

# THE SMOKY YEARS

By ALAN LE MAY W.N.U. Release

## INSTALLMENT 8 THE STORY SO FAR:

Dusty King and Lew Gordon had built up a vast string of ranches which stretched from Texas to Montana. King was killed by his powerful and unscrupulous competitor, Ben Thorpe. Bill Roper, King's adopted son, undertook to

break Thorpe's power. His first step was to start a cattle war in Texas. He made this decision against the opposition of Lew Gordon and the tearful pleading of his sweetheart, Jody Gordon. The raids upon Thorpe's herds were successful at

first, but resistance was soon put up which caused Roper's men to leave him, one by one. Cleve Tanner, manager of Thorpe's Texas holdings, appeared not to feel the losses inflicted upon him. Roper's resources were dwindling low.

**CHAPTER X—Continued**  
Dry Camp Pierce still loafed at the Pot Hook, dejected, hopeless. No one knew what he was waiting for. Roper never heard from the rest of them now. In spite of everything that Maxim could do, the Rangers were on the loose. The wild bunch that had threatened to dominate Texas was broken and split, scattered far and wide, every man for himself. Day and night, a saddle pony waited beside the door of the bunkhouse in which Roper slept. . . .

"You'll get him, all right," he added hastily.  
Half a block ahead another man stepped into the street, and walked toward Bill. Before his face could be seen in the black shadow under his hat, Bill Roper knew by the set of the broad shoulders, by the rolling swing of his stride, that it was Cleve.

He was surprised to hear her say that. He had no way of knowing how much she had heard, or what she had heard, about his shoot-out with Cleve Tanner.

Nothing could tell more of Roper's present position than this:—as Shoshone Wilce rode up, Bill Roper already had his gun in his hand, and the other hand upon the bridle rein of his pony.

The moments during which the two men walked toward each other drew out interminably. Their eyes were upon each other's faces now; Bill could see that Cleve Tanner looked happy, almost gay, as if this was the first good thing that had happened to him for a long time.

"A notch? I hadn't thought anything about it."  
All her bitter contempt of the lonely-riding men of violence came into her voice. "Isn't that what the gunmen and the cow thieves always do?"

Shoshone Wilce almost tumbled into Bill Roper's arms. He grabbed Bill by both lapels of the black, town-going coat that Roper always wore when he was about to travel a long way. Shoshone's bottle-nose gleamed and quivered, and his eyes were like shoe buttons.

At twelve paces Cleve Tanner drew; to observers the men seemed so close together that it was impossible that either of them should live. Tanner's gun spoke five times, fast, faster than most men could slip the hammer. Nobody knew where the first four shots went; but the fifth shot was easy to place, for

He was motionless a long time. Then he drew the skinning knife that always swung at the back of his belt in a worn sheath. Its blade was lean and hollowed, worn almost out of existence by a thousand honings. He stood looking at the knife; he tossed it in the air, and caught it by the handle again.

"It's done! He's bust—he's split—he's cracked—"  
"What are you talking about?"  
"Cleve Tanner! I tell you, he's gone to hell!"

When he looked at Jody she was staring at him strangely, almost as if she were afraid.

"I wouldn't go cutting marks on the handle of a gun," he said at last. His voice was thick. "Nobody cares what anybody does to the handle of a gun."

Suddenly Bill Roper turned into the unaccountable kid that his years justified. Like a man suddenly coming alive, he took Shoshone by the throat, shook him as if he had weighed no more than a cat. His teeth showed bare and set.

When he looked at Jody she was staring at him strangely, almost as if she were afraid.

Roper stepped forward, and with the keen blade cut a notch clean and deep in the left arm of Dusty's cross.

He said, "Shoshone—you fool with me—"  
Shoshone cried out through the grip on his throat, "I tell you, Cleve Tanner—"

All through the afternoon Jody Gordon had ridden the barren trails above Ogallala, on a pony that forever tried to turn home. Thaw was on the prairie again, and the South Platte was brimming with melted snow; in the air was something of the damp, clean smell which had marked another spring, in this same place. But it was now more than six months since Jody had seen Bill Roper; and she found it no help that she was forever hearing his name.

When he looked at Jody she was staring at him strangely, almost as if she were afraid.

He couldn't say any more.  
Bill Roper was cool again, now. "What makes you think so?"

It was with reluctance that she at last rode up the rise upon which it stood, unlighted, in the dusk.

Roper stepped forward, and with the keen blade cut a notch clean and deep in the left arm of Dusty's cross.

"He failed his delivery at the Red. Where he was supposed to bring up fifteen thousand head, a little handful of punchers showed up with a few hundred. He can't round his cattle—if he's got any cattle—and he can't make delivery at the Red!"

She unsaddled her own pony, booted it into the muddy corral, and threw the forty pound kak onto the saddle-pole with the easy, one-handed swing of the western rider. As she turned toward the house she was trying not to cry.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

"We didn't believe you," Shoshone Wilce babbled on. "We all said it couldn't be done. But by gosh we've done it! All over Texas, Tanner's notes are being called, as the word spreads. Wells Fargo refuses to honor his signature for a dime. They say now that Ben Thorpe won't back Tanner—Thorpe denies him, and the Tanner holdings are being closed up and sold out—"

She unsaddled her own pony, booted it into the muddy corral, and threw the forty pound kak onto the saddle-pole with the easy, one-handed swing of the western rider. As she turned toward the house she was trying not to cry.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

"You sure?" Roper asked, looking up from the ground again.

She unsaddled her own pony, booted it into the muddy corral, and threw the forty pound kak onto the saddle-pole with the easy, one-handed swing of the western rider. As she turned toward the house she was trying not to cry.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

"Am I sure? You think I'd risk my damn throat coming here to tell you something like this, if I didn't know for sure?"

She unsaddled her own pony, booted it into the muddy corral, and threw the forty pound kak onto the saddle-pole with the easy, one-handed swing of the western rider. As she turned toward the house she was trying not to cry.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

"No," Roper admitted, "I guess not."

She unsaddled her own pony, booted it into the muddy corral, and threw the forty pound kak onto the saddle-pole with the easy, one-handed swing of the western rider. As she turned toward the house she was trying not to cry.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

"It's all over," Shoshone tried to tell him. "Can't you realize it, man?"

She unsaddled her own pony, booted it into the muddy corral, and threw the forty pound kak onto the saddle-pole with the easy, one-handed swing of the western rider. As she turned toward the house she was trying not to cry.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

"No," Roper said.

She unsaddled her own pony, booted it into the muddy corral, and threw the forty pound kak onto the saddle-pole with the easy, one-handed swing of the western rider. As she turned toward the house she was trying not to cry.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

**CHAPTER XI**

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

Strolling, easy-going, but somehow reluctant, Bill Roper walked the streets of Tascosa, between the false-fronted wooden buildings that lined the hoof-stirred dust.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

Sooner or later, he knew, Cleve Tanner would appear upon this one main street. Everybody knew that Tanner was on the warpath, determined to seek out Bill Roper. It was said that Tanner's only remaining interest was to bring down the youngster who had cut Texas from under him.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

Yet ten days passed before Cleve Tanner came.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

It was eleven o'clock on a sunny Saturday morning when Dry Camp Pierce brought Bill the word.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

"Well, kid, he's here. You were right again—you won't have to hunt him out. He's looking for you; all you have to do is wait."

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

"Where is he now?"

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

"In some bar, a block up the street. He's quarrel with my father, asking if you've been seen. You might's well wait for him here."

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

"No," Roper said. "I'll walk out and meet him, I think."

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

Dry Camp peered up into his face. "Kid, you look sick!"

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

"I don't feel real happy," Roper admitted.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

"Draw deliberate and slow," Pierce counseled. "Take your time, don't hurry, whatever you do. But don't waste any time, either. Fast and smooth—"

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

"I get you," Roper said with a flicker of a grin. "Take my time, but be quick about it. Move plenty slow, but fast as hell. All right, Dry Camp!"

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

He gave the butt of his gun a hitch to make sure it was loose in its leather; then he spun the whiskey away from him untasted, and walked out.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

Dry Camp Pierce looked at the full glass, and exchanged a worried glance with the bartender. Then he followed Bill.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

Dry Camp kept blinking his eyes in the bright light, as if they were dry; and there were white patches at the corners of his mouth.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

"Don't give him too much of a break, kid. He's awful bad. But

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

CHAPTER XII

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

Then, as she walked through the stable, a figure rose up from the shadows beside the door and barred her way.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on an impulse, she had changed her mind.

It was well into the summer as Bill Roper once more rode south out of Ogallala toward the pile of stones that marked the grave of Dusty King. Jody Gordon rode with him. In the few days he had stopped over in Ogallala he had hardly seen her at all. At first she had refused to ride with him today; but at the last moment, as if on