

Women Still Willing to Die for Lost Love

Four Outstanding Instances Confound

the Cynics, Who Hold That Women No Longer Take Love Seriously, and Prove That the Modern Maiden Is Just as

Intense as Cleopatra, Sappho, Francesca and Juliet.



Mary Fanny Grasswitt, Virginia Girl Who Fled to Chicago and There Killed Herself When the Man She Loved, O. S. Hunsicker, Was Disclosed as Married.

By Elizabeth Shields

THE modern cynic takes deep delight in saying that woman no longer takes love seriously. "Her interests have become varied," he declares. "She satisfies her psychic cravings by seeking—and often finding—success in business, achievement in art, complete independence of the male who once was her destiny."

Thus the word of the cynic who looketh upon the outward appearance. The actual fact is that women love as recklessly, as deeply and desperately as they have loved since the race began. Softly feminine, strong in passion, they love with such wholeness of being that, like women who loved of old, they find the world but waste when the light of the heart, which is evanescent as impulses and long as eternity, goes out.

The poor little sordid tragedies of the Marion Fishers, the Mary Grasswitts, the Peggy Beals, the June Mathilda Reynolds, who have loved and been loved and dared death when loving was over have plenty of precedent in tales of womanhood.

Sappho, sweet singer of Lesbos, sang no more when the glow of her life was dulled. Her longing and her pain were dark companions of her terrific gesture of resignation.

The Sorceress of the Nile found glory grim and grandeur a futile thing when love was gone. She, too, sought peace in the terror of the Beyond. Tender, clinging Juliet hardly wooed death when her Romeo no longer wooed her.

Spring was reveling in Massachusetts. But there was a maid of Malden who saw only desolation where cherry-blossoms grew and felt only chill in the velvet wind. There had been love between Marion Fisher and Walter Stephens. Then there was no love. The pretty Marion was stricken with such sense of loss as to feel that faculty lay backward and forward and all about. Life that had been desirable as life always is to the late teens suddenly was worth exactly nothing. Furthermore, Marion was in the difficult position of having always before her the object of her emotional stress. For she was a stenographer in the very office of the man who had loved her! Perhaps one could stand any sort of sorrow if it were to come in a single shock and be finished. It is the cruel repetition of shocks that destroys morale. After Marion had met Walter over and over, always with increasing hopelessness, she went to the office early one morning with a bit of bottle in her coat pocket. It was labeled with the skull and cross-bones.

She wished to have a farewell look around the place where she had been so happy—and so miserable. It really was her good-by to the man who no longer cared. Then it was over. She raised the bottle; the liquid began to burn her throat.

AND—
The face she never expected to see again was before her. A white, anguished face and a voice saying things not at all like those a man out of love would say. "A pair of arms went round her, too, so she didn't quite fall. When she began to realize what was happening she was lying comfortably at home with both hands clasped in those she loved."

If only Sappho and her stony-hearted swain might have experienced the revelation of death without its finality! Perhaps they, too, might have visioned a future of happiness together, just as did this humble stenographer and the once indifferent youth!

There was no such happy ending to the death-rather-than-no-love story of Mary Fannie Grasswitt. Poor little lonely heart, lying under Chicago sod! Who shall say that her spirit does not wander back to Virginia, there to hover about the man whom she so loved in her troubled life?

A Southern romance, this, of old Richmond. Whispers under the stars. A first kiss when magnolias bloomed. Other kisses while river



Peggy Beal of Kansas City, No. 51 of Maj. F. Warren Anderson's "Conquests," Sent a Bullet Crashing Through His Brain When He Boasted of His Magnetism Over Women. She Then Attempted Suicide.

songs floated through the evening under a purple sky. He promised and she believed him. So their love became what the world calls guilty though she thought it pure.

They wandered through fairyland. But this was the summer of happiness for the daughter of Virginia. A chill wind cut through one day, forerunner of winter to come. O. S. Hunsicker was married; he had a daughter. He had neglected to mention these things when he made his promises.

However, the habit of the heart is formed of steel. Love comes unbidden and leaves at no bidding. Mary Fannie Grasswitt tossed discretion down the wind.

Then Fate came round with a bill payable. The girl fled before that demand, hiding herself in Chicago. Followed long letters to Hunsicker, begging, pleading. But she knew, finally, that his passion had flickered out. Without it she felt as if she were sinking through fathoms of darkness; sinking into depthless night. She bought a gas-tube and took it to the furnished room she lived in. Not a big, spectacular love was Fannie's. Yet perhaps she felt herself kin to Cleopatra with the first, sweet lethal flow.

Marie Peggy Beal is another who wished to die because love was gone. But Kansas City's mystery woman differs from the others in that she also wished the man with whom she had shared love to die with her. Having loved her in life, he would love her again in death, despite the graceless wall of indifference he had built between them as they stood at the end of their trail.

This appeared to be the reasoning of one of



Frank Dicksee's Famous Painting of the Tomb Scene from "Romeo and Juliet" Showing Romeo About to Take Poison, Believing That Juliet, Who Was in a Trance, Was Really Dead. The Greatest Love Tragedy of the Drama.



June Mathilda Reynolds, of Boston, Who Attempted Suicide Because Her Employer-Lover Lost Interest in Her.

the most beautiful women ever to come within the coils of the law in the mid-west city. F. Warren Anderson, Kansas City and Philadelphia clubman, scion of New Jersey aristocracy, man of irresistible personality, had belonged to her in happiness. Better that he still belong to her in unhappiness than that he be another's, or that they find contentment separately!

Thus thought another woman long ago; Francesca, who elected to be wafted on the winds of hell while time shall run just so the arms of Paolo held her close! So on a night which was to be the last of many nights strung upon their illicit love, the nurse who was Number Fifty-one on the "Perfect Lovers" list of loves, sent a bullet through his head and another through her own body. Oh! half of her wish was realized. If her preference was death for herself, she lost. Still she may eventually. For Kansas reserves the noose as penalty for murder.

Rimini, who sentenced her lover to eternal perdition that she eternally might enjoy his love.

So perhaps there are women today more noble of heart, if not of station, than those others of illustrious memory. June Matilda Reynolds, sweet-faced, scared-eyed blonde, who has yet to greet twenty, took stock of her heart-fancies and found that, sincere as they were, they appeared to offer harm to the man she adored. Daniel Grimes, much older than she, was a figure of wealth and position; she had been only a cashier in a restaurant he owned. Seeing her spring-like loveliness, he, too, offered promises which she believed. Followed four ever-to-be-remembered years. Then awakening.

Was she a mill-stone round his neck? Was she dragging him from his best, impeding his progress? Perhaps. She tried for a time to drop out of his life; to work her way and live her life. But the attraction was too strong; she kept going back. So finally she knew what she must do. There was a whole handful of veronal tablets; surely enough to make a very little and very tired girl sleep a very, very long time!

Perhaps you will be disappointed to know that she was not permitted to make her sacrifice. Wishing to die so the man she loved might be happy she "had no luck," as she said herself when the police found her. Perhaps one of these days Daniel Grimes will find his way to the Boston hospital where she is drawing back to life and will tell her that love so sincere that it would destroy itself rather than burden its object never can be other than a joy in the life of a man.

O. S. Hunsicker (left), for Whom a Single Girl Killed Herself Because He Posed as Single, and Maj. F. Warren Anderson (at right), Whose Love She Mistakenly Believed Had Been Lost.



Marion G. Fisher of Malden, Mass., Whose Self-Destruction Was Prevented by the Timely Arrival of Her Employer, Whose Love She Mistakenly Believed Had Been Lost.

Juliet, after all, was a selfish lady, even as Sappho and Cleopatra were selfish. They died because they wished to escape the ache of unrequited love. And most selfish of all was Francesca da

