

THE BALLAD OF BUCK THORN

John Haugland

From the Wabash River to the Mississippi's mighty flow
This frontier state was born from prairie families long ago
The bluestem danced a two-step with the wind across the plains
And buffalo roamed far and wide among the scarlet flames

With fire and ice this land was honed and tempered thru and thru
A well-planned out community that mother nature grew
But then one day, so long ago, a stranger came to town
He set his gnarly roots in, and the neighborhood went down

He was the wildest outlaw to ever have been born
and crossed the tawny prairies, branches spreading scorn
Oh, he was the meanest outlaw to ever have been born
His name was Buck, Buck Thorn

Buck rounded up the rowdiest and most-destructive clan
Invading wretched thugs with names like Lou Strife and Queen Anne
These lowly desperados quickly pushed our friends away
And cast a shadow deep on the degraded disarray

A lot of the old-timers started pining for the sun
Deliberating hard on what exactly could be done
The critters, varmints, bugs and balms, and every kind of seed
Came up and argued in delineation of their needs

The prairie dogs and chickens, the bluebirds and buffalo,
The meadowlarks and gophers spoke with voles inside their holes
Bob O'Link chirped loudly perched atop an old oak grub
A spritely tuft of dropseed hollered to a grizzly cub

And with decades of deliberating finally at an end
They sent an e-mail plea to anyone who could attend
To tell about their problems they took paper to the pen
And wrote letters to the editor and to their congressmen

In early spring some other strangers finally came to town
But Buck was waiting for a chance to win the big showdown
The new folks had their work gloves on & held their sharpn'd saws
with garlon for administering mother nature's laws

At high noon by their watches all the twigs began to fly,
Tho needles stabbed the trunks were felled & pilers piled em high
With bulging arms the sweat was dripping down upon their brows
Til they had cut ol Buckthorn into piles of broken twisted boughs

Yes, Buck had finally met his match and soon was chased away, and
Once again the prairie buzzes in its happy gay soires
But friends, the story don't end here 'cause all you buckeroos
Should help keep law and order with the restoration crews

For this we know my friends as in all things the buck stops here.