

The Lost Road

in her mind was a possible life with him, and he was content.

She became to him a wonderful, glorious person, and each day she grew in loveliness. It had been five years of soldiering in Cuba, China, and on the Mexican border since he had talked to a woman with interest, and now in all she said, in all her thoughts and words and delights, he found fresher and stronger reasons for discarding his determination to remain wedded only to the United States Army. He did not need reasons. He was far too much in love to see in any word or act of hers anything that was not fine and beautiful.

In their rides they had one day stumbled upon a long-lost and long-forgotten road through the woods, which she had claimed as their own by right of discovery, and, no matter to what point they set forth each day, they always returned by it. Their way through the woods stretched for miles. It was concealed in a forest of stunted oaks and black pines, with no sign of human habitation, save here and there a clearing now long neglected and alive only with goldenrod. Trunks of trees, moss-grown and crumbling beneath the touch of the ponies' hoofs, lay in their path, and above it the branches of a younger generation had