

stop on the way home and bring the mail."

"Judge West told me the good news." Seb turned away from the window.

"It is bad enough," she replied. "But—I smile when I look at my wrists." She brought her hand up and studied the veins. "I came from nowhere, but I am not a squaw! I shall not fear the call of my blood, for it will not lead me backward."

Dr. Lang's heavy tread sounded on the small porch, and they heard Judge West greet him.

"I could not believe—"

Layton paused, for Dr. Lang's deep voice had come to them from the yard.

"Dan Johns was killed trying to escape!"

There was a sharp cry from the girl, and Layton felt the blood leave his own cheeks.

"Here's a telegram for you," Lang was saying. "I reckon it will tell you. But I heard the news in Whitman."

Tess took a step toward the door, but staggered, and in a moment Layton had clasped her in his arms. For a few breaths she lay there, trembling. He bent down and kissed her.

"You must not!" she cried, struggling to