lohengrin.

She saw Sam come and take his place before the altar. "There is only one Sam," her mother had said.

She scarcely saw Edna Castine, the matron of honor. For Teresa coming down the aisle absorbed her whole mind.

Teresa wearing electric blue, but was not Teresa flame and electricity and a high wind blowing? Teresa with a look of determination. Determination? Not ecstasy? Yet the color of her would dye all of a man's days and all of his nights.

"Whom God hath joined together..." Sam kissed his wife tenderly. Alison held her breath.

Then the chauffeur who had brought her mother and her to the church was driving them through this windy October night to Edna and Philip's house in Virginia.

Kitty said in a tired voice. "I wish we were going home."

Alison opened her gray eyes wide. "Don't you want to go to the party?"

Kitty laughed, but there were sad little cracks in her laughter. "Of course I do. Why should I say a thing like that? It'll be fun. Champagne and dancing—like old times to me. You've never been to a party like this. Good for you to see how things are done when they're done right."

Her eyes narrowed thoughtfully. "But I keep thinking what Teresa said when she came up to see us last summer. She said, 'I am never going to marry anybody.'"

"She changed her mind when she met Sam."

"Didn't she though? I guess he's the kind of a boy to change a girl's mind."

"He isn't a boy."

Kitty tilted her too-yellow head and laughed again. "He's 24. Eight years older than you, my sweet. But when you're 20 Sam will be 28. The day will come, you see, when you'll be contemporaries."

The great brick colonial house sat proudly upon a hill. Brilliantly lighted tonight, it could be seen for miles around. As the large black car ascended with ease, the headlights gave Alison brief glimpses of formal gardens and the dark green of old boxwood. Like long waving arms the tall trees bent in the wind over the roof of the house.

Inside the house was so large it seemed to dissolve her will, so that for the next few hours she was like a puppet on a string—except that she had eyes that could see and a mind that would remember.

The receiving line. Teresa's lips were as cool as her eyes. The look of determination was gone. If she had not still been sunburned, Alison thought, she would have looked pale with relief.

"How pretty you look tonight, darling," was what she said. It was all that she said.

Didn't she notice, Alison thought, that she was not wearing the aqua dress?

Sam leaned toward Alison and touched her cheek with his lips. It was like rockets bursting in the air. . . . And Sam was looking at her with an expression that would haunt her from this moment on—as if he were trying to convince himself of something he could not believe. . . . And then she was moving along the line.

Then faces floated up as faces in a dream and voices spoke in her ear. "And who are you, my dear?" "I'm Teresa's sister."

"Really? I didn't know Teresa had a sister." She saw her mother with a glass of champagne in her hand and she was flirting a little with a small, dark, foreign-looking man. Kitty's plump hands were so nervous the champagne was spilling slightly on the most conservative frock she had ever owned.

Perhaps she was afraid that if the little man left her she would be alone and no one else would talk to her. And there was food, beautiful food, heaps of it, and dresses that rustled as they passed and soft music and surely a thousand candles burning from silver candelabra.

A young woman with smooth dark hair and a gay, wise, worldly face stopped before her. She wore a blouse that glittered. She and Teresa were the only ones who were sunburned.

"You must be Teresa's sister," she said. Her eyes were dark and merry. They were also eyes full of secrets. "And you must be suffering through this as I am, though for different reasons. You don't know who I am, do you?"

"No."

"I'm Nicola. Edna and Philip's sister, the one they don't talk about if they can help it. I would come home for a visit and run into something like this."

"I think it's lovely," Alison said.

"Yes, dear, that's what everyone thinks—it's lovely. So romantic and lovely. So sudden!"

She smiled ironically into Alison's face, carefully flicked the ash from her cigarette and walked away. Across the room she whispered something into the ear of a young man that made

## INDIAN HELD IN SHOOTING AFFRAY

Rowland Man Tells Officers Of Harrowing Night After Assault

LUMBERTON, Oct. 9.—Bradley Locklear, Indian, of Route 1, Rowland, is getting along well at a local hospital after an hours-long harrowing experience of being shot, beaten, robbed, tied and thrown into Lumberton river near Pembroke Monday night. McNeill Hunt, Fairmont Indian, is held in Robeson jail on a charge of secret assault and kidnapping in connection with the affair, while Robeson county officers continue search for another man believed to have aided Hunt in the assault.

Locklear told officers that Hunt and another man, whom he did not know, assaulted him about 8 o'clock Monday night. They shot him through the right thigh, he said, beat him about the head, robbed him of \$400, then tied his hands together and threw him into the river.

He was able to catch his hands on an overhanging tree limb and thus save himself from drowning, he said. He made his way to a nearby house about 2 o'clock the following morning and asked that officers be notified and an ambulance be sent for him.

Officers today report that Locklear has a suit for \$10,474 filed last May 8 pending in Robeson Superior court against Hunt, the suit arising from a collision between an automobile driven by Hunt and a pick-up truck operated by Locklear.

Also pending against Hunt is a suit filed on September 26, by Ila Oxendine, asking \$10,000 damages from Hunt as result of injuries sustained in the same wreck while she was a passenger in Locklear's truck.

## REVIVAL MEETING

LUMBERTON, Oct. 9.—A revival meeting is in progress this week at Chestnut Street Methodist church, Dr. Fred W. Paschall, pastor, announces. Guest preacher is the Rev. Dennis Kinlaw, a native Lumbertonian and graduate of Auburn Theological seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky, who is now doing full-time evangelistic work. Leading the singing is Donald Rollins of Louisville, Kentucky.

him laugh. She looked as though she had been everywhere and knew everything and cared only for clothes and laughter and men.

Voices swirling about her: "Do you think we'll get into the war?"

"Where have you been? We're in it now—informally."

"Nonsense. I can't see any logical reason for us to get mixed up in it. It isn't any of our business, after all. No, I think we'll have the good sense to stay out of this one."

"Hitler says. . ."

"Roosevelt says. . ."

(To Be Continued)

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## Charities Group Are Not Planning Separate Campaign

Speaking for the board of directors of Associated Charities, the Rev. William Crowe, Jr., president, said yesterday that it is his understanding that the association is planning no fund-raising campaign separate from the Community Chest.

Although no discussion or vote on the subject has been undertaken, the president said, no plan for a fund-raising drive has been suggested. Adding that members of the board would like to see the organization continue separate from the county's welfare program, rather than be merged with it as has been done in all the State's other 99 counties.

## WHITEVILLE P-TA MEETS WEDNESDAY

Meeting Date Changed From Monday As Originally Planned

WHITEVILLE, Oct. 9.—The October meeting of the Whiteville Parent-Teacher Association will be held next Wednesday evening, October 15, instead of Monday evening as originally planned, it was announced today by Mrs. D. A. Maultsby, president of the organization.

Arrangements were made to postpone the meeting because of Monday evening when a team of night baseball in Whiteville on a conflict with the inaugural of major league baseball players will meet a local team under the lights at Legion Memorial Field.

The program will be presented Wednesday evening at 8 o'clock and will feature an address by M. G. Isley, new principal of the Elementary school.

Two business matters will claim the attention of the P.T.A. One will be the report of

the membership committee which has been conducting a campaign for members and the other will be a decision on the question of staging a Halloween Carnival. The executive board recently recommended that the Halloween event be considered at a full meeting of the Parent-Teacher Association.

The membership campaign is progressing satisfactorily and is scheduled to come to a close on October 17.

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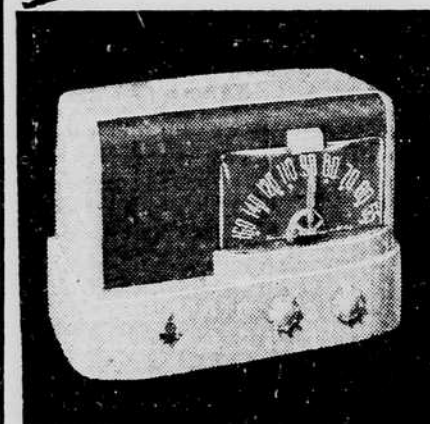
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