

you at once bump against every instant you despised or prized, growing up. No inch of that territory, back there, is neutral. Not the town, too small or dull of horizonless when you were its thankless offspring, and filled now with faces that have taken on years, and attitudes that have not changed all that much. Not the walls of your parents' house, those echo boards of your prom date that they did not approve of, those times of this law laid down, and that amendment "just this once." Can't turn a corner without meeting yourself in ghostchild form.

When you come in on the last of a body's life  
careers, when you come in to do  
Mariah & Steven M were taken into, brought in y d's  
situation. [We thought] we were <sup>serving</sup> good purposes, no prob-  
lems, & before his clock ran down the @. last, L seemed  
to think

She stretched, aware Lyle's last act,  
Now there's a m/n waiting. A week of them

We had our lines, our grooves

to do / o. shared

'unknown was were still ahead of them

"Lexa, I'm warning you!"

"--tough, the tough get--"

"Stop, stop! Look, I'm on my feet. Holy Kajesus, you'd have made a hard-ass coach."

alternative  
version

They dry-camped that first night, high but shelved out of the wind, they hoped.

Their timberline campsite had only the backs of the gigantic reef formations and the portals between for company. Jericho, its bowed palisade the nearest to them, appeared to arch its back in everlasting surprise as the plains butted into its bedrock. Across a deep thickly forested gulch from Jericho, Roman Reef stood higher and a mile longer, its rimrock crest as regular as the frieze of a vestal temple but incalculably more ancient. Grizzly Reef, true to its name, seemed to threaten on into eternity with its half-turned slab face targeting north toward the flanks of the other two.

Moving stiffly as marionettes, Mitch and Mariah had gone to their packs to dig out sweatshirts, hours of dusk yet ahead here under the timbered shoulder. Lexa already was setting up things for supper.

"You know what?" Mariah announced as she came back over tugging her sweatshirt down. "My legs ache in every damned pore."

"No shit, ridgerunner." But Lexa managed sympathy in her smile.

"Aren't you tired at all?"

"Sure. But it's a good tired." Lexa stretched, arms out and fists balled, the swath of scar bright white across the bottom of each clenched hand.

Hungrily hovering, Mariah looked over the meal makings set up by Lexa on little shelves of rock. A loaf of heavy dark bread, tough nourishing stuff. Uwajimaya noodles. Cured sausage that would have set off cholesterol sirens in them all down on the flatlands but would be welcomed by digestive systems up here. "What can I do to help, cookie?"

"Same here," Mitch arrived with, another volunteer corps of appetite heard from.

"Firewood for later," Lexa rattled off. "Tents. Roll out the sleeping bags. Dig a potty place over there in the trees."

Giving each other a look which said *That'll teach us to ask*, the two non-cooks faced around to the camp chores.

The freshest of fresh air woke Mitch in the morning. Only inches of him were outside the sleeping bag, from his nose on up, but those were thermometer enough. He saw there was frost on the outside of the tent. He lay looking at it a minute, then

"I know,  
I know."

Holy shit,  
quacamole

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Mitch saw there was frost on the outside of the tent. He lay looking at it a minute, then put a finger to the fabric. The frost was on the inside of the tent. They all turned in at 9, the orange of the tent giving false light.

Matthew is hired to drive them to the trailhead @...

--Rozier Bench below; start of the going...

Lyle's pickup was like a ~~junk~~ room calved off the house, the dashboard full of flotsam and the floor of jetsam. Lexa moved a OO from in front of her...

...I just think she LOOK OUT!"

They popped over a rise, into a flock of pintail ducks on the road

eating gravel for their gizzards. Pitiful thuds against the bumper

- .12-gauge driving

- Mariah in back of pickup
- Lexa: "I'll get to. milt, like <sup>fuckin'</sup> fuggins evolution intended for me to."

to one of ~~the~~ his moments caught y M y col see him  
sniffing, sneaking that extra air in; tugged his face up..

Manik had gathered it all

He had- expected

· maddening variety.

turning s' thing (death?) over in his mind, head OO as a drum.

tweezing @ 3mo (w/ his pencil)

Jocelyn spoke in the tense dry tone of Mitch's own letters home from college. The old story of being young. Against all the odds from the beginning of time, he wished for better. Why does talking across a generation drain the life out of what's said?

...

Up the Coast for a seminar in counter-intuitive advertising--rain-in-your-face Seattle was a paradoxically fond case study for buying more sunglasses per capita than anywhere else--she came to dinner and behaved as though every substance she came into contact with had mold on it. Playing at being a sad-all little girl the size of a linebacker. Laurits, Lexa had never met. If his accent was anything like Jocelyn's, there would be Indonesians talking like a Tennessee Williams play. The gator branch of the family, Lexa thought of them as, but was honest enough to know she had a stake in their absence. If Mitch had been raising those kids, she wouldn't have spent night one under the same roof with that situation, would she. Relieved mother of none.

...

For a minute Mitch pondered the skeletal traffic jam, but drew no new conclusion.

"Hell if I know." Mitch made a wry face. "Cremation always sounded to me like a perfectly good idea, until he thought of it too."

"Hey, I was on Coldwater Ridge." This was like Juanita Trippe again. He hoped he had learned something in the 20 years since...

"...What's the matter?"

"Nothing." Nothing that ~~anything~~ <sup>can</sup> ~~could~~ be done about.

"What, ahm, what's the memo?"

It was Coldwater Ridge. Lexa battenning stuff as expertly as Juanita Trippe had. He licked his lips. Next time around in life, Meriwether Lewis plop down he'd be OO, sure he would. He looked around for a log to sit on and rest.

Lexa's sense of the other; the "not only stranger than we know, but stranger than we can know" that ~~is~~ is nature.

--is she interested in the newly-found lifeforms @ Juan de Fuca Plate vents?

--cook on oceanographic vessel?

--more feeling of "other" in griz bear section? and link it somehow into the oil spill section?

--does Lexa have the ability to see from the "other's" point of view?

--p. 75: "the bear that wasn't there"

--from yellow pad: Lx's sense of the other: books, grizs, & without knowing it's specifically him, Bob Marshall on the trail.

--she knew hers was a life 00 enough to argue with itself, if she would let it. (from yellow pad) (make this tie in w/ coin flip @ end of book?)

--the wild helix (Note that firetower stairs are a kind of helix.)

(Mitch writes a column abt it? Or is it strictly Lexa's awareness?)

--emanations (such as Tony Angell reported from Mesa Verde, and the Welches from Marias Massacre site; Lexa doesn't see why this can't be old receptors in us, our genetic wiring...)

--caves of time

--Lexa's college major pre-veterinary? (Wd give her a link to helix, zoo work, barrel-racing horses...)

--from yellow pad: ornithology, if she had it to do over.

--from yellow pad: she didn't know how not to work.

--from yellow pad: Biogenesis. Beyond biogenetics.

--from yellow pad: ...and barrel racing, and horses and the history of everything, she supposed.

Lexa walks ~~to the~~ Bench.

(Lyle: "You're ~~walking~~ all on money.")

--use this scene for Lexa's view of the life she grew up in, and chose to leave.

--(Two Medicine country to the north) A ~~lot~~ of fencelines between here and there. *(she rubs her wrist scars)*

--can see line of Soda Creek heading toward the Teton or the Sun River.

*→ the role of drainage*

scene to do:

The mountains held lodes of time. (memory)

Geology and history kissed right here. (the Divide)

from yellow pad:

--Lexa & Mariah, bras undone as they sleep in their clothes on the hike

--Mitch can pee off the tower; not for the first time in his life he took satisfaction in the male anatomical arrangement.

from yellow pad: Who was it who said the problem with the outdoors is that it's never the right temperature? (Betty Rollin in Techniques n'bk)

~~The~~ trail gave Lexa some of the elevated feeling of being on horseback; the body has memory too.

The firetower: Mitch knows of Kerouac and Snyder on Desolation...

The Rocky Mtn Front reefs: banks (vaults) of time--oil/gas flare of that, like the books burning at Alexandria.

insert: *use w/ brand inspecting?*

probably into Mitch's driving into TWS, mention of Great Falls and rare trips to "the city" when he was a kid, one of them a school-clothes trip; his father's trips (or his mother's, except for the summer of Ferragamo's wife) for parts.

--It could also be slipped in to the picnic scene that Lyle went fishing, somewhere near Gt Falls, for a mess to provide to the picnic; implication, later enunciated by Fritz Mannion, that he was seeing Ferragamo's wife during this.

--TWS's little neon strip a pale imitation of 10th Ave. S. in Gt Falls...

Marnie

All of them were in love with OO. Some more than others, but all in love. She was a pale girl with chestnut hair. She was slim and elegant, with fine small breasts looking cozy in the cashmere sweaters she wore.

✓

The great fire of 1929. Phantom Woman burned on and on, jumping firelines, sending the crews scattering like 00. In the shakeup a young ranger named Varick McCaskill was given this district, the family line's first loop back to the homestead country. A bit of this Lexa and Mariah knew by their father's ~~is~~ telling; mostly it simply inhabited them, the sense...

"It's called the wild helix. Theory, is all. But what goes on in us, if it isn't something pretty close to that? Power places...

use c War at Home?  
used in Sky >

On a deer-hunting day, crisp and bright, Dad pulled his .30-30 from the scabbard in the back of the Jeep, and looked at the line of peaks. Jesus, the country this is. Skavinsky, I'm gonna shoot one right on top of these Rocky Mountains for you. A few hours later and higher, with one of his squinted exact shots he ~~downed a fat young buck beneath one of the great rimfolds driven up into the blue.~~ I looked at the Jeep the size of a pencil-point below us:

used in Sky  
V. 229

made me uneasy. Almost anything else we might meet up with while I was downtown at Dad's elbow, I could go along with. But not the hopeless sea of those sour-smelling men. We went into the Grand Central only when Dad had to find someone to herd sheep or do the lowest ranch chores for a few days, and that was often enough for me. The saloons went quicker after the Grand Central, as if we were hurrying on from its sights and smells. The place on the next block, the Mint, was the first new saloon in town in years. It took up half of a long white stucco building, side by side with the dry goods store under a single square front as if they were the facing pages of an open book. The Mint wasinky inside, the light for the entire saloon coming pale and thin from a few tubes of fluorescence behind the bar. The owner was a three-chinned man in a white shirt, which always looked milky-bluish as he pulled around carrying glasses in the squinty light. This was the one saloon in town besides the uppity Melody Lane where drinkers used the booths almost as much as the bar stools. Some Saturday nights the Mint would have two or three people

draw

Beyond the Soda Creek bridge the highway took <sup>dead</sup> ~~straight~~ aim at  
water tower (P'wood trip descptn from Bucking)...Now  
the town, the yellow line

Mitch drove with excessive care, the <sup>road</sup> patched from frost heaves.

These were mountains that had lived long.  
Mountains from another age here. The Rocky Mountain Front stood...

The town looked even more shabby...Come out here and create a town from  
scratch and that's what it was going to look like, scratch.

Chico Hot Springs had access to the airports and freeway and ski  
areas, White Sulphur Springs had... Twin Sulphur Springs had OO against  
it.

While atop it sat the Wilderness, with a capital W. The Bob Marshall  
OO, OO,  
Wilderness... Marshall was a bat-eared wonder, another of the Mozarts  
of the forest.

So why did he feel as if he was back on the edge of a volcano  
or the lip of a tectonic plate.

as if  
this was  
volcano  
country, here.

Okay, which was the trance? The Coast life, the fumble of marriage  
and the kids, the long devotion to a newspaper that was Bingford's hobby  
between climbing mountains. The try with Lexa, six years and still in  
the experimental stage. Or-~~the~~ what the hell do you even call it, sonhood?

somewhat

It was no longer childhood, it was offspring hood.

that was a  
set of years  
between  
was it not.

The remembered mountains. The Junetime of trailing the sheep  
up...The trails were carpets into the anteroom of the sky, up from  
Noon Creek and English Creek, the falling-down homesteads, up across  
the foothills with their OO of timber, and then up that really meant it,  
the trails climbing the mountainsides. They went horseback, she and  
her father, sometimes Mariah, tending the sheep camps...What is there  
in elevation that thrills us? Something about the human eye that does  
not want a close horizon.

Mountains were made of time, the eons of geological thrust and  
fold, the sharp periods of glaciers. This particular range was the  
ridgepole of the continent, the divide of waters and American history  
into Atlantic and Pacific phases. For Mitch the Rockies existed mostly  
in his eyes and mind, but those were powerful places, the tellers of  
time. He tried to decide if Twin Sulphur Springs would look so shabby  
if it didn't have the massive mountains behind it. He decided it would  
still be worn around the edges.

histories  
This was the kiss of coasts

The sun was flattening down behind Roman Reef for the night as  
the three of us left for town. As the road swung up onto the benchland  
<sup>between?</sup> dividing Noon Creek and English Creek, the Bago kept pace with that pretty  
time between day and night. Behind us <sup>of</sup> the peaks and crags of the Rocky  
Mountain Front were jaggedly standing their tallest there at the first  
of evening, while the Two Medicine country around us rested in soft shadows  
unrolling under that sunset outline of the mountains. Lulls of this  
sort are how a person heals from the other weather of this land, I suppose,  
for the light calmly going takes with it the grievances that the Two  
is a country where the wind wears away at you on a daily basis, where  
drought is never far from happening, where these <sup>of</sup> valley bottoms now in  
the perfect shirtsleeve climate of summer dusk were thirty-five degrees  
below zero in the nights of February.

At least weather is a grievance capable of going.

---

Parsons  
of  
1915?



Mountain, while down at the hem of Phantom Woman, so to say, was the comblike outcropping of Rooster Mountain and the canyon where Noon Creek has its source. Then, south across Flume Gulch, the most mountain of all--the immense gentle bow of cliff half a mile high and more than three long, Roman Reef. I grew up looking at Roman Reef head-on from my father's English Creek ranger station, and even yet my eyes can never resist that towering wall of stone. This ranch, which was started by my horse-raising grandfather Isaac Reese around a hundred years ago, is situated just the right distance from the mountains--close but not so close they can reach out and dump their every snowflake on you. The one Noon Creek place nearer the mountains was the old Ramsay homestead that is now the upper hay meadow of this ranch, and there you feel as if Jericho Reef might twitch in its sleep some night and squash you. Odd, how local the boundaries are in a country where you can see for a hundred miles. Only the gradual rise of Breed Butte about a mile from here divides this Noon Creek valley from the valley of English Creek and its South and North Forks, yet that partitioning seems to me as central and mighty and unalterable as the Continental Divide up there in those mountains.

Rooster Mountain and the canyon where Noon Creek has its source. Then, south across Flume Gulch, the most mountain of all--the immense gentle bow of cliff half a mile high and more than three long, Roman Reef.

Odd, though, how sudden the boundaries are in a country where you can see until the miles blue away into far distance. Only the gradual rise of Breed Butte, the most junior landform of this arriving morning horizon, divides ~~the~~<sup>this</sup> Noon Creek valley from the valley of English Creek and its South and North Forks, yet that partitioning seems to me as central and mighty and unalterable as the Continental Divide up there atop the mountains. Or maybe it is my life, divvied between the two valleys, that makes it seem so.

Still needing to orient myself--after my past weeks of reluctant  
snuggle next to Riley in the back of the Bago, the bedroom of the  
ranch house yawned around me like an auditorium--I slid my achey leg  
carefully to the floor and sat up on the edge of the big double bed.

Already there was enough dawn to see the bulk of the mountains. Marcella  
and I purposely put every possible window to the west when we built  
this new house. In the last months when the cancer was taking her,  
the one thing I was thankful for was the view of the mountains she never  
seemed to tire of, even in her final bedridden days.

I swallowed hard on the thought of Marce again and tried to put  
my mind only on watching this day begin itself. The mountains, the jagged  
rim where the Two Medicine country joins onto the sky, were going to be  
clear and near today. A last few desperate patches of snow still showed  
bright among

Raven  
the topmost clefts of Jericho Reef, but their destiny was evaporation  
in another week or so. (Above and beyond the rimrock of gray Jericho  
stood the tall slopes of Phantom Woman Mountain, while down at the  
hem of Phantom Woman, so to say, was the comblike outcropping of

gingerly?

cut 2

The Bob. Up there in the tops of the Rockies and the supple  
valleys under them lay the Bob Marshall Wilderness, a million acres  
set aside.

The McCaskill ranch was a beauty for hay. Bottomland meadows of wild brome along Noon Creek, and the big field atop the Noon Creek-English Creek divide which grew dry-land alfalfa. In a wet year, the alfalfa soared up to knee-high and that wide benchland field looked as green as the Amazon jungle.

It could have been country from a picture book. Mountain range to mountain range, the hay meadows and fenced grazing land and winter wheat fields filled the countryside, a broad peaceful deck of pattern between the high backdrops of summer pasture. Spring and autumn, bands of sheep and herds of cattle could be seen trailing across the valley in slow flows. The cattle would pool into a dark tide which you could follow from the moment they bawled past until they drew over a far ridgeline. Sheep were harder to sort from the landscape at a distance, just a softer patch of gray which you had to squint hard at to find among the sameness of sage. The surest marker for sheep was the rounded white canvas of the herder's wagon, standing up out of the flat valley color like an igloo.

Lexa's  
remembered  
part -  
used in  
Sally's  
novel  
other?

The lines of settlement began to buckle in the gnarled contours of those foothills. What counted here was not the square corners of surveyed acres which kept neighbor from neighbor, but the meander of hay meadow along a tiny creek and the flow of grazing land between ridgelines--and more yet, the swirls of weather (in the sky) overhead.

Picking rock was like sorting through a landslide. They threw  
the rocks onto a truck, which would dump the load alongside the field.  
No stone fences like sutures on the landscapes as in Britain or even  
New England--just raw piles of rock, dumps, scrapings from the fundament  
of earth.

*↳ led at the led at Eng*

Maybe the mountains anchor the old thoughts, the fleet of moments

that <sup>are</sup> is the past.

*phantom*

*move*

For half his lifetime, Mitch had written pieces about environmental concerns, and around him the trees fell<sup>fall</sup> until the Cascade Mountains and the Olympic Peninsula looked like creatures with mange, the salmon..., the suburbs sopped up land, the nuclear wastes at Hanford were festering into the Columbia River for 0000 years.

...

stalled.

"Clutch":

So far.

halted.

He blinked @

Then his fingers ~~stopped~~ This was more unnerving yet, the evidence

And was worse yet

there on the liquid crystal screen. He was working in a field where there was a saint every foot of the way. And none of their sermons swayed the human race.

how to describe

He couldn't figure out what to call it, except a kind of accumulation.

Too many conferences. Too many field trips with earnest feds showing him how steel shot was slowing the decline of geese... Too many...

He became  
he had been @  
b 00

~~the worst thing he ever laid eyes on~~  
Yet ~~it~~ had brought him Lexa. ~~to his aid~~

Had he actually, deeply, unquestionably liked this job, or simply  
the habit of it? Would he be feeling this same kind of mossy fondness  
if he had spent the past twenty-five years say, collecting garbage?

ever,  
despise  
down;  
Truly  
or  
routine

Mitch's feeling of disjunction of time: his life had been spurts, then stops...this (@ Lyle's) was a stop.

Feeling the start of panic,  
Starting to feel a little panic, he changed files to BMarshall.

*will  
be read*

Even though Bob Marshall spooked him a little even in the best of times.

*there*  
Father of Forest Service wilderness areas, Marshall walked himself to

death in the mountains he loved, forty-fifty miles a day. But what an

epitaph. "How much wilderness do we need? How many Brahms symphonies

do we need?"

How much, how many, how, how, how.

River. Mitch felt himself tensing. To kill time, he tapped out a  
played with a

graf about the lives of the saints:...Ed Abbey smoldering in his grave  
Leopold watching the face of

repentantly  
in the slickrock desert, the whispering pines of Muirland, the sweet ponds

of Thoreauvia; St. feathered Francis, if you really want to go back.

Rhetoric was better than nothing, he decided.

Muirland; St. feathered Francis, if you really wanted to go back. Mitch

was working in a field where there was a saint every *foot or way* few steps. And

none of their sermons swayed the OO.

possible firetower scene:

Mitch wakes in the night, hearing Lexa get out of her sleeping bag, probably going down for a pee. But he hears her rustling in his pack, realizes she's going to throw Lyle's ashes from the tower. He charges up, to grab the box from her; trips on stairs, breaks his leg. (left leg, so he can drive in

--Out of this, Lexa--the best hiker among them--has to hike out for Fritz's team? help and there can be a symphonic piece of running the trail about this; Mariah has to stay w/ Mitch, and begins falling for him.

or, he thinks it's Mariah, & finds it's Lexa?

Desolation. (Mitch thinking abt Kerouac and Snyder in fire tower summers.)

"Hey, what, it's not that bad."

@ firetower, names carved into tower leg: Ferragamo's, Lyle's? Jick's?  
(chime this w/ brands burned into Lyle's wall)

There was no weeping this away.

(use somewhere in Divide, for Mitch?)

pick up on Mon,  
ap. 25

- L shines pencil lt in M's eyes, lkg @ his pupils.

- M: "My leg. Broken."

Qn to take him up or dn:

M: "A/ it's betn griz country & you 2, I'll take you 2.  
Altho it's not a helluva lot of choice."

L @ some pt: "Okay, okay, okay." (Agreeing they won't do anything w/ L's offer)

L on trail; running dn hill?

So Mitch had <sup>bumped</sup> been as close as he cared to be to a volcano in fury,  
and he had <sup>bumped</sup> been through the '65 earthquake when he was a student at the  
University of Washington, plunging out of the dorm as books slid off  
his desk. What was pressing on him now was accumulation. Conference  
after conference,

Spaceship Earth had all the necessary chaplains.

Mitch &  
Mariah  
in tower

✓  
"What's this?"

Hot

"Jell-O. With airline brandy in it, courtesy of Mariah."

It was greatest thing [since he quit smoking dope.] ?

"Comfy? Anything we here at the Phantom Woman Hilton can ~~we~~ get  
for you?"

"I hate to have to ask, but... A bedpan."

"Mmm." She scouted around for (a tin can?)...

He fumbled at his front and managed to relieve himself. "Ah<sup>e</sup>, done,"  
he called to her, outside on the platform.

He was embarrassed that the urine can was still warm when she  
came and took it. "Just--toss it..."

"...and watch out not be downwind," Mariah said.

...  
"I've got some shooting to do."

"Sure, feel free. I don't seem to be going anywhere."

"Holler if you want anything."

"You bet." He wondered how far along the trail Lexa was...

✓  
Mariah:  
Yo.

"A can."  
"What kind  
of a can? Oh."

Manah: "I was going to reread it. Uh, him."

"Re-? w/ what?"

~~computer~~ ~~comes~~ ~~compile~~. Your ~~father~~ dad's asked...  
"Do it."

M: "You've never crowd a line into a story, mm?"

Alaska or any of that? Lexa & Travis...

- I did not try to switch, he pited out. Lexa & +  
happened after  
that.

... At just seemed like a good idea @ . Yemé.

"I hope to hell I'm nowhere to some hemisphere  
(on some m/n) to"

w/ you when you get a bad idea.

"Have you wanted to handle it?"

"wanted to, <sup>godd+</sup> ~~fuck~~ no. But I've been...

Bob Marshall scene adapted from Mariah Montana?

"That's funny," Paul Eliason said, frowning. "Company."

Ferragamo looked around, surprised too, but half hopeful it was Lyle coming back.

Not even close. A man under a backpack, laboring but forcing himself up the trail.

... "How do you do. I'm Bob Marshall from the Washington office."

Eliason gulped.

"Not inspecting," Marshall said. He turned toward Joe and introduced himself all over again and shook hands. "Just doing a high lonesome."

an  
appx to  
Lyle,  
-the man  
under a  
rhyolite  
backpack

'gulp' on  
'young  
ranger,  
Eliason,  
when he  
told him

"The Bob," Riley said as if inventing the words. Up there in the tops of the Rockies and the ~~mountain~~ wide valleys under them lay the Bob Marshall Wilderness, a million acres set aside.

"My father knew him," I said, more in the way of thinking out loud than anything else.

"Knew who?"

"Bob Marshall."

"You're kidding me."

"Hell I am. Fact of the matter, I knew him myself. At least was around him a little while, when I was a skim milk kid."

Actually, I suppose I was older than I knew in that summer of 1939. Coming up on my fifteenth birthday, but right in the midst of everything that was going on in my family. Alec was on the outs with my parents over his decision to get married instead of go to college, my father was ~~in~~ trying to contend with the worst fire season on his forest, and out of nowhere arrived this big guy saying How do you do, I'm Bob Marshall from the Washington office. My father <sup>ought to</sup> should have gulped, because Marshall <sup>?</sup> really was one of the big ticks in the Forest Service, head of the Recreation Division, but likely he didn't have time;

shot  
room  
in  
mid

he just said, Glad to know you, Bob. What brings you? All Marshall wanted, it turned out, was to hike. He'd just spent a week on the Flathead national forest, and wanted to balance it with some time here on our side of the Continental Divide.

"Well, Jesus H. Christ," Riley was saying, giving me a stare.

"Tell me about Marshall. Everything you can remember."

"Everybody else in the Forest Service called him a walking fool."

"The other thing was, he counted everything. When he and I were just starting up the trail, he stopped his horse, ~~and~~ pulled ~~out~~ a notebook out of his pocket and said, 'Help me with this. Did your father say two 'Goddamns' and one 'sonofabitch,' or the other way around? What he was doing was keeping track of how many times he heard each cussword. It was quite a list."

?

✓

are  
in  
Kelly  
columns?

(bad word)

lead  
into  
Riley  
columns

shepherders' moments:

--one in the Bob can save Lexa by confusing the griz (whether there are two humans)...

--this can overlay the Bob Marshall "presence"...

✓

ire not able to  
"We cannot land because of low visibility. We're going to lower  
a basket sling."

*hideously  
groan*

Mitch let out a <sup>dreadful</sup> horrible groan. Mariah whirled and looked down  
at him.

His eyes were wide and staring. He asked:

"How much does a piano weigh?"

and see to him,"  
"I've got to go up next," the medic said over the helicopter roar.

"Then we send down the sling for you."

Mariah looked abstracted, hunched, looking off into the field of  
cloud. The medic frowned. "Are you all right?"

"I have to go back up for my camera  
"Tiptop," she said wearily. "I've got some camera gear  
gear. I'll be ready by the time you get lifted."

...

"What the hell is she doing? Hey, lady,

Mariah did not look up. She clasped the OO to her eye, shooting  
and shooting as the sling reeled her up, the tower rising out of the  
layer of clouds that looked like ocean.

Lexa peered out the door. "No, leave her alone. Just bring her  
up as slow as you can."

Which is the trance? The kaleidoscope OO, Jocelyn on blades, Ritz  
lost to (Indonesian cooking), Xandria... Seattle...

Mitch:

Memory itself was artesian in this damned town, erupting and...  
(hot and...

This was volcano country too...

The past was " " "...

to look up Fritz  
WebSite of. Divin

cell phone to next door?  
or is Mitch mobile?

M:

"I wonder if I could borrow Matthew for a while."

"Whatever became of Fritz Marnion?"

The drive to the Deer Lodge Valley took a couple of hours, Mitch solo in the Honda, not ready, willing or able to do this with Lexa watching.

...

*Mulling*

Deer Lodge and the littler towns south down the valley had been at the front of the line, back in history, when institutions were being handed out. The prison to Deer Lodge, the insane asylum to Warm Springs. Galen had both the state hospital and the VA facility known as the Vets' Home.

...

*capitol* ↓

The Vets' Home resembled a grade school of the 1950's, low and flat, made of the elongated squashed-looking building material known as ick brick. It sat a block back from the tiny main street of Galen, an aging patch of storefronts and a bar aglow with a green sign redundantly declaring it the Oasis.

Mulling, Mitch drove around the block twice. Then headed for the lone motel in Galen, to wait for morning.

going to be  
"How's life at your paper?"

"Gave it up," Mariah said only.

"Gave it u--?"

L: "Mitch, I gave @. Alaska office, remember?"

<sup>still</sup>  
"There's a lot to be sorted."

Lexa looked next at Mariah. "You're still staying on?"

"Mmmhmm. I need to hole up and <sup>finish</sup> ~~do~~ the photo book."

"This is the only place you can think of to do <sup>that</sup> it, huh?"

Mariah took a breath. "If you decide to hang around--then I won't."

This country breaks your heart. Lexa looked <sup>down</sup> ~~out~~ at the ratty little town, the gravel ridge which Mitch now would not have to sell, but the OO someone else would. The Coast at least confessed what it was.

...  
"Call it, sis."

Mariah swallowed, composed herself, and ~~managed something like~~

~~a grin.~~ "Heads, you go. Tails, I do."

Throat tight, h

"Sure you wouldn't rather have a cook-off?"

*↳ I wiped a thing from her eye, & managed a grin.*

~~"Eat dirt, ~~shrimp~~ you shrimp."~~

*↳ sisters laughed together.*

*(I know that thing?)*  
*Toss*

*↳ damn it, Lexa.*

Lexa poised the <sup>quarter</sup> ~~coin~~ on her broad thumbnail. Then flipped the

coin high, the silver disc of heads over tails and tails over heads

spinning and spinning in the mountain light, whirling like the world.

*Lexa.  
A hope  
you know.  
But then  
how. Well  
not your  
under ↓ -*

*↳ reefs  
oil leaks  
and come.  
Piling  
protection  
each other,  
the dirties,  
the sickness*

She looked steadily at Mariah. "The loser finds some excuse  
 to clear out for awhile, see what happens..., right?"  
 "Okay." Mariah swallowed, composed herself, and grinned. "Tails,  
 you shrimp."

*drops her sorry butt out of pic for awhile*

*10. other are ~~blacks w/~~ gets a clear shot at trying to defeat of both men*

*can't offer her there. ~~she~~ if she can make a thing of it w/ him*

*I do know if it's right or not, but okay.*

*scrub*

"Eat dirt, sis."

*over of heads & tails to tails over heads*

Lexa flipped the coin high, the silver disc of it spinning and spinning in the mountain light, whirling like the world.

*pocket coin on her broad thumbnail. Then*

possible insert above:

M: "what're you grinning about?"

L: "Our landlord will crap a brick if I come back to Seattle without Mitch."