

pulse-beat? Mean it! How could I help meaning it? How could any one with a soul help meaning it?"

"But, Lachlan, Lachlan, think of what you are saying." The voice was tender, and there was no note of objection.

"Oh, Ruth," I went on, "I do not need to think of what I am saying. I love you fondly, madly wildly, and I've loved you from the moment I looked into your glorious eyes. I tried to fight it off. I wrestled with myself, but it was all to no purpose. It came on me like an avalanche, and I was just as powerless to resist as I now am to refrain from speaking."

A strange, sweet smile came into her face, and a light as from the other world broke in her eyes.

I went on, for I was filled with love. The feelings which had been restrained and pent up for a time were overflowing—nay, the dam had burst, and I was being swept helplessly and resistlessly upon the impetuous flow. I took her both hands in mine, and she offered no resistance.

"Ruth," I said, "I've lain awake many a night just repeating your sweet name, so dear has it become to me. Often and often have I spent the hours under heaven's canopy gazing up into the matchless vault thinking of you, and so real did your presence become to me that I would have regarded it as quite natural had you issued from amongst the stars and come to me. I have looked upon you as of the angels, and I feared to speak to you of my love lest the gods, offended at my sacrilege, should take you from me. I know that you are too good, too beautiful, too angelic