

## A Speech

At a nod from Aunt Eleanor they all rose.

Louise stepped from her end of the table to where Overland stood gazing out across the hills. She touched him lightly on the arm. He turned and looked at her unseeingly. His eyes were filled with the dreams of his youth, dreams that had not come true . . . and yet . . . He gazed down into her face. His expression changed. His eyes grew misty with happiness. He realized how many friends he had and how loyal and excellent they were. And of all that he had gained his greatest treasure was his love for Louise — for Louise Lacharme, the little Rose Girl of his dreams. That love lay buried deep in his rugged heart. She would never know of it. No one should ever know — not even Collie.

Louise, in an ecstasy of affection and pity that she could not understand, suddenly flung her arms around Overland's neck and kissed him full on the lips.

More than he had ever dared to dream had come true.

THE END