

"Hurrah," seconded the Bushwhackers.

The Colonel chuckled and put an arm about each of the two young lovers.

"That's a splendid idea," he nodded, "—a splendid idea. Good people, I'll take you at your word. I'll come and we'll live here together. I can't say that I want to leave this place since I've been initiated into the Brotherhood of the Untamed."

Twilight had scratched its purple tally-mark in the fringed west, and the ducks were sweeping in from south in long lines, when Boy and Gloss paused before a spot beside the path.

"That's poor Joe's grave," said Boy. "Seems I miss him an awful lot since the birds are comin' back and the world's alive again."

"Poor old Joe," sighed Gloss. "He won't lie and watch and sleep by the old ash-leach no more, Boy."

He drew her close to him.

"Let's don't talk of Joe to-night, girl," he said. "Let it be you and me and the Wild."

And so they passed up the path and the streak of crimson faded to orange in the low sky, and from orange to gray-drab. In the lone tree beside the path a little gray-bird sang its song.

THE END