

indefinable but evident. It was as if the warmth and brightness had gone out of her affection, like the sunlight from a landscape, leaving all the colors dull and lifeless. I feared that she had grown away from our friendship.

When circumstances brought us together again I was glad, for I hoped to resume our old intimacy. But I found a different Ruth. Her feeling for me seemed unchanged and her welcome was affectionate, but all her sparkle of animation was gone. She was quiet and listless. Only when her children were near her or when she spoke of them did I see any of the gladness of her old spirit.

Often I thought she seemed anxious to tell me something—to open her heart to me—then she would suddenly draw back into a gentle but impenetrable reserve. One afternoon I found her looking pale and ill, but almost feverishly animated. She proposed one of our long walks into the hills, and as we went along