

was all unintelligible. Suddenly the flow of French stopped. There was a second or two of silence. And then, clear and distinct, I heard my name.

"King! King! come back!" wailed a pitiful little voice. With a gasp I recognized Diana's tones in the words which the machine poured forth. I began to think that I was dreaming. But no, the phonograph was continuing.

"Oh, sweetheart," sobbed the voice, "can't you see that I love you? Have I not shown you, a thousand times over, that I love you? King, King, you are so blind. What must I do to show you your mistake? Must I hold out my heart to you in my hands and cry, 'Here, take it; it is all yours?' I know what you would say. That you are poor. But I love you for it. I want you—you, the man, with your heart full of love for me. Not the other, with the chest of gold. Darling, there is no one but you. Oh, I wish I were a man. If I loved a woman, nothing on earth should keep me from telling her—"

The cylinder stopped.

I straightened up, a wild thrill in my breast. It was so strange, this discovery. It was accident, assuredly—but it was Fate.

I thought I understood how it had come about. When I had gone, that doleful evening three days before, Diana had given way to her pent-up feelings. By some blessed chance—a sweep of the sleeve, or the entanglement of a curl—she had moved the little lever and set into motion the shell of wax which had so faithfully recorded her every word and tone. For the first time I looked with kindly eyes upon the frail instrument.

And then there was a faint foot-fall behind me, and a breath of violets. I turned and held out my arms. Diana put both her hands in mine.

"Only a part of your fortune, Di," I said, softly. "A man, who loves you with his whole heart—only that."

At first it seemed that she did not comprehend my words. But as I watched, I saw the wonder die out of her eyes, and in its stead there came "the light that never was, on land or sea."