

mourning dove whose love cry sounded from the alders fringing Teapot. They were all children of the Big Country.

Away off to the north a dot topped a divide and disappeared; in a minute it bobbed over the crest of a nearer wave of land, coming in the direction of the cabin. Original's eye followed the vagrant moving thing curiously.

"That might be the doc, though he said he was n't comin' back here for a week," he mused.

"No," Hilma corrected softly. "I think I know who it is. It's Uncle Alf."

"Sho!" exclaimed Original in mock surprise. "How come your eyes are better than mine?"

"They're not," the girl laughed. "It's the heart tells me, boy. And besides, I told the doc to send Uncle Alf out here because — because ——"

Original's hand, suddenly tucked beneath her chin, tipped up her face so that her blue eyes, deep and slumberous with the love in her, must meet his.

"Li'l' girl, once you stole my hoss — my fool li'l' hayburner Tige — an' I let you go. But what am I goin' to do when you figger to