

~~We weren't complete.~~ In the juggling of all this, a herder was needed at least until shearing time. Getting us settled in at ^{the} cabin, gauging Berneta's health, learning the country, my father needed someone with the sheep all the time. A tepee herder, to guard against coyotes, bear, whatever else threatened sheep around the clock. The man who had come recommended didn't seem to be any whiz, but he trooped through the day, Dad moving his tepee after the herder had his breakfast. "I wouldn't call him the greatest," my father said, something bothering him about the lazy look of the guy.

Then came Dad's discovery of a lamb carcass, gut-eaten by a coyote practically at the doorflap of the herder's tepee.

The instant the sheep shaded up at mid-day my father was sifting his way ^{into} ~~among~~ them step by ever so slow step among them, doing a walkthrough count of the lambs. Low at his hip, his hand flicks an inch or so as he tallies each one, quick ^{stroke} touch of arithmetic. Thirty lambs come up missing.

The herder is a scenery inspector, idling away under a tree instead of patrolling for coyotes. My father wheeled, strode over to the herder and snapped, "Roll your goddamn bed."

locks down
air
up of a
help

Trying to do
whatever
my father
was out of
right

while
my old
hair, been
having
a
counting
lamb
a dog
whatever
they
felt
like it.

sheep ^{each} ~~for a~~ day. When the two dogs are worked together, they add up to
less than one. Jack proprietorially sulks whenever Flop is sent around
the sheep, Flop ^{with him} takes a ^{dis}dismayed yipping fit any time he is held back from
a mission with Jack.

The next herder, escorted in by the Morgan camp tender, my parents immediately dubbed Prince Al for his ^{rapid fire} consumption of Prince Albert tobacco.

When he wasn't smoking the twisty shreds from the red can, he chewed it.

^{of moosejills} Brown parentheses, apparently permanent, hung at the corners of his mouth,

but what really caught attention were the tracks of his roll-your-own

habit down the front of his shirt, the burn specks where dribbles of

cigarette ash fell from his handmade cigarettes. [Thinking of the dry

grass of July and August ahead,] Dad muttered that we'd be lucky if this

one didn't burn down the mountain and the sheep with it.

 He and I were barely back from moving the herder's tepee the ^{first} ~~next~~

morning when rifleshots broke out on the mountain behind us. KuhWOW!

KuhWOW-kuhWOW-KuhWOW! My father the marksman listened skeptically to the ^{knock over} fusillade. If you don't hit a coyote with your first shot you're probably

wasting your lead.

Berneta came out to cock an ^{ear} at the uproar. "Makes you wonder if the coyotes are shooting back."

When the three of us rode up that evening, the sheep and Jack the dog were as jittery as if they, not the coyotes, had been under bombardment

dialogue

My father is heard to mutter

130-06?

unstrung?

enacted

A grouse's cry. She is sure it came from a big pine, out by itself.

Nudging OO toward the tree, she tries to find the bird. Camouflaged virtually to invisible in the limbs...It takes her five minutes to discern the blend of feather pattern against the bark. The grouse plunges out of the tree, wings set, sailing [in an unflapping glide] down the mountain. Quick and far; a hundred yards, two hundred, three hundred, the brilliant unflapping glide goes on. At last vanishes into another tree.

as if dislodged by her view of it

She notices the Flop dog straying off and calls him in, her voice drumming back from the mountain. ^{op - op - op} ~~inches~~ That ~~The~~ air dance of echo allures her. The play of words comes out in her soft shout: Ringling, Ringer, Rung!

right of cabin from ...

--Charlie Rung teeters in the cabin doorway, fifteen summers before, drawn by a disturbance in the air, the toot of a grouse, was that? He squints at the meadow, his handful of cows with their heads already dumbly down in the grass again. Not sure now he heard anything, he regrets the the nips of his chokecherry wine at this time of day...

absorbed

Homebrew for lunch is not a sound idea. ~~hasn't~~ He regards the stack of house lumber, no longer the fresh yellow when he hauled it in here

class meadow

three years ago, four? Took receipt of it at the Maudlow depot, borrowed the Morgans' big gutwagon and labored it up here load by load, damn near tipping over every time at ^{every} gulch. There it sat, board footage for four rooms not counting the screen porch, gables and shingles, the whole shebang.

4 lbs.
SOB of a
pile

d) The thing of it was, the house existed in his mind; the only discrepancy was that it needed to be built. He'd done ^{CR's} okay with the barn, and been ^{pile} triplicate careful with the walls of the cabin, not wanting to wake up some winter morning frozen to death. But the carpentry of the house...

^{Jan.?} Middle of June, already. He knows he ^{stuff} ^{all at once} ^{will} never budge that lumber.

He was -
a youngster
any more.

congar
Hawkins,
light brown
& coyote
runners
a market for
predators

Nobody got over her. Doig or Ringer, those around me in my growing
up stayed ~~hit, pierced,~~ ~~pierced~~ by my mother's death in the mountain cabin. My
father was wrenched back and forth by how agreeable the return to Montana
with no warning
had been for Berneta, and how it struck her down; how risky the one last
mountain summer turned out to be, and how it wouldn't have mattered if
there had been a hospital next door there in the meadow. To my grandmother,
all her suspicion of "out there" was horridly proven, Berneta taken from
her in some remote visitless place. Having had to toughen herself against
so much, Bessie Ringer now faced what would never [callous over], ~~this~~ death
of a daughter. For Wally, the reaction was a lifelong clutch at his
sister's last letters, the keeping of news that shot in just ^{as} after it
became clear ^{was} ^{was} he himself ^{was} ^{would} was going to survive the war. [My uncle ^{went on to} lived
a pursuit of outdoor enjoyments; it may be that he did so from the indelible
evidence ^{that} ^{any night,} that the term of life could be ^{over} short. Always after, for all of
them, it was not simply that Berneta had died. There was always the
echo-plus of "out-there-in-the-Maudlow-country, up-there-on-the-mountain,
on-Ivan's-sixth-birthday..." ...the acrobat heights of Montana earth that
kept her so alive, until they killed her.

mead -
near

menting -
picking

young?

surrounding geography. The ~~so~~ level deck of meadow; how in the world does that happen to occur here, slipped in between gulches so convulsed they nearly stand on end? Then the cabin knoll, just enough of an ascension to lord it over the meadow; a terrace, no less. And the water helling off down the gulch is a surprising amount of creek, yet its flow is covert, hidden under steep banks until you peer straight down into the ~~subterranean~~ ^{disturbed} glass of its riffles.

*Transition
ever?
always?*

✶ But barn smells are reliable, down-to-earth and then some. Musty hay and almost neutral old manure tinge the air as I clock in on my father and the saddle stock.

now?

Unexpected as a chateau, the steep-peaked barn holds stalls for all four horses and there are even enough fenceposts around it, askew but still standing, to resurrect a pasture. Eternal daily chore of picketing Sugar and Duffy and Tony and Star on thirty-foot ropes thus banished, Dad moves through the unsaddlings whistling the same chorus over and over in pleasure.

possibly
Holy J. Christ, how can you ever figure it all? Prince Al probably
would've behaved himself, not gone off and got plastered, if Berneta
been the one to take him to town.
had taken him in. Yet, couldn't blame her for not wanting to fight the
, muddiest damn setup anywhere, the Maudlow country.
roads. If we could just sneak past the weather a little...

And maybe Prince Al would have misbehaved no matter who took him to town.
fallen off the wagon even if a dozen Bernetas

had taken him to town. *summer sheep...*
the Rung place is restful when it's not a day of commotion like this,
Settle in, use the country, the sheep deal will pay off in just a couple
more weeks at shearing, and there'll be the lambs after that, and the
ewes sold too, it'll set us up for a good long time. We can see if
Berneta will try Arizona again, ^{that} the country around Prescott. Or if she
can get by in Montana as well as she has this spring, ~~xx~~ maybe that's as
much as can be asked. Ivan in school this fall, we'll (get ourselves placed)...

where she feels she can start dealing with the herd situation. The

sheep are full of run this morning. Every second minute, the lead ewes

have to be turned, bent back from a sudden mania to quit the country,

stream out across the mountain just to be traveling. Here and there

a bunchbreaker erups^t, a solo sheep dithering off toward the timber

with forty lambs following like a tail on a kite. The worst

vagabond, a haughty high-headed ewe determined to stomp off back to the

bedground, Berneta slings the ring of cans at and has the satisfaction

of clouting her in the rump and causing a panicked veer back to the

protection of the herd. Don't ~~ear~~^{dare} do much of that, as it means the

exertion of climbing off and on the horse to retrieve your cans, but

it shows the old biddies you mean business.

She uses the dog to take the run out of them, directing him with

backhand sweeps of her arm as if clearing away a curtain of air. "Go

away around them, Flop. Around them, boy." The sheep mill in an unruly

circle, a two-acre knot of wool, then suddenly catch the inspiration to

mother up with their lambs. The epidemic now is ewes sniffing to make

sure the offspring is their own, lambs diving to their knees to suckle.

After the session of this, the band of sheep begins to graze up the slope

You'd think 1000s had app/mts.

*dash
dog's arc*

On through that summer--Hiroshima's summer--the last of the letters in Wally's packet were written and sent out, in grief and confusion, to Wally would packet away

Wally has written that he feels he's being spared the news of the family. Not knowing is ^{usually} worse than knowing, and she has written back a line, an odd one but ⁱⁿ ~~that seems to say~~ yet ^{says} the attitude he seems to ^{need} ~~want~~ from somebody ^{on . homefront} here at home. Don't worry, Wally--if there is anything very bad happens here at home, I'll write and tell you.

--A few lines once again to let you know that I am fine. And I hope these find you the same. My grandmother imperturbably ^{sets in on her reply letter to him} begins from her Norskie kitchen captivity.

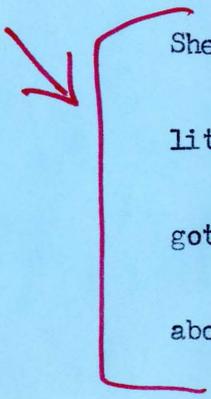
Then, amid report of rhubarb canning and OO, Winona abruptly is ^{written off} ~~tended to~~.

She's a nice enough kid in a way. But Mama learned Winona's ways what little time I spent with her, she ratifies Wally's break-up. I nearly got my head bit off several times over nothing. It kind of amuses me about these silly girls.

one that sounds odd came out odd

possibly she can understand

more >



laboratories
laborations

Normally our haircuts were homemade, and ~~the strange fussiness of~~
a barbershop ^{was a strangeness} spooked me a little, ^{actually} all right then, a lot. The green
eyeshade worn by the hovering barber; why ^{vulgarish} green, why not skyblue? The
barber chair with those corrugated arm-ends as if the chair was enough
of a participant to have its own knuckles. The mirrors on the walls both
in front and back of the haircut victim, I could see the use of, ease
of glance for the barber so that he wouldn't snip you lopsided; but the
surplus of reflections echoing endlessly away, what was that about?

Even my hair seemed to know it was in odd circumstances. The barber
tucked the whispery cloth in around my collar and critically combed my
flop of red shag across my head. Then asks, as though it might matter
in how he proceeds: "Where you fellows from?"

A2 77
C. W. Morgan
W. S. Morgan
March - March

Where indeed, given our road record since ^{February} ~~last November~~. But my
father flaps a wrinkle out of the newspaper he is reading and encompasses
everything from the root years of the Doig homestead to the Morgan summer
range of the moment ~~with~~: "We're out here on Sixteen--"

adv?

--sixteen kinds of weather a day this year, Berneta says to herself
as she unties the [slicker coat] from behind the saddle and slips it on.

#

The sheep were full of the devil this morning. The lead ewes had to be turned time and again, bent back from their sudden mania to quit the country, stream out across the mountain just to be traveling. Here and there a bunch-breaker would erupt, a solo sheep dithering off into the timber with forty lambs following like a tail on a kite. The worst vagabond, a haughty old biddy determined to go off on her own, she slung the ring of cans at and had the satisfaction of clouting her in the rump. ~~You couldn't afford~~ much of that, as it meant climbing off and on the horse to retrieve your cans, but it showed them you meant business.

She used the dog to take the run out of them.

urgent
show face
quick hooves
side-effect
within epidemic

causing a
panicked near book
to protect in
hand
Don't do
Don't do

motivated
them up

return
to
bedside

exaction

(expand
narrative)

run

abrupt

stamp

Berneta

old biddies

Charlie and his mother-in-law instead of his young wife. I grew up amid their storms, for neither of these two was ever going to know the meaning of bland. But as their truce swung and swayed and held, my growing-up felt not motherless but tribal, keenly dimensional, full of untranslatable alliances (no, she's not my mother, she's...no, he's my father, not my grand-), (curlicues of loyalty.) In the eventual, when I had grown and gone, my grandmother and father stayed together to see each other on through life. April 6, 1971: his ended first, emphysema the cruel lung reprise of my mother's fate. October 24, 1974: my grandmother remained sturdy to the final instant of her eighty-one years--thank God, it was the middle of a chuckle as she joked with a friend taking her to their regular card party at the Senior Citizens Club. Their twenty-one years together, a surprising second life for each, I've long known I was the beneficiary of. The letters newly show, though, theirs was maybe the most durable dreaming of all, that not-easy pair; my father and my grandmother, and their boundaryless memory of my mother.

away to W went her letter of June 14th,

next chance
(to mail)

Transition

solitary

It crossed paths
chronologically

At last arrives the only letter from Wally that I have been able

to bring to light.

his nearly a year
worth

All others, dozens from the Ault and Pearl Harbor and Eniwetok and

→ Tokyo Bay

Leyte and Okinawa, went the way of discard and loss, but this one hid in

out in plain sight, in print.

Proved to edit

print. Send in by my grandmother, it appears in full on the front page

of the White Sulphur Springs weekly newspaper of July 4, 1945. Now don't

think that this is all that could be said, Wally tags in an immediate

warning. It is what they will let past the censors.

but in military way, unsaid says plenty.

Not is much.

a lot

It isn't much. From whatever bored junior officer was assigned mail

duty, a dehydrated handout about the Ault having experienced many exciting

encounters that are helping to make history each day.

*Aguy
Barneta
- Santa Long
- Santa Long*

growing like a weed, her last letter ever sang on the 19th of June, 1945.

You don't need to worry about him forgetting you, he remembers his

Uncle ^Wally and knows what ship you are on. He'll probably have a million

questions to ask when you get back. A million less one, now. The lettered

answer of origins, of who first began on our family ocean of askings.

minutes?

As I put words to pages, I voyage on her ink.

^{more}
with sarcasm, then he really lights into him. Scathes him for going
off on a bender. Yet not quite firing him. We still desperately need
a herder, even of this kind, until shearing.

Without a word, Prince Al follows us ^{out & fold himself into} to the car.

moon?
The route from the Maudlow road up to the cabin was beginning to
take on familiar features, like a caravan run. The thick brush of the ^{covers} ~~hid~~ the ^{tangle}
creek but the South Fork sound of it was constant, every ripple purring in hiding.

Yellow shaley rock wherever the gulch broke...

*Cottonwood (?) cut wd slap you half off yr horse.
I am (ignorant)...*

But Go into my father now, and Berneta's words circulate worry and

he is churning Berneta's words, back
reassurance in him.
and forth, worry and reassurance.

*Berneta
knows
country.*

..I'm not about to walk myself to--"

activity at meadow, cabin, as we file
--Dearth of daylight
tangly
up out of gulch.

*find
pigway*

have forgotten their earlier affection for the bedground and want to

keep on stuffing grass into themselves. Words fly out over the mountain:

"Around ^{While the dog makes his route}
"Round them, Flop. Way around them." Berneta adds whistling, a clatter

of cars. ~~Steadily~~ Grudgingly, the sheep shift around and mince slowly

down the slope. It will be a push, to ^{make them} get them down to the cabin meadow

before dark. The horse and dog both are tired and, message from her body,

^{seriously} that way, she is getting ~~to be~~, too. Stay on the horse, don't be walking yourself

to--

*a day's work; she spurs Duffy
close to her head*

*A don't
walk
myself
76-*

the

--Dearth of a herder still holds us in Bozeman. My father and I

ransack the drinkeries on the south side of the street first, Dad giving

a description of Prince A1 which grows more blazing with each bar. But

the bartenders shake their heads, chorus that they sure haven't seen any

such specimen. We even resort to the Oaks Cigar Store, on the chance

he's in there stoking up on tobacco.

No luck. "~~Of-all-the-goddamn-times-to-have-to-herd-the-goddamn-~~

herder," my father tells the world, and we begin canvassing the north side

of the street.

shagnasty

Who would have thought it of ~~grubby~~ gopher-cheeked Prince A1? He

*Completed
(day)
May yourself
out
Get there--*

on chair

more

It was nearing dark. The sheep were bedded at the upper end of the meadow, where my father had handily sited the herder's tepee that morning. Prince Al, sobering up grumpy, headed his horse toward the tepee.

Duffy, still saddled, was grazing in the high grass alongside the barn. Berneta was nowhere in sight.

My father stood in his stirrups, suddenly tiptoe with the strain of trying to see behind the windows of the cabin. "Berneta, we're home," he shouts almost as if it were a question.

The cabin.

The barn.

The bedded sheep.

Nothing answers him except echo.

Then she is in the cabin doorway, wiping her hands with a dish towel, calling out: "Back the same day, are you."

The sheepdogs appear, one on either side of her, yawning from their cozy cabin stay. My father clucks his horse into faster pace across the meadow.

passing tepee cavity

no dogs -
Neither

swindow
slimed w/dun
yells

home of
cabin doorway
get cluttered
frames
w framed
materials

Boy of
a dog
on either
side of her

to (try)
to keep
up

effort

unlit

"How'd ye do with the sheep?"

I got along okay.

The groceries wait. First off the pack saddle are the boxes for her.

"What have you two been up to?" she looks happily back and forth at my father and me.

"Try 'em on," my father says with worldbeating confidence.

Publicly done, as everything is in the single room of the cabin.

She slips the first item on, then peeks in the second box. Lifts out
by ducking down to see it in
the other half of the outfit, puts it on, ~~just so~~

Dad's shaving mirror. Turns to us, rigged out new from head to toe.

Charlie and Ivan brought me the nicest pair of brown boots and a

big hat.

So I am (kind of) a combination cowgirl shepherd now.

*confident
a way - surely*

*w/ an
exclamation
at perfect
fit*

more! →

weeks ago.

"The first day of summer," he resorted to. "Close enough, anyway."

more

>

This was good. My father feeling relieved enough, about the arc of the sheep deal so far, about cabin life and the summer range, to think in gift terms. Berneta has been through a lot, this quintet of months since he fell sick in Alzona Park. Time for her to have a surprise of the decent sort.

*yes
in an*

My father finds what he has in mind. Picks one up and looks at it as if trying to see through it.

"What color would ye say this is, Ivan?"

How to define that it has a kind of off-reddish tint, neither quite one color nor another, stumps me until I think to declare: "Hereford."

"That's no good to us then," he puts it sharply down. "We want straight brown."

*So it'll
go w/
anything*

I single out undiluted brown, my father decides on a pattern, and we're already halfway in business. Away we swagger to another section of the store, for the other grand item to go with this one.

style

royal

There, the saleswoman catches up with us. We feel we don't noticeably

Out of the barber shop we march, shining at the back of the neck.

70
lunch,
Quick
one

Onward to conspiracy. This is the part that is secret from my mother.

My father had confided it to me as soon as we turned Prince Al loose.

I outright dance to the idea, and my father looks springy himself. like he could spring down the street too.

in a
way
just
steps
too.
in
unway

At our destination, though, two of the women shoppers who seem to be the population of Bozeman are passing by, one shaking her head and telling the other: "You ought to see the prices they've got in there."

occupy
one

"Expensive?"

"Awful. I walked in and walked out."

The Doigs are not daunted. In we plunge, my father's jaw geared forward into determination.

Shelves, counters, racks, boxes. Storeload of stuff, and the saleswoman is busy with a woman customer buying something whispery. We're on our own and glad of it.

"What's it a present for?" I'd asked my father when he unveiled this wonderful scheme of his.

That ~~stumped~~ ^{threw} him for a moment. ~~Almost~~ ^{Nearly} three months yet to my mother's birthday, and their wedding anniversary had been six, no, already seven

day
line

The place has the feel of getting away with something, pulling a trick at odds with the surrounding geography. The so level deck of meadow; how in the world does that happen to occur here, slipped in between gulches so convulsed they nearly stand on end? Then the cabin knoll, just enough of an ascension to lord it over the meadow; a terrace, no less. And the South Fork of Sixteenmile is a surprising amount of creek, yet its water is covert, hidden under steep banks until you peer straight down into the subterranean glass of its riffles.

For the first time in half a year, Berneta's letters seem to catch their breath.

#

June 8, 15, and 19, 1945. Her glad reports begin with what neighbored our meadow cabin on the face of Hatfield Mountain, a nice stream. Where my father, getting caught up on his fishing, made its waters our supperland of rainbow trout, nice ones. Almost as softly as if talking to herself, she puts to the pages the three of us starting up our spiral staircase of summer.

share the plank-sided bed in the opposite corner, snug for two but they do not seem to mind. ^{the prospect}

Berneta debates to herself whether to do away with the nasty greenblinds-- nobody for five miles around to see in on us--but ends up scouring the fly matter off them; blank windows have never seemed right to her.

*(more; the one of them?)
↓ tag after...*

Follow

her eyes while she inventories the cabin, the three-month future. The elderly table, scarred and stained from extra duty as a butcher block, at least sits at the proper window, the west one where there is a view of the willow course of the creek. Across the room, the ^{canned goods} homemade cupboard for once is huge enough, logic of someone who, like her, has needed to store most of a season of groceries at a time. And she is glad of the ^{smaller} cool cupboard, the outside cabinet of shelves handy beside the door and tinned against rodents; food will keep for a day or so in there, and for longer term, butter and bacon and any grouse my father manages to shoot can be sealed in jars and ^{cold} stored in the creek. Could be worse, her kitchen veteran's glance and our recent on-the-move history both say. The cookstove is frankly puny, a midget two-lid job not much more than kneehigh even on

leftovers?

improve?
Berneta, but elaborate meals aren't the point of this summer anyway. At the other end of the cabin's single room hunkers a sizable heating stove, *close to* so ~~near~~ the bed that it seems to be trying to sneak under the covers. Winter here halfway up a Montana alp must be beyond *even* what we were accustomed to at the Faulkner Creek ranch, according to the two stoves and the triplicate cabin walls--broad rough boards undermost, then clapboard siding nailed to their outside, and a surprisingly cozy interior of short boards pieced together bricklike--and the roof of corrugated tin sheeting for snow to slide off. We are staying the summer, not the winter. Could be worse.

My father tromps in with a *heaped* maximum armload of firewood, goes to dump it in the woodbox, cusses and lets the wood avalanche *thunder down next to* ~~beside~~ the box instead of into it. "We're going to have to get after the pack rats, first thing," he declares as he scoops out of the woodbox *yet* another junk trove accumulated ~~accumulated~~ by them. Marauders so quizzical--swiping a torn handkerchief one night, a thimble the next--you had to wonder if they did it from sense of humor.

The trapper Berneta kids him, "So if I catch them, think that 'll *id* make it easy enough for you to shoot them?" (Two scabbards are slung on

my father's saddlehorse. In one, the .22 rifle that is the shooting machine
for pack rats and grouse. In the other, his .30-06 coyote ^{artillery} cannon.)

"Other way around, any I shoot first ye can sneak up and clamp a
trap on, can't ye," he gives her back and ^{hustles} ~~goes~~ out to make sure the stovepipes
haven't rusted out where they chimney up through the roof.

Now, in come the contents of the packs. Groceries to the cupboard
between the pair of east-facing windows, clothes...

Habitation is 95% habituation, so the cabin begins to seem familiar as
soon as our own clutter is in place. Rexall calendar to keep track of
the days. Small pane of mirror for my father to shave by, Berneta to
groom by. Our own galvanized bucket for our drinking water, because there's
no telling what has visited any bucket you find in a disused cabin.

My father, everywhere today, is at the barn unsaddling the horses.

Unexpected as a chateau, the barn has stalls for all four horses and there
are even fenceposts ^{still standing} enough to resurrect a horse pasture. My father whistles
in pleasure, ^{eternal daily} summerlong chore of picketing four horses abruptly gone.

An earlier Charlie had striven on this hidden-away knoll. ~~▲~~

bachelor homesteader ~~named~~ Charles Rung who applied himself enough to

cut
run
IS noticed
what does
about 1000?

if Rexall
ever went
out of business,
we will know
because of
mom.

Spigling
v. Trencher?
↓ speed
on 30,
ropes

assemble the cabin and the barn, but his intended house was still stacked
of
as lumber, a huge weathered pile boards...

Whoever he'd been, Charlie Rung had a ~~some~~^{the} ~~what~~ ~~gracious~~ ^{knack} of survival; *moving in like*

up in the timber a little way from the cabin was his cache-hole where

the venison he shot out of season, which
he stashed homebrewed wine and venison steaks from the deer

was to say virtually all the time.

The sheep can't believe their good luck. They stand in their tracks
gobbling the lush meadow grass like a serving of hay, then plunge ahead
three quick steps to gorge the same way, time and again. By noon they
are so roly-poly they don't even head for the timber to shade up, simply
flump down in the open meadow.

Our own meal, this first cabin lunchtime, is Spam sandwiches, drawing
the accusation from my father that it's a plot to send him directly out
fishing.

dialogue

"At least it sits straight with the world," my father observed.

*to 3mo
decy ↓
have some
of family
unease*

What aligned us so in our thinking, ^{the} the squares of a mile each that land
in the West was surveyed into, the section-line roads that ruled us
wherever we drove in that country? ^{not-edge} Whatever it was, we were uneasy with
any house that angled ^{absolute} off from a straight compass reading of north-south
or east-west. # "But what the hell was he thinking of with a north door?"
North was storm country, snow and blow waiting to swarm in any time you
opened such a door between November and April.

sent her gaze

Berneta looked out the rickety screen door, down the long cleft *ledge*
of gulch toward the Maudlow road. "Maybe he wanted a good long look
at who was coming," she said.

My father laughed in agreement. "Like maybe a game warden, could be."

The place has the feel of getting away with something, pulling a

tick at odds with the surrounding geography. The so level deck of meadow;

how in the world does that happen to occur here, ^{stepped} in between gulches ~~tipped~~

so ^{convulsed} ~~wildly~~ they nearly stand on end? Then the cabin knoll, just enough

of a ^{by ascension} ~~dais~~ to lord it over the meadow, ^{a terrace, no less.} Strange, a tidy riser on the meadow

platform. } And the South Fork ^{of Sixteen mile} is a surprising amount of creek, yet its

water is covert, hidden under steep banks until you peer straight down

into the subterranean riffles.

plus
of its

For the first time in half a year, Berneta's letters seem to catch their breath.

#

June 8, 15, and 19, 1945. Her glad reports begin with what neighbored our meadow cabin on the face of Hatfield Mountain, a nice stream. Where my father, getting caught up on his fishing, made its waters our supperland of rainbow trout, nice ones. Almost as softly as if talking to herself, she puts to the pages the three of us at our version of ease. We aren't working very hard at present. Were out

for a horseback ride this afternoon, first time I've been on a horse
for ages. Ivan & I rode Duffy, Charlie rode Sugar. That tandem ride
likely was our last; this was the period when I took it into my just-
about-to-be-six-year-old head to require not only a horse all my own
but the ruggedest possible saddle, a sawbuck packframe, for myself.

Received our band of sheep last Mon. Nice bunch of lambs, 1230 of them.
Sure hope they weigh good this fall and we can keep the loss down. We
have a herder ^{for} now, but when they go ^{to keep on} in the Reserve the 1st of July or
about then, Charlie, Ivan & I may herd them. We aren't sure yet. Charlie
is going up to look at the Reserve range & see how tough it is.... Charlie
has been watching the sheep early in the morn. and late in the eves. while
the herder gets his meals.... Don't know just yet when we will shear. I
shouldn't have a lot of work to do after shearing, and that should only
last one day unless a rainstorm catches us.... Ivan is fine, growing like
a weed. You don't need to worry about him forgetting you, he remembers
his Uncle Wally & knows what ship you are on. He'll probably have a
million questions to ask you when you get back.

—————

for a horseback

ride this afternoon, first time I've been on a horse for ages. Ivan

& I rode Duffy, Charlie rode Sugar. That tandem ride likely was our

last; this was the period when I took it into my just-about-to-be-six-

year-old head to require not only a horse all my own but the ruggedest

possible saddle, a sawbuck packframe, for myself.

transition:

She starts up our spiral staircase of summer.

Received our band of sheep last Mon. Charlie has been watching the

sheep early in the morn. and late in the eves. while the herder gets his

meals. Nice bunch of lambs, 1230 of them. Sure hope they weigh good

this fall and we can keep the loss down. We have a herder...

Don't know just yet when we will shear. I shouldn't have a lot of

[other] work to do after shearing, and that should only last one day unless

a rainstorm catches us...

Charlie is busy getting caught up on his fishing. Has been wishing

you could be here, as we know you used to enjoy fishing.

Ivan is fine, growing like a weed. You don't need to worry about

him forgetting you, he remembers his Uncle Wally & knows what ship you

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neighbored our meadow cabin on the face of Hatfield Mountain, a nice stream. Where my father made its waters our supperland of rainbow trout, nice ones. Then almost as softly as if talking to herself she puts to the pages the opening of our three-way chapter of summer.

We aren't working very hard at present. Were out for a horseback

184/ing caught up on his fingers

add a line to go w/ "softly talking" then use "three-way" instead of "three-way"

ride this afternoon, first time I've been on a horse for ages. Ivan
& I rode Duffy, Charlie rode Sugar. That tandem ride likely was our
last; this was the period when I took it into my just-about-to-be-six-
year-old head to require not only a horse all my own but the ruggedest
possible saddle, a sawbuck packframe, for myself.

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him forgetting you, he remembers his Uncle Wally & knows what ship you
you are on. He'll probably have a million questions to ask you when
you get back.

cut middle

cut -
use in
cabin dialogue
"Aah, you -
say who..."

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him forgetting you, he remembers his Uncle Wally & knows what ship you
you are on. He'll probably have a million questions to ask you when
you get back.

When my father shouldered open the door of that cabin of then, packhorses and wife and child and twenty-two hundred sheep at his back, a mouse nest fell down onto the brim of his Stetson. Ceiling paper drooped in shreds. The greenblinds on the windows were speckled with mashed flies, the floor was soiled with mouse droppings and pack rat leavings.

The place was a sty, but not for long. The floor of a housing project cubicle on the factory outskirts of Phoenix, maybe Berneta would wash with tears. But this cabin on the summer mountain she launched into with soapy water. Led by the hurricane broom of my father, who cocked a look out every window he swept past to check on the behavior of the sheep.

To dream us this last time, into the twists of June, I harbor there at the very first hours of the swabbed cabin.

And watch Berneta as she gives her mop a conclusive wring. Follow her eyes while she inventories the cabin, the three-month future. The elderly table, scarred and stained from extra duty as a butcher block, at least sits at the proper window, the west one where there is a view of

the willow course of the creek. Across the room, the homemade cupboard for once is huge enough, logic of someone who, like her, has needed to store most of a season of groceries at a time. And she is glad of the cool cupboard, the outside cabinet of shelves handy beside the door and tinned against rodents; food will keep for a day or so in there, and for longer term, butter and bacon and any grouse my father manages to shoot can be sealed in jars and stored in the creek. Could be worse, her kitchen veteran's glance and our recent on-the-move history both say. The cookstove is frankly puny, a midget two-lid job not much more than kneehigh even on Berneta, but elaborate meals aren't the point of this summer anyway. At the other end of the cabin's single room hunkers a sizable heating stove, so near the bed that it seems to be trying to sneak under the covers.

Winter here halfway up a Montana alp must be beyond what we were accustomed to at the Faulkner Creek ranch, according to the two stoves and the triplicate cabin walls--broad rough boards undermost, then clapboard siding nailed to their outside, and a surprisingly cozy interior of short boards pieced together bricklike--and the roof of corrugated tin sheeting for snow to slide off. We are staying the summer, not the winter. Could be worse.

"Ivan, look how you'll just fit," she is saying from the scant cot under the southmost window. I inspect, solemnly bob my head, and claim it with my bedroll. A corner of my own, all I ask. My parents will share the plank-sided bed in the opposite corner, snug for two but they do not seem to mind.

Berneta debates to herself whether to do away with the nasty greenblinds-- nobody for five miles around to see in on us--but ends up scouring the fly matter off them; blank windows have never seemed right to her.

My father tromps in with a maximum armload of firewood, goes to dump it in the woodbox, cusses and lets the wood avalanche ^{next to} beside the box instead of into it. "We're going to have to get after the pack rats, first thing," he declares as he scoops out of the woodbox another junk trove accumulated ~~accumulated~~ by them. Marauders so quizzical--swiping a torn handkerchief one night, a thimble the next--you had to wonder if they did it from sense of humor.

The trapper Berneta kids him, "So if I catch them, think that 'll make it easy enough for you to shoot them?" (Two scabbards are slung on my father's saddlehorse. In one, the .22 rifle that is the shooting machine

alternative
1st 2 pp,
ch. 5

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That tandem ride likely was our last; this was the period when I took it into my just-about-to-be-six-year-old head to require not only a horse all my own but the ruggedest possible saddle, a sawbuck packframe, for myself.

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We aren't working very hard at present....Charlie is busy getting caught up on his fishing....Don't know just yet when we will shear. I shouldn't have a lot of other work to do after shearing, and that should only last one day unless a rainstorm catches us....We are all pretty good. Some days I don't feel too good but can't complain most of the time....

Ivan is fine, growing like a weed. You don't need to worry about him forgetting you, he remembers his Uncle Wally & knows what ship you are on. He'll probably have a million questions to ask you when you get back.

lead?

my mother's

For the first time in half a year, ~~her~~ letters seem to catch their
breath. First time I've been on a horse for ages. Ivan and I rode Tony,

Charlie rode Dan. That tandem horseback ride... ~~was~~ ^{likely our last,}
^{my ~~is~~ growing-up}
^{was at a (pack horse)}

Charlie tried the fishing, caught four nice ones, enough for supper.

Our cabin is right close to a nice stream. The south fork of Sixteenmile

Creek, my father taking on fishing with the attitude not of sport but

a slightly pleasanter form of work; we either eat them or leave them alone.

...My father came in disgusted.

"Can ye believe it, that scissorbill [of a herder] ^{make a trip} has to go to town already. Compensation papers of some damn kind he needs to fix up."

The only virtue ^{evident in} Prince Al ^{'d better do...} had was the one that counted, he wasn't losing lambs left and right. "I'll have to do the herding tomorrow," my father was saying the necessary, ^(Juan?) "while you take ^{burryard} him in. At least it's a chance at the mail and whatever groceries, and while you're in Bozeman why don't ye get yourself--"

He stopped. Berneta was shaking her head.

I'll play sheepherder tomorrow.

"That's what you'd rather, is it." My father rethought. A horseback day for her versus--

The roads in this country get my goat. If it happens to rain, they are awful."

~~They were bad enough, the next morning when my father and I and Prince Al slewed our way to Maudlow in the Ford. Our backed-up mail was prodigious. Wally was heard from, Winona, Anna and Joe, my grandmother~~

claims he told
compensator,
figured
sets for
a few days,
then quit

shop for -

more?
Maudlow
Jumbo

more?

#

a pile
of cat

more?

4/29/92

For the first time in half a year, Berneta's letters seem to catch their breath.

change: mt inside of p deal
face of H Mtn
 Her glad reports of that June begin with what neighbored our herding cabin, a nice stream. Where my fishing father made its waters our supperland of rainbow trout, nice ones.

Almost as softly as if talking to herself she puts to the page the news of us, our *fresh* new chapter of summer. We aren't working very hard at present. Were out for a horseback ride this afternoon, first time

I've been on a horse for ages. Ivan & I rode Duffy, Charlie rode Sugar.

That tandem ride was likely our last; this was the notorious ^{June} summer when

I somehow took it into my head to ^{require} demand not only a horse for myself but

a sawbuck packsaddle to straddle onto for a seat. Charlie has been

watching the sheep early in the morn. and late in the eves. while the

herder gets his meals. Nice bunch of lambs, 1230 of them. Sure hope

they weigh good this fall and we can keep the loss down.

Charlie is busy getting caught up on his fishing. Has been wishing

you could be here, as we know you used to enjoy fishing.

Ivan is fine, growing like a weed. You don't need to worry about

him forgetting you, he remembers his Uncle Wally & also knows what ship

you are on. He'll probably have a million questions to ask you when

you get back.

————— ^{should've} When my father pushed open the door of that cabin of then, so many

summers ago, a mouse nest fell down onto the brim of his Stetson. Ceiling

paper drooped in shreds. The greenblinds on the windows were spotted with

mashed flies, the floor was soiled with mouse droppings and pack rat leavings.

not quite -
6-7-01 - old
w/ my father
proprietor

4/30/92

For the first time in half a year, Berneta's letters seem to catch their breath.

Her glad reports begin with what neighbored our meadow cabin on the face of Hatfield Mountain, a nice stream. Where my fishing father made its waters our supperland of rainbow trout, nice ones.

Almost as softly as if talking to herself she puts to the page [the news of us,] our fresh chapter of summer. We aren't working very hard at present. Were out for a horseback ride this afternoon, first time

For the first time in half a year, Berneta's letters seem to catch their breath.

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Almost as softly as if talking to herself she puts to the pages our fresh chapter of summer. We aren't working very hard at present.

Were out for a horseback ride this afternoon, first time I've been

on a horse for ages. Ivan & I rode Duffy, Charlie rode Sugar. That tandem ride was likely our last; this was the notorious June when I took it into my not-quite-six-year-old head to require not only a horse all my own but a sawbuck packframe as my inexplicable saddle. Received our band of sheep last Mon. Charlie has been watching the sheep early in the morn. and late in the eves. while the herder gets his meals. Nice bunch of lambs, 1230 of them. Sure hope they weigh good this fall and we can keep the loss down.

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———
 When my father shouldered open the door of that cabin of then, packhorses and wife and child and twenty-two hundred sheep at his back, a mouse nest fell down onto the brim of his Stetson. Ceiling paper

save
for
end #?

drooped in shreds. The greenblinds on the windows were speckled with mashed flies, the floor was soiled with mouse droppings and pack rat leavings.

The place was a sty, but not for long. The floor of a housing project cubicle in the factory outskirts of Phoenix, maybe, Berneta would wash with tears. But the cabin on the summer mountain she launched into with soapy water. Led by the hurricane broom of my father, who cocked a look out every window he swept past to check on the demeanor of the sheep.

To dream us Junelong, I harbor there at the very first hour of the swabbed cabin.

Now that the dirt of disuse had flown or floated,

a mouse nest fell down onto the brim of his Stetson. Ceiling paper drooped in shreds. The greenblinds on the windows were speckled with mashed flies, the floor was soiled with mouse droppings and pack rat leavings.

The place was a sty, but not for long. The floor of a housing project cubicle in the factory outskirts of Phoenix, maybe, Berneta would wash with tears. But this cabin on the summer mountain she launched into with soapy water. Led by the hurricane broom of my father, who cocked a look out every window he swept past to check on the behavior of the sheep.

To dream us June long, I harbor there at the very first hours of the swabbed cabin.

as nearly as I can

Physical details: Blowing hair out of her eyes, giving her map a final airing, conclusion

takes stock of place (surroundings)

Berneta has seen worse. The hard-used table is at least situated

use-worn

at the window with the creek view, a boomerang gulch with the first ridges of the Bridgers above its willow course; and across the room, the cupboard for once is huge enough, logic of someone who--like her--has had to store most of a season of groceries at a time. She debates to herself whether to do away with the nasty greenblinds--nobody for five miles around to

*most of summer
add time
By 00:00 can
take family*

needed

see in on us--but ends up scouring the fly matter off them; blank
windows have never seemed right to her.

The place has the feel of getting away with something, pulling a trick

at odds with the surrounding geography. Take the level deck of meadow;

how does that happen to be here, in between plunging gulches? Then the

cabin knoll, just enough of a step up to lord it over the meadow. And

the South Fork is a surprising amount of creek, yet its water is covert,

hidden under steep banks until you peer straight down into the riffles.

~~"At least it sits straight with the world." Alignment with our section-line minds, actually; unease when a house angled off to a compass~~

~~reading. "But what the hell he was thinking of with a north door..."~~

~~North was storm country, weather waiting to swarm in any time you opened such a door~~
Out that door was the Maulow country, the Big Belt mountains, the weather

factory.

~~"Maybe he wanted to see his way out," Berneta said.~~

~~in agreement~~
My father laughed and agreed. "Like maybe a game warden, could be."

wild gulches
try to
to find
themselves
on end

in world

occur

seeps

fast

Howt.
aligned
our thinking
was

Used to
see like...
we like...

North
held all
weather...

screened
3 east side
out it, into
Maulow
country...

a gd long lke at

who's
who was coming

time you
opened a
such a
door
Nov & April

too soon

And I see at last, past the curtain of time which fell prematurely
 between us, that I am another one for whom ^{my mother's} her existence did not end when
 her life happened to. Summoning myself--summing myself--is no less
 complicated, past fifty, than it was in the young-eyed blur at those howling
 Montana gravesides. Doig, Ivan, writer: independent as a mule, bleeder
for the West's lost chances, [irrevocably married to someone with dash
enough for both of them,] second-generation practical thrower of flings,
emotionally skittish of opening himself up like a suitcase, [despiser of
economic domination,] delver into details to the point of pedantry,
dreamweaver on a professional basis--some of me is indisputably my father
 and my grandmother, and some I picked up along the way. But more comes out
 in the reflection of my mother's letters. It turns out that the chosen
 world where I strive to live full slam--earth of alphabet, the [dangerous
 wonderful Twenty-Six country--had this earlier family inhabitant who
 worked at phrase and cast a sly eye at the human parade; most of all,
 from somewhere brought up out of herself the half-hunch half-habit of
 keeping track, ^{stay} ^{score in life,} of making her words persevere for her. Berneta Augusta
 Maggie Ringer Doig, as distinct as the clashes of her name. Ivan is fine

impose?

in 00 lines?

Author
chamber of
myself...

move
to
next P.?

4 whose
ing got
best score
adv.?

Chanda?

heart-

more?

A?

2410 to
paper

growing like a weed, her pen sings in the last letter ever. You don't
need to worry about him forgetting you, he remembers his Uncle Wally
and knows what ship you are on. He'll probably have a million questions
to ask when you get back. A million less one, now. The lettered answer
of origins, of who first began on our family ocean of askings. As I put
words to pages, I voyage on her ink.

ca. 5 Direct pp.