

all these, and I live in perpetual fear lest it will not shine for me. Without this sunshine life will be a dreary pilgrimage. I can but look forward to a journey along a sombre, sunless and cheerless pathway."

Ruth looked genuinely puzzled, for of course she could not understand the feelings that had been agitating my breast.

"You are thinking of Tannis?" she said.

"No," I answered, "poor Tannis is beyond the bourne, and for her the sun will not shine on earth again."

"Then of what sunshine are you deprived?"

She was looking into my eyes with all the sweet and innocent simplicity of girlish youth. Her hair had broken loose from its fastenings and streamed over her shoulders and neck in glorious wealth.

"Why, can't you guess, Ruth?" I said, taking her right hand in mine and stroking it gently. My soul was on fire at the touch, and I could have gathered her in my arms and smothered her with caresses.

The magnetic current established by that touch, the contact of soul with soul, for we were looking into each other's eyes, soon did its subtle work. The girl's face was suffused with blushes and her eyes fell.

"Why, you don't mean it, Lachlan; surely you don't mean it?"

"Ruth," I said, earnestly, and there was a tremor in my voice, but my speech came to me like a wild current, "mean it! mean it! Why, have you not observed it in my every glance, in my every action, in my every