

style, travelling along the line it had traced thereon, vibrated as it had done so in the first instance. By this means the mica was once more set in vibration, and, as it communicated its vibrations to the air, the original sounds were once more produced.

Tom tried to persuade Dora to sing a song, but the presence of that silent recorder made her nervous, and she was content with listening to the repetition of some trite and rather disconcerted sounds of his own.

The next few days passed not quite happily for Tom Douglas. He was in love with Dora, but he did not dare to tell her as yet the secret which was, nevertheless, betrayed to her keen sight by his every word and action. He spent a good deal of time alone in his study, and amused himself after a rather silly fashion with the phonograph.

One day he had gone off on a visit to some friends, and Dora was feeling lonely and a trifle weary. Her cousin had begged her to borrow any of his books if at any time she wanted to read, and she went down to his study to get one. As she went, she was thinking of him, and wondering why he still hesitated to ask her the simple question, which she would gladly answer—the question which he was constantly asking himself, and to which his love and his humility both gave different answers. She had chosen a book, when her eye fell on the phonograph lying ready for use on the table. Now that she was alone, she thought it would be rather pleasant to try how her own voice sounded.

She had read lately in one of the newspapers that people had no idea of what their voices sounded like; and she rather wondered whether her singing, of which she was inclined to think highly, was really so good as she imagined. Filled with dread lest the unflattering phonograph should prove to her that her voice was harsh and unpleasant, and not quite decided as to what song she would try, she began to move the treadle which set the cylinder in motion. What sound was that which fell upon her ears? Her cousin's voice was speaking to her; and after a moment of blank astonishment, she listened with a quiet smile, as though Tom were standing before her in the flesh and saying what the phonograph now said for him.

This is what she heard: Dora, darling, I have loved you since the day when I first saw you. I have longed to tell you every day since then, but have always been afraid. Will you try to love me just a little?" The voice lapsed into silence.

With a sudden gladness Dora saw what had happened. Her cousin had also wondered how his voice sounded to others—to her—and especially how the question would sound which he so longed to ask. Well, the voice struck her as awkward; constrained, and quite unlike the cheerful tones to which she had become accustomed; but the words—

At that moment she heard her cousin's voice at the other end of the garden. He had returned home unexpectedly, and was chatting with the gardener. He would be here presently, no doubt.

In a moment she had once more set in motion the cylinder of the phonograph, and bending over it spoke a few words in a low, clear voice. Then she lifted the cylinder back into its original position, and stepped quickly into the next room—the laboratory.

In a few minutes she heard the conversation between Tom and the gardener cease. The young man came quickly down the garden and entered his sanctum. He flung his hat and walking stick upon a chair, and then the phonograph struck his attention. He moved towards it, and stood looking down on it, with his back towards the door of the room whence Dora was eagerly watching him. Then he began absent-mindedly to put the treadle in motion. Once more the phonograph spoke, and as it did so Dora moved silently forward and stood in the open door of the laboratory. "Dora, darling, I have loved you ever since the day I first saw you. I have longed to tell you every day since then, but have always been afraid. Will you try to love me just a little?"

Tom heard these words, and then, before he had moved his foot from the treadle, the phonograph spoke in another voice: "Why should you be afraid to come and ask me when you know?"

It was Dora's voice, and even while he wondered at this marvel he heard the same voice speaking again. "Tom!" said the voice, and turning he saw his cousin standing with half parted lips and laughing rosy face only a yard or two away from him.

"Dora," he cried, "you have learned my secret!"
Dora moved towards him and hid her face in his shoulder. Then, as he raised and kissed it, she whispered, "Yes, Tom, long ago."

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