

CHAPTER VIII.

"WHEN THE SUN GOETH DOWN."

"Opitsah!—Klahowya."

They brought him—his dark, sad-faced brothers—bearing him on a bed of elastic poles and the skins of beasts; and walking through the lines of blue-coats as if not seeing them, they laid him on the floor of the shack, and grouped themselves clannishly in one corner, near his head. Stuart knelt with trembling hands to examine the cruel wound in the throat, and turned away, shaking his head. He could not speak. There was a slow, inward hemorrhage. He was bleeding to death.

"Determination has kept him alive," decided the Major, when the spokesman of the Kootenais told of the shot on the mountain, and how they had to carry him, with Snowcap in his arms, to the wigwam of Grey Eagle; of the council through which he kept up, and then told them he would live until he reached camp—he was so sure of it! For the body of Snowcap he had asked the horses left in the gulch, and was given them—and much more, because of the sorrow of their nation. He did not try to speak at first, only looked about, drinking in the strange kindness in all the faces; then he reached out his hand toward Rachel.

"Opitsah!" he whispered, with that smile of triumph in his eyes. "I told you I'd live—till I got back to you;" and then his eyes turned to the Major. "I got a stand-off on the hostilities—till your return—inside