

She shook her head. "I always wanted to be rescued from the environment that was stifling me, but I did n't know a way of escape till you came," she said.

"Then you knew it?"

"From the moment I saw you tie the janitor to the hitching-post. You remember I was waiting to go riding with Mr. Bromfield. Well, I was bored to death with correct clothes and manners and thinking. I knew just what he would say to me and how he would say it and what I would answer. Then you walked into the picture and took me back to nature."

"It was the hitching-post that did it, then?"

"The hitching-post began it, anyhow." She slipped her arms around his neck and held him fast. "Oh, Clay, is n't it just too good to be true?"

A ball of fire pushed up into the crotch between two mountain-peaks and found them like a searchlight, filling their little valley with a golden glow.

The new day summoned them to labor and play and laughter, perhaps to tears and sorrow too. But the joy of it was that the call came to them both. They moved forward to life together.

THE END