

at her. His eyes were bent fondly upon his collection, to which he had just added the fairest wings of all. "Who—whose are those?" she asked.

"Those? Those are yours," said Love.

*Marguerite Tracy.*

### TOO LATE!

A WOMAN knew that love was in her life.

One came, reverently to touch her hand and look into her eyes, if haply he might find there rest for what was throbbing in his heart.

The woman wavered and drew back. "How foolish I am!" she thought. "Where is the fame—and the wealth—and the beauty?"

She wrapped her love in a shimmering tissue of friendship, and tied it firmly with a cord of indifference—to wait for a day that would come. The taut cord pressed painfully.

"Childishness!" exclaimed the woman with impatience, and deftly wound many cords together and intertwined them.

Then love sat inert. "Now I am safe—until that day."

She waited—and at length one came with wealth and fame, and stooped to kiss her hand. "This must be he," whispered the woman, beginning to unloose the cords.

One by one they fell.

"Dear Love, waken. It's morning!" she said softly, and pulled aside the covering.

But there was nothing inside.

*Jean Marie Lawrence.*

### AT THE LAWN FAIR.

WITH a grim, hurt feeling at his heart, Shilton watched her as she stepped lightly across the lawn with Jackson, his rival, a handsome blond Northerner. The whole week had gone wrong. On Monday she had declined to go boating, because she was going for a ride—with his rival. On Tuesday she had refused him a walk, pleading a previous engagement—with his rival. On Wednesday she was tired from the night before, and would not go rowing with him. That evening she had worn a bunch of daisies which he had seen his rival plucking. Then, childish enough, he had avoided her for two days, and then for the next two days she seemed to avoid him; and so things had gone from bad to worse.

There seemed, now, a studied coldness between them. The last and worst stroke of all was when he saw his rival wearing the scarf pin he himself had given her. He had reasoned it all out logically, and found that he had no reason to feel hurt, since he had no

claim whatever upon her; but his heart refused logic utterly.

He walked away and sat under a tree with his back to the direction in which she had gone. In a few moments, however, he heard her merry laugh, and saw her again by the light of the low swung Japanese lanterns. The soft light fell prettily over her white gown, which was sheer and cloudy—"floaty," as Shilton called it. He saw his rival take her hand and lead her into a few steps of the minuet.

"Would it not be fine to dance out here on the grass?" he heard her say. And then he saw them take position for a two step.

"You must whistle the 'Directory,'" she said.

"I can't think of it," answered his rival, still keeping the position.

"Then we can't dance," she laughed again. "I will only dance it to the 'Directory.'"

Shilton clenched his hands and walked back and forth in the deep shadows of the tree. It was not long before he was besieged by energetic ladies and enthusiastic girls asking him to buy any number of nameless little trinkets, for it was the evening of the yearly summer mission fair of the Hot Springs, held on the hotel lawn.

One pretty girl begged him to have his picture taken by flashlight. "Only," she said laughing, "you must stop frowning so blackly, or the flashlight will be of no use."

When she was gone he frowned twice as blackly. Then others came, asking him to take chances for bed quilts, embroideries, paintings, lamps, and other things which he hated. Some one else pleaded with him to give a dollar to have his silhouette cut, and he gave two dollars not to have it cut. At last a pretty girl of fifteen came to him and said:

"Mr. Shilton, you must have your fortune told! You must find out if she loves you! You know it is worth a quarter. Come now, isn't it?"

Shilton, being perfectly aware that it was worth the whole world to him, did not deny her statement, but stood frowning.

"Ah, do come!" she pleaded. "Mrs. Parker Averill is our fortune teller. There! I really ought not have told you. It is a secret. She is disguised, you know, and wears a veil and all, so that no one knows her. But she does tell the most wonderful things!"

It seemed so utterly foolish to have his fortune told. Besides, he knew Mrs. Averill by sight only. Not knowing him, she would have to make up a lot of impossible things about his being in love and marrying, and all the rest of the unlikely rubbish these people

usually tell. Nevertheless, the pretty little fortune agent urged, and he followed her.

The tent was the conventional gipsy booth, with a caldron, which, in consideration of the August night, had only a mock fire under it. The sides of the tent were hung with skins, and here and there, peering out uncomfortably from unsuspected places, were great Japanese spiders and toads. It was quite dark, too, save for the weird light of a red lantern at the entrance. With her back to this, and closely enveloped in a long cloak, sat the fortune teller, her face concealed by a Spanish veil, fastened under a fantastic head-dress.

"The very best of luck to you!" said the girl of fifteen, as she left him in charge of the gipsy.

Rather doggedly, and feeling very like a schoolboy, he sat down on the little low seat before the fortune teller.

"Palm or cards?" said the gipsy, drawing her cloak more closely about her.

"Oh, the infallible cards, by all means," said Shilton, a little sneeringly.

She bade him shuffle and cut the pack. Then she spread them out one by one before her, on a board covered with deerskin.

"Now let me see, you are not entirely blond. I think I shall run you through as the Jack of Hearts. Where is the Jack of Hearts? Ah, yes! Very fortunate!" she began mysteriously. "Wealth, health, and advantage cards together. Much travel. You have traveled a great deal, have you not?"

He nodded his head.

"Pessimistically inclined. Yes, at one time you were very pessimistic, shortly after the death of some one dear to you."

He had once lost a sister, and afterwards almost gone to the dogs. But Mrs. Averill could not know that; it was a mere coincidence. He looked up sharply at the gipsy, but she continued:

"Yes, your nature is a little unfortunate, a little unhappy. Lately—no—yes, lately you have loved. There is a blond man; and the jealousy card, the three of clubs, is between you and the blond man. She is a brunette. Spades. Clubs. Ah, misfortune comes to you through jealousy. It is that unfortunate nature of yours again," she said solemnly, putting her finger on a black card near the Jack of Hearts. "The card of imagination near to it. You have imagined! And yet she—the brunette—you have no warrant for it. Only light cards surround her. You have misjudged her."

"How do you mean?" he was startled into saying.

"See!" she said, laying her finger on the hated Jack of Diamonds, which stood for his

rival. "You have no cause for jealousy. There are no love cards between them. She does not love him."

"Are you sure?" asked Shilton.

"Quite," said the gipsy.

"But she might, because he loves her," insisted Shilton.

"Yes," said the gipsy in a low voice, "perhaps he does."

"Well, then," said Shilton, trying to laugh lightly, "I don't see but I've a right to that imagination of mine, after all. Do you mean to say I've no cause for jealousy with that Jack of Diamonds so near my brunette of Spades?"

"None," she replied solemnly.

"No danger of her falling in love with him?"

"No," said the gipsy, "the love cards are not there."

"Where are they, then?"

"Here they are, on the other side of the brunette—the nine, five, and seven of hearts."

Shilton drew up nearer in a businesslike way. He wanted to get the run of it all. "On the other side," he said, "five, seven, nine—those are love cards? Well, what does that mean?" He looked puzzled, and then put his finger on the Jack of Hearts. "Isn't that myself—that Jack of Hearts?"

"Yes," said the gipsy dreamily.

"Then the love cards are between the Queen of Spades—that is my brunette—and the Jack of Hearts—which is myself?"

The fortune teller assented.

"Then that means—she loves me?"

"Yes," said the gipsy almost under her breath, "she does."

Shilton thought a moment. "Well, that's just where you're wrong," he said ungraciously, and rose with a frown. Then he laughed a harsh, irritated laugh. "You see, I knew before I came in. So you will excuse my saying it is rubbish. But here is a dollar for the cause."

As he was leaving the tent, Mrs. Parker Averill passed him, going into it. "You poor dear child!" he heard her say. "Did you grow very tired waiting for me? It was so good of you to take my place for a while. Have you told many fortunes?"

He stopped just beyond the tent, and heard the gipsy answer. It was not in the mysterious tones he had heard but in a girlish voice which he thought he knew better than any other voice in the world. His heart leaped up and then seemed to stand still.

"Yes," it said softly, "and nobody guessed in the least that it was I."

He waited a few minutes, until, the long red robe and veil thrown off, she fluttered out