"The Followers of The Steel"

A long time ago, the forest was in harmony. That is, apart from the squawking of the crows, high up in the trees, and the rampaging wild boar, but otherwise all was well.
The trees grew tall, then in time they died and crashed to the ground. In the space they left, flowers and then scrubs grew, before the next tree pushed it's way skywards, to fill the canopy once more.
And man lived in the forest, under the branches, which provided shelter, and the fallen trees were burned to provide warmth, and the nuts gathered to provide food.
The squirrels and wild boar also ate the nuts, and on occasion, man would dare to hunt the boar, which was a brave thing to do. In those unusual times of hardship, man would also eat the squireel, even though it tasted disgusting.
Then everything changed. One day, in one of the clearings made by a fallen tree, a tall shiny triangular of steel appeared.
No one knew where it came from, or why.
Over time, stories were told about the steel, the powers it had, the rules that must be followed, the taboos. And the people who told these stories became known as the followers of the steel. They started as a small group, then a large group, and then a cult.
Splinter groups came about, with disagreements about the steel, factions whose words turned into actions, and fights broke out within the forest.
One group, who would have nothing to do with the steel, moved far away, to a part of the forest previously rarely visited, and they became known as The Followers of The Forest.
But the other groups stayed close to the steel and fought for, what they claimed, was their ground.
So the harmony of the forest was lost. Instead of people saying "the forest's" they said "mine" or "ours". Greed set in. Battles were fought, trees burned and animals killed.
Over time, separate areas of the forest were marked out, by banks or ditches, or areas where the tree had been felled. But conflict still arose, often small skirmishes, but sometimes much larger battles.
Then, one day, the steel disappeared, as mysteriously as it had appeared.
But the followers of the steel persisted in their ways. Their greed, their arguments.
Until the day of The Great Fire.
Setting fire to another groups belongings, had become a weapon of war.
On this occasion, once the fire started, it could not be stopped.
It swept across the gaps between the groups, and trees, and animals, and humans burned to death.
The forest was devastated.
All that was left was charred ground, with wisps of smoke rising up from it.
No tree, no animals, no humans.
A wasteland, where once there had been plenty. Wide open space, instead of dense forest.
Silence, apart from the sound of the wind, where there had been incessant chatter of animals and birds.
And the land was like this for quite some time.
However, The Followers of The Forest had been spared, and they returned from far away, and set about replanting the flowers and the shrubs and the trees.
Over a great deal of time, the forest grew back, animals re-appeared, and harmony was restored.
The tall shiny triangular of steel did come return, but that is another story.

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