

smouldering self flamed, prodding all his senses. "Man can't give, or take away, the right to life."

A hearty laughter checked Gail. Yet instantly he rasped —

"Dick!" His stare consumed the gay youth's green plaid mackinaw, his round wool cap with a knob on top. "Dick Trueblood!"

"Gail, you look as though you'd crawled out of a coffin," he cheered. "Any Siwash seeing you, 'ud stampede or shoot you for a *shaman's* devil."

"Ought to see the others," averred Gail, blankly. "We'd laid down to die. Said so — flat."

Ever the remote excruciation is that in the shadow of extinction nothing matters. But Dick winced.

Faint — Gail's joy was but a phantom; so sapped, even the elemental faculties of manhood, that he could not yet respond to the splendour of deliverance. Only, Life was a flux, a mighty rhythm. Naught was fixed. Existence was but the mutability of atoms. . . .

"Others?" — Dick's old, imperative tone.

"Look by that fire," pointed Gail. "Mine there, like your woman here. The same fate for us in this country, I guess."

"Our land, won through them." Dick coloured, but with a shy chuckle. "And she's weakened me jest enough with her shears. Eh, Mrs. Delilah Trueblood?"

At last Gail followed Dick's glance toward the silent, dumbfounded woman. Her head had drooped into her hands, and she was gently quivering. But now Gail could see clearly — the grey squirrel pelts he remembered made into a *parka*, the white toque. And soon she resolutely raised her face: the abrupt bang over the round, appealing countenance, no longer shrewd or doll-like, but transfigured, strongly tender. Those