

riding up on Sergeant Mose Rathbun in horseback prance ahead of them instead of the blue serge back of Bailey. "He was away soldiering so much of the time, it's harder to put myself in his place than hers back then. But I've been having a pretty good go at it." He slid his eyes her direction to gauge her attention, and she nodded, a single keen echo of his own usual manner of acknowledgment, for him to keep on. Glancing away toward the gapped wall of long barracks along this side of the parade ground, he began in a low ripple of voice:

"The Tenth Cavalry most of its time was never anywhere but down in the desert, Arizona, New Mexico some. They fought Comanches and Apaches and whatnot--I pestered this out of the Major once. Then all this gets built, some outfit is needed to man it, and the Tenth lights in here, four or five years before my mother does. Middle of a blizzard, naturally. Summer here isn't any too wonderful either, is it." The hot wind found them again, making them duck their heads to fend it off with the slant of their hats. Monty checked from under his hand clasping his hatbrim: no dust storm riding this wind, at least. As soon as the elements would not whisk his words away, he went on with his spoken thoughts.

"So there had to have been hard going for my father, too." Susan watching, the handclasp on the saddlehorn was a fan of fingers lifted one by one

now as he named off. "No way up, sergeant was as high as somebody like him could ever go. No war to really fight. No other colored anywhere around, except his troopers." He laughed softly. "Angel Momma always told that she was barely off the steamboat at Fort Benton before here's this Sergeant Mose Rathbun making eyes at her. But that's after he's already been at Fort Skin-and-Bone those years. And that's kind of interesting to me."

"You had better spell that out for me."

"All kinds of reasons to fly the coop, and he never did," came the reply.

"Didn't desert. Upped and re-upped. When the last enlistment they'd let him have was over with he had a good discharge--my mother hung onto that one piece of paper of his, that and the bugle. So, something here held him, even before my mother and me came along." Anxiously: "Miss Susan? You still with me?"

He was badly aware how far beyond common sense he was venturing. But he had no one to go to with this but her. If they were bound together in this godforsaken place like a pair of people in a three-legged race, what better time to take this on? *You're good and smart*, he put across mutely but he hoped legibly; either those cinnamon eyes were registering every line of him or expertly hiding how well they kept their distance, he couldn't tell which. *You had a soldier in*

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your family, too. Music aside this once, can't you give me some help on me and mine?

"I'm here listening, aren't I." Susan provided and no more.

Monty nodded as if that made up his mind to something. Spurring his horse lightly on the near side, he made the mount shy around in a well-reined pirouette. Startled, Susan watched man and horse turn into a tableau that needed only the sound of bugles behind it.

Bailey glanced back at the brief fusillade of hooves, then away again.

With the horse under perfect control but edgy about the sudden authority on its back, Monty held the high-headed parademaster pose just enough to be sure it registered on Susan. He sidled the horse back toward hers, his voice coming lower and quicker than before.

"Maybe it was something like this parade ground. Could be this was his auditorium, you think? It took something to run soldiers--we know that from the Major and his decorations, don't we. I can kind of see my father out here, bossy as you can imagine"--this drew him a deep look from Susan--"to make his troops look sharp. I don't have much memory of it, but from what I do, the Tenth liked

to put on a show. I'd bet anything their inspections and parades were pure spit-and-polish. And he had to have been front and center at all that. "

She did not say *While a white officer stood right over the top of him on everything he did?* Nor its corollary *Until he had to go out on his own and leaked away into the landscape at the first opportunity?* Monty's family pangs peeled her heart. But they also worried her sick. It didn't matter one spark to her what was behind his father's evaporation unless it ran in the family, and she had natural resistance to that prospect. Or unless--worse yet--Monty let himself be eaten away at by example: that whenever a man of the color passed down to him by Mose Rathbun stepped across a certain line, the world was always going to be too much for him.

"So here he is," Monty said in a near-whisper as if the conjured sergeant again was about to gallop up and inspect the shine on their buttons. "Parading when he can, hanging tough when he can't, and in either case he never cuts and runs from here. But over at the Double W, he didn't last hardly any time at all. Doesn't that sound sort of funny to you?" Susan knew a question that did not need answering when she heard one.

was saying

The fingers on the saddlehorn already were enumerating again. "A better wage and all; whole lot easier place for Angel Momma and likely him too; rider all his life with a chance to shine at a riding job--and he couldn't hack it? Why was that?"

Monty paused to consider. "Angel Momma didn't give him the benefit of any doubt," he at last said in an outbreath. "Got himself in some kind of scrape, she'd always tell me, and that was enough for her. Nobody else at the Double W would ever say scat about him, because of her, I suppose. But when you think about it, here's a man fought Indians all his life--what's it take to spook him out of the Two Medicine country, if that's what happened? I can't see the Williamsons catching him at something either, and kicking him out and hiding it from Angel Momma. No," he shook his head decisively, "old Mister Warren would have given him one hell of a talking-to, excuse me, and fobbed him into some little job in Helena, packed us off along with him so breaking up the family wouldn't be on the Double W's conscience, that's more their way." Monty pondered off to the perimeter of prairie beyond the far end of the parade ground. "Lately I had to wonder if something like this Klan bunch got him. But Mister

Angus would have picked up on anything like that, if it'd happened. If anybody would ever level with me, he would."

Susan knew it was her turn to try. "Just hearing all this, I would have to line up with your mother. Some kind of scrape."

"Which puts him back to being a quitter."

"Monty, this can be argued flat as well as round. I don't see why he couldn't have been a worthwhile trooper"--

"Striper. He was an old-hand sergeant, that's what the Major says they were called."

"That, then. I don't see why a man can't serve as a good soldier," this did not come out of her easily, Samuel's stubbed-off service life to be gotten past, "and be whatever else he is, besides. What your father was faced with here, obviously a lot--if it makes you think better of him, I find nothing wrong with that. I wouldn't say it necessarily wipes out your mother's rendition of him after that. People are the full alphabet, none of us is just the ink-teardrop on the *i*." She watched for any accepting of this in him, but he had gone to that expression where you couldn't tell much. "You did want my opinion."

"Knew I'd get it, too. How about we race Bailey to the stables?"

Against the evidence, Wes hoped Whit had only had a bad night's sleep. Chances of that diminished with every step as Whit came hotfooting for the house. By now he had all but flown across the yard from the Double W foreman's quarters, and Wes with alert dread turned from the office window to await him.

"They hit us again last night, more dead cows," Whit came in saying, breathing heavily. "Somebody got into them up in the Marias pasture and cut the throats of fifteen." He looked at his brother as if pointing out arithmetic on a blackboard to him. "That took a pretty fair number of men, to work over that many cows. Wes, this isn't patty cake with these bastards. And don't tell me the war wasn't either."

"I never would, Whit." Wes whipped his coat on. "I'm going to the fort to see what Bailey has come up with."

"Godamighty, Mrs. Gus, you ever hear of an invention called the cough drop?!"

Mrs. Gustafson's phlegm spasm ceased and she beamed triumphantly up at him from front row center.

"I see the picture," Monty said with resignation. He turned and faced the music, Susan sitting expectantly at the piano and wearing her surely-you-can-spell-Passchendaele expression. "Sorry I let it throw me off. I know, don't let anything short of kingdom come take my mind off the music."

"Once again, this is the place to get mistakes out of your system."

"I'd like to run out of those, at some soon point."

"Oho! The first perfect singer there ever was?"

He quit gripping the music stand as if he wanted to shake it and walked over to her, holding the sheaf of songs as a pretext. In a businesslike murmur that would not carry clearly out to the seats, he said: "Need to ask you about something. Just us if we could."

Susan eyed him. She had been expecting this, but that did not make it the least bit welcome.

"Mrs. Gus," she reluctantly called out, "thank you the world. That will be all until I give you a holler." When the broad stern of Mrs. Gustafson receded up

the aisle and out the door and the curiously depopulated auditorium was theirs, Susan sighted back onto Monty. "It doesn't look like music on your mind."

He shook his head, meaning she was right. They both knew it was going to be that kind of discussion. "I'm still not getting any younger, at this," Monty set out. He surprised her with a commiserating smile, as if sympathizing that she didn't have a twelve-year-old prodigy here beside the piano to put her stamp on. "Look at that another way," he went on, "if I'm finally old enough to have some sense I better ask myself if we haven't given this our best shot. We plug along on these runthroughs, some of them aren't that bad, and others we wouldn't either one of us wish on anybody, would we. And maybe this's about the way it's going to be. Maybe this's as good as there is in me, you think?" He watched her long enough to see how she was taking this, then looked off as if something beyond the walls had caught his attention. "Besides, I don't know how much more I can take of Fort Skin-and-Bone."

That makes two of us. Aloud, Susan armored herself with the teacher's creed. "You're nearly there. True, there were some times this morning that we could have done without. That's part of the profession, though, learning to take the rough with the smooth." But then she halted, up against the actuality of what

their time together on this old trouper of a stage amounted to for her. Monty saw her grasping for words, a shortage he had never expected she would come down with.

“Pretend you’re not hearing me say this,” she managed, “but I’d give anything if you could see yourself from in me. This auditorium has been the making of you. I’ve sat here putting you through a dozen predicaments a day, Monty, and while you still stew over them a bit much--we’ll work on that--you’ve come miles in your performance.” Still grappling, Susan husked out as if it were a stage direction: “It has been a wonder to me to see. Bear that in mind, but not enough to pop your hatband, all right? Now then. We’ll run through the rest of the morning without the aid of Mrs. Gus, what do you say.”

“Christmas come early, that sounds like to me.” All at once under the scrapes on his patience and the wear on his equilibrium, he had the oddest damned feeling he was someday going to miss all this, the time on this monster of a stage with her.

“Ready then?” Susan fixed a gaze on him that told him he had better be, and down came her fingers on the accustomed keys white and black.

Fort Assinniboine shimmered in the noon heat, as if the brick buildings were bake ovens, when the Deussenburg nosed onto the long approach road.

What next, Wes mulled as he began to come out of the fitful waking doze the miles had induced, *Beau Geste on the ramparts in a kepi?*

But when the car at last drew to a halt beside the Saharan expanse of the parade ground, on watch in the nearest tower per usual was a sunburned-looking agent, and coming out the door of the guardhouse Bailey himself, looking as spruce as a man in a dark suit could in such heat.

Telling Gus to go and reacquaint with the Mrs., Wes stepped over into the shade for the civilities with Bailey.

"No luck at the railroad," the investigator met him with. "But we're working on"--Wes's sharply raised hand cut him off. The two men stood there, ears cocked. From across the fort, the soar of a voice lingered in the air like a long lovely alpine call, then followed the faint steps of a piano down, down, down to poignant silence. Throughout this, Bailey watched Wes with care, wishing he could know everything under that expression. Finally he said, "They'll be at it a while yet. Major, I--"

"Boss!" Thunder from an open sky, the sentry's roar clapped down on them. "*I see something!*"

Bailey ran hell-bent for the tower. Grabbing from the car the Zeiss binoculars that were a prize of war, Wes went lurching after him. The interior of the tower was like the tight twist inside a lighthouse, a narrow iron spiral staircase winding and winding to the portal of blue above. The binoculars thumping against his chest, Wes pulled himself up the clammy guardrailings by his hands two steps at a time, his stiff leg catching up with each such lunge.

"Over by that coulee." The sentry pointed south to a distant break in the tan sameness of prairie. "Some kind of white shapes, hard to make out."

Bailey had his binoculars on the forms. "What the hell--? Major, can yours pull that in?"

"Yes." He let the Zeisses drop on the strap around his neck. "Antelope rumps."

Neither Wes nor Bailey said anything during their clanking descent.

At the base of the tower, Bailey glanced around and put this in a low voice: "Miss Duff and Rathbun--I think you ought to know. They have plenty to say to each other. Just to each other, sir."

"I imagine." Wes looked impatiently at the shorter man. Bailey shrugged.

"Now that we know we're not going to be attacked by antelope," Wes rapped out,

"let's talk over our chances against the Ku Klux Klan."

"Are you crazy? Why'd you come in here?"

"Can't I have business, like anybody else? You ought to be gladder than that to have me show up."

"In broad daylight? Step over here where the whole world can't see you, at least."

"Figured you'd want to know, I come across a way to get the goods. On him and her both. Hadn't ought to take too long, now."

"Why didn't you say so? Well?"

"Thing is, I'm tired of this nighthawk stuff. I want to be in for real."

"I've told you and told you, we can't induct you until--"

"Who's all this 'we,' anyhow? Seems to me you pretty much run things."

"If you really can find out where the pair of them are, I can stretch matters and make you a provisional. Wait until Saturday night and I'll bring your--"

"Wait is what broke the wagon down."

"All right, all right. You have your dues on you?"

A happy nod from the little cowhand.

"Then show up at my place at noon. Come around the back. And for heaven's sake, make yourself scarce around here."

Feeling spent to dime-size after that morning's runthrough of music and her as well, Monty came into his room ready to plop down on his bed. It was inhabited.

"Major. Didn't expect to bump into you until chow time."

"I thought I'd come see how performance is with you," came the reply from the figure sitting as if carved to fit the edge of an Army bed. "Mind if I take the load off like this? My knee has been places."

Monty proffered the premises with a gesture and seized a chair from by the table, straddling it so he could rest the top part of him on the chairback. With the Major, you never knew how long a siege you were in for.

Wes examined the room as though he had been thrust back through military history to, say, the interior of the Trojan Horse, but was smiling a little.

"How do you like the accommodations?"

Truth to tell, the big high-ceilinged room that Monty had chosen because it faced out onto the full sweep of the parade ground practically whistled when the wind blew. But then, all of Fort Assinniboine seemed to be drafty. "This'll do."

The smile Wes could not keep off his face was oddly sly by now.

"You're in officers' quarters, you know. Quicker than any of my promotions."

Monty gave that a dry laugh. "Ought to be some reward in this singing business, don't you think?"

"Speaking of. How's the auditorium working out for you?"

Monty skewed his head as if considering. Where to even start, on that?

"I'd have thought I knew how to walk out on a stage, but she's--Miss Susan's been showing me tricks of the trade. I'll tell you, she's got them."

Wes perched in wait, but that seemed to be all that was forthcoming.

Monty showing some independence probably was all to the good. Still, he needed some kind of sounding on morale here, how long he and Bailey had.

"Those bastards in their bedsheets--are they making you nervous?"

"I was born nervous, in that respect."

Wes started to say more, then cocked an ear around in mystification. "I keep hearing something."

"Mice eating the wallpaper paste." Monty leaned toward the woodbox, found a chunk he could heft nicely in one hand, and tossed it against the base of the far wall. The smorgasbord of gnawing stopped. "You were telling me about the bedsheets."

"Monty, we're working on them."

"Figured you were." Monty looked off out the window toward the barracks across the way, where every empty room was a hiding place for a cluck with a rifle. *Working on them, the man says. How fast, though? A bullet wins any kind of a race.* This next had been forming in his mind since that night of the burning cross, but even so he took extra time now to frame it just so. "Major? Do I savvy it right, that they don't have any love lost for you either?"

"A mackerel snapper like me?"

Shock showed in Monty's eyes. Since when did a Williamson use those kinds of words about himself?

Not looking up, Wes industriously kneaded his knee. "I've been after them," he said as if it was a satisfying memory, "back when I was in politics." His voice took a sudden turn that Monty was not familiar with. "The damned mongrels. Who do they think they are," it shot out of him in bursts, "to tell me

what church I dare kneel in? Or to take in after you like a pack of bloodhounds just because they feel like it? Wholesale haters, is all they are. Scum who need to take out their own shortcomings on others. They're going to catch it for this, Monty. We're going to get a handle on them, don't worry."

Monty did not feel any lessening of what had been on his mind, however, hearing this.

Onto his feet now, a passage in one motion from soldier to landholder, Wes was back to sounding merely brisk. "I'm going to have eat and run, although that's not easy after Mrs. Gus's food, is it. Coming?"

"You go ahead, I need to change out of this rig and wash up."

Shedding the little tie and then the tailored coat, Monty watched out the window as the Major went down Officers' Row in that gait that wouldn't admit to being a limp but carried a wound. From this angle Monty couldn't quite see to the verandah of the commandant's house, but he knew Susan would be out there, keeping a safe distance from Mrs. Gus's kitchen. He hoped she would light into the Major about why the pair of them at Fort Assinniboine kept hearing the Klan was being worked on when what they'd like to hear was some heads rolling, out from under those hoods.

Stripped down enough now to scrub up, Monty still was in a storm of thought as he stepped over to the washbasin. The water he dippeded from the galvanized bucket was tepid when he wished it was bracingly cold, but he doused himself with it like a man diving deep. That the Major had old tangles with the Kluxers was not exactly news, but the contempt was. He had been like a man suddenly off his rocker when he got going on the Klan that way. *And he doesn't even have a skin reason.* But was contempt enough to do the trick? Why wasn't the man tooth-and-nail into some session with Bailey about wiping out the sonofabitching Klan? Church was something strong, no question, but strong enough to stir up the clucks and the Williamsons like bobcats in a gunnysack? *And me--and her--just being used as catnip for the Klan?*

That couldn't be right. Monty looked the question to his dripping face in the mirror. *Could it?* If this was about church, it was going to be beyond him. Even Angel Momma, praying woman that she was, had joined in with the Holy Rollers for singing's sake, you couldn't say she caught the religion. The one time, as a boy, he had tried some hopping around when the Rollers started their bodily commotions, as soon as he and Angel Momma were home at the washhouse she spanked the daylights out of him. *Those folks can let fly if that's*

what they feel, but you aren't going to just to be doing it, she had whaled the lesson into him. In his life since he hadn't seen any reason to church himself to any one or the other: whatever was in charge of things of this world--more or less in charge, he had come to think--that's what the spirituals and her spirit songs represented to him. But Catholics, Protestants--could those kinds of people in this part of the country where you could ride half a day without seeing a steeple, could they go at each other like his father and the Indians whenever they got the chance? Had the Major, maybe the Williamsons back to time immemorial, had to wait this ungodly long for a crack at the other side? Toweling his face furiously, he wished again he had Angus McCaskill around to talk to, he was strong on the past.

Fenceline in decline waits for no man. The pair of dun workhorses switched their tails in idle resignation as Angus wrapped the reins around a wagonbrace, barely taut so he could cluck the team ahead from the ground, and climbed down to his work. He took another squint at the mountains as if hoping the sun was going to fool him and go down early for a change, but nothing doing. This time of year, there would be a good couple of

Tools of the earthgouging trade arrayed in the back of the wagonbed like a crusader's cudgels, he readied, if that was the word, to take on his rocky north line one more time. The dog Bob, with the older wisdom of his species, scooched in under the wagon and took a position there with his head pillowed atop his crossed paws.

"Have the decency not to snore," Angus admonished the snug dog.

He honestly could have stood more company out of Bob, particularly this day-end. Susan's leaving was like air going out of a lamp chamber, a leak of life he and Adair felt with each visitorless dusk. Not only that, but the valley somehow seemed voluminously empty without Monty and that odd bodkin Dolph riding in of a morning. Scotch Heaven truly was on thin times, he reflected, when the only caller to be looked forward to was the paradoxical postman Wesley Williamson.

Taking his time about putting his barbwire-scarred gloves on and assigning his reluctant thoughts, Angus contemplated boundaries and their needs. He had fought this ground countless times, a shale shoulder of Breed Butte that repulsed fenceposts, heaving them out with frost and pinching off their strands of wire with contemptuous rust. All summer he had pecked away at repair up here,

choring away on this stubborn sidehill an afternoon or evening at a time when not haying or shearing or otherwise carrying the homestead on his back, and to say the truth, he found it supremely tempting to let this last sagging stretch go until next spring. But the jog of fence here was where his land butted against the range of the Double W, and while he had never grasped how, the Williamsons and their invasive cattle could always sense any tingle of opportunity at a fenceline, much like that monitoring that occurred from the verges of a spider web.

Angus puckered in exasperation at this situation of perpetually losing ground by holding onto ground. He had to say for the old grabber Warren Williamson that Scotch Heaven at least had known where it stood with him; and Whit had pretty much filled his shoes since they came empty. Major Wesley Williamson, though--a piece of work of another sort he was proving to be, that dazzler.

He went to take his mood out on the first posthole. Feet splayed substantially wide of the target--"Ay, *Angus*," Ninian Duff had pointed out to him all those years ago when he was a greenling at this, "*you don't want to have to count your toes after a day of fencing*"--he hefted the crowbar and in a double-handed thrust jabbed the point of it downward with full force and conviction. A

chip of earth about half the size of his palm flaked away. He took a half-comical gander at the crowbar to make sure he was using the chisel end rather than its blunt top. This invincibly dry summer had left the ground harder than ever. And while he never would have said he might be getting a trifle old for this sort of thing, the crowbar had definitely put on weight over the winter. Excuses never counted for much in this life, though, as far as he had found; and hard labor generally led him to hard thinking. So, knowing he would have to go some to finish with this by dark, he hoisted the digging implement again with a grunt.

From posthole to posthole as he broke ground, shoveled, set fresh-peeled posts and tamped them in, Angus bothered the question. It had only been twenty-four hours now since he had contrived to bring telling shape to the story, but it felt like the majority of a lifetime. He went back over and over it like an apprentice minstrel, still disturbed, still shy of what he knew he ought to do. Maybe better not to have ever known for sure; but Monty Rathbun was not the only one with curiosity for a habit. Besides, after enough time suspicion gets to be even poorer company than Double W cows.

Ceasing crowbar rhythm for a moment, Angus ran a finger around the inside leather of his hat, wiping the sweat out. It had taken the wearing of his

other hat, his snappy dove-gray town Stetson to the county superintendent's yearly summoning of all the teachers at Valier yesterday, to funnel all this into his head. Just as soon as he could decently take leave of the teacherly gathering, he had beelined across town to the irrigation project headquarters. In luck, he found the ditch rider, Toussaint Rennie, just unsaddling from his rounds of inspecting canals.

Angus. You have on your clothes for marrying or burying.

It's one of those rare times I need to be presentable, is all. Have time for a gab, do you, Toussaint?

Part Cree, part Canadian French, part seed of the loins of the Lewis and Clark expedition, part in-law to the Blackfeet by marriage, part roving ditch rider and more than a little coyote when it came to sniffing out what people had been up to, Toussaint as a one-man League of Nations possessed a memory as deep as anyone's in the Two Medicine country, and Angus had shopped there countless times before for delight and intrigue. This time, one of those would have to do, and it was not delight.

He could have kicked himself for not seeing it before. But who knew how three-sided a picture this was? He'd had to alibi to Toussaint like a good

fellow as to his interest in matters practically back to Genesis, in terms of the earliest days of landtaking here. But there by damn it at last was, clicking into place like the orbiting shards of a kaleidoscope. All it took had been to fit Toussaint's canny gossip about a long-ago shenanigan or two up there in Cree and Blackfoot territory onto that oldest rumor, distant but so echoing now, within his own compass of memory at this end of the Two Medicine country. Stopping again to blow, Angus rested his hands atop the crowbar and his chin on his hands. [#]Still thinking full-tilt, he stared up the slope of Breed Butte to the falling-down homestead there and the now doorless house where he and Rob Barclay batched together when they first came. No more than six months old, that lingering indistinct whisper must have been, when they rode in here in search of the land America promised. Straight from Scotland, Rob and he were the youngest young men there ever were, but between them they possessed brain enough to recognize something that probably was not wise nor healthy to pursue. Which did not lessen Angus's discomfort now that the old haunt of an incident was in apparent pursuit of him.

Hawk weather, like now, that first Scotch Heaven season of theirs had been, and Angus for another half-minute watched as an evening lift of breeze

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carried a windhover above him, around and around. The reddish tailfeathers of the sleek bird caught some last sun in the upward twirl of its flight. Under such seasonal spirals, all of Scotch Heaven had lived, when it lived. He had to wonder: did Wesley Williamson, coveting this valley in the glandular way that ran in his family, ever even bother to enumerate its inhabitants in memory, or were they just ciphers of acreage to him? Sharp-pointed Ninian Duff and genial Donald Erskine and Rob and himself counted as specific burrs, no doubt, for they had bothersomely tenanted the North Fork before the Double W managed to get its head turned in this direction. But the Frew cousins, George and Allan, hard to reason with as anvils and as sturdy. The feckless Speddersons, short-lived here but loyally selling off to their neighbors instead of the bank in town or the land hoggerly on Noon Creek. The populous Findlaters; old sad bachelor Tom Mortenson. The wives, most of them formidable, who went the limits of their lives on these homesteads, and the cavalcade of children on horseback who descended on the schoolhouse down there at the forks of English Creek and madly recited their way through the schoolyears under the tutelage of Angus McCaskill. Scotch Heaven empty country? No country that has ever had human eyes pass over it is empty of memory. *What about it, Major--when you*

orchestrate this way, how many of us are words to your tune? Maybe the man himself no longer knew. Not even a contortionist, Angus thought tiredly, could see all sides of himself at once.

Never mind that. Just make up his own mind whether or not to speak up. He could not believe that the cat's cradle of Susan, Monty, and the manipulating Major would hold together if he were to sidle up to the right one and murmur, "*I hate more than anything to say this. But for the welfare of all concerned, you ought to know...*" Could even do it by note delivered by the silky hand of Wesley Williamson his very self, a notion that brought Angus a fleeting grin. But he sobered back to the question: spell out or leave lay. It was one thing to let bygones be gone, allow the long silence over this keep its seal; but one hell of another to hold your tongue when some inflamed dunce hiding under a hood but able to peep through a rifle sight could still get Susan and Monty in reach.

Despite the nearness of dusk, the sweat still rolled from him. He slammed the crowbar into the making of the next posthole. A piece of Adair's dried-fruit pie and a sip of coffee would be uncommonly welcome before bed. He hadn't said anything so far, needing to think, but tonight would need to be a war council with her. Adair couldn't read the weather, she had not much more notion of the

ins and outs of the Two Medicine country than when she was deposited into it thirty-five years ago, but she knew more than he wanted to admit about the wear of living with silences.

Angus glanced west. Nearly to the corner-post now, one post in between to go. He clucked the horses to attention, and they dutifully paced forward with the workwagon until he called "Whoa." He felt more tired than he should, but it was worth a bit more strain if he could put this fenceline away for another year and rewardfully head home to--

The spasm hit him dead-center in his chest, and he knew. Clutching himself there, he tried for all he was worth to catch his breath. His arms felt afire. All the wonder he had ever had about this tipping point of life now coming out of him in gasps, he lurched his way to a cutbank. The dog came and nosed at him urgently. Angus hunched there, holding hard to himself, but slipping and slipping in his wrestle with the last pain ever.

Monty was the first to hear the Duesenberg pull in, the next evening.

Looking not at all like a man who again tonight was cleaning out the Gustafsons and Susan at poker in the parlor, he had just ruefully flicked in his

next ante from his heap of winnings. Kitchen matches. Where was this run of luck back on those silver-dollar paydays when he could have really put it to use? On the other hand, the Zanzibar Club's poker habitues generally had not placed as much faith in a pair of treys as the Gustafsons tended to, or for that matter shown Susan's abiding sense of conviction that she could fill an inside straight on a two-card draw. At the moment, she was vowing what she would do to him if she ever got him in a game of rummy.

He and Gustafson peered at each other in confusion at the sound of the big car. After driving the Major to the Double W the day before, Gus had hitched right back with the campending truck. Major's orders; one more sign to Monty that there was still was nothing but delay ahead on the Klan front.

All four of them around the table now heard the click of a rifle being cocked by whatever bruiser was on duty on the verandah. Then Bailey's call into the dark: "Major? Is he one of yours?"

"It's all right. He drove me, is all."

Bailey and a couple of hastily summoned operatives came in first like sweepers before a proccessional. Looking compelled, Wes stepped in, Dolph immediately behind him as if in tow.

"The funeral is when?"

"She's not going."

"Hold off a minute, Bailey. It's not the best idea, Susan."

"Don't even try," she halted that from Wes. "I'll make my goodbye to Angus if I have to crawl to get there."

It took none of the accumulated detective powers in the room to know that she would do just that. Wes seemed to be shuffling mental papers and not finding the precise one he was looking for. Bailey appeared ulcerous. He began, "We're still not--"

On the instant, Monty decided. "Miss Susan, I hate to butt in, but if you're going to be away--suppose we could work in that night runthrough you promised, first? Tonight, yet? The evening's still a pup."

The faces in the room were a silent ring around him after that came out. Even to himself his words had sounded as cold as if chipped out with an ice pick. But right now he figured that was what it took. Susan looked as if she wanted to hit him, but while he watched, silently willing her, her expression came around to consideration. "Maybe we had better," she said in a tone no warmer than his had

"Monty, kiddo. And Ma'am." These salutations hung there, until Dolph managed a further blurt. "How you faring?" Eyeing around, he seemed to be in awe of the contingent it took to tend Monty and Susan here, when he had managed it single-handed on the North Fork.

For all Monty knew, Dolph's only transgression was his bad case of mouth when they'd had to ride across there together. When his yap wasn't open, he'd do. "Just ducky, Dolphus," Monty gave him back generously enough, "how about yourself?" Susan only sent him a distracted nod, focusing on Wes and whatever had put him on the road this late in the day.

Wes's eyes stayed steady on hers.

"You'd want to know--Angus McCaskill passed away. I'm sorry, honestly."

Frozen there in her chair, she looked the question to him.

"He was fixing fence," Wes told her as much as there was, "his heart gave out."

Monty sat there helplessly next to her, hands doubled to fists under the table so they couldn't touch to her in sympathy in front of all these. After a moment Susan broke into the awkward pall they had all retreated into:

though

been. "It would get that out of the way, wouldn't it. We'll need the auditorium lit." She tore her eyes from Monty to seek out Gustafson.

After a moment Wes stormily seconded her look. "I get the coal oil lamps going," Gustafson vouched and left the room.

"Excuse me, all," Monty said hastily and went out behind him.

Wes's brow still held thunder. Susan's words came before he could say anything. "Leave us to this. Monty is at a point where this means quite something to him."

"It must." Mustering himself, Wes looked around to where the nervous arrival to their midst was standing there looking unhorsed. "Dolph, I know you're new at this. Just hold on here, while Bailey finds you a bunk."

Wes waited up for her. The fort had quieted. The moon was at its most tentative--the crescent of its new phase, thin as thin can be, mingling with the almost-circle of the darkened waning one like an escape of light from a shuttered portal--and delineating only the outlines of buildings, their details staying hidden. With only the general night for company this way, he thought back over everything.

"You went on late," he called out when he at long last heard the screendoor slap closed behind her.

"Sorry. What we're at takes time, too." Susan sounded done in. She came through the scarcely lit hallway out to where he was, surprised him with a touch on the shoulder, and navigated from that to the wicker chair next to his.

"I hope he was in good voice, at least?"

"He's always that, it's the rest of him that takes the work."

They were on the big screened-in rear porch of the commandant's house.

A brick wall enclosed an oddly prim garden area back there which the Fort Assiniboine seasons probably had always rendered more theoretical than botanical, but it did provide a place to talk in private. This night itself seemed a kind of seclusion. The soft dark gentled everything except the sound of the graveyard shift of sentries as they called out now to the coffee caddy making his middle-of-the-night round with a hot pot in a bucket of coals. Wes listened, checking the arithmetic, until the shouts matched the number of towers. "Quite a collection of people Monty has in his entourage now," he mused. "Even me."

"You brought it on yourself."

, remember

"You know what road they say is paved with good intentions." He could sense her attention rouse at that. To head off what she might ask, he hurried out his own loop of question: "Monty out of sorts, that way--how close are you to done with him?"

Susan seemed to consider this from numerous sides, until finally replying: "He's nearly there. I'd say another week of practice and he'll have everything down pat."

"Do you think that could be made two weeks?"

"What then? Does Bailey count on the Klan flying south with the swallows?"

"Susan, he--we're doing our damndest." He rubbed a hand along the wicker corrugations of the chair arm, whetting what he wanted to say next. "I know you're bothered by a lot tonight. I wish it didn't have to be so."

"It's ghastly to me, Angus gone," she said, dry grief in her voice. "From girl on, I looked to him. For everything from the ways of words to justice in our fights at recess. But do you know what's odd? I spent all those years in his classroom, I can tell you the exact part in his hair and every mood of his mustache, yet when I think of him it's at the schoolhouse dances. He and Adair

could shine together at that, at least, and at every dance the time would come when people would make him step out on his own." A remembering laugh unsteady in its sound, which increased Wes's ache for her. "He wasn't the inflated kind of Scot," she tried to lighten this with a mock chiding, "like you Highlanders. But somewhere he picked up the Highland Fling." Wes could just see her profile as she looked up into the night, gave a little hum to find her note, then softly sang:

"I saw the new moon, late yester e'en

with the old moon in her arm--"

She ended the little chorus with a croon that swept upward like the flung hand of he who danced to it: "Hiiiyuhhh!" The drums and pipes of Edinburgh came to Wes's ears, the similar cry of the Black Watch drillmaster drifting up to a balcony that held the two of them. "I didn't mean to carry on like this," Susan's strained speaking voice broke that memory. "I realize you and Angus had your differences."

"We were born to them, let's just say, Susan."

"This is a night I'm not made for," she concluded as if regarding herself from a distance. Across it, across the years stretching back to those other nights, her hand found his. "Keep me company? As before?"

little

little

*Angus
it mixed
up
medley of time
meddles
memory of
survive*

For a moment he thought he had imagined those words. But this was Susan, imagination could not begin to keep up with her. They rose, not exactly steadying each other but needing to feel their way together, and went to the bedchamber where, in the courses of other lives, commandant and lady had lain together under a mingled moon.

Does what we were at give off some spoor he picks up? Or has he had enough experience of bedsprings that it amounts to an instinct?

Breakfast was in every conceivable stage, knives and forks still in action among those of them left at the table when the morning shift of tower guards scraped their plates into the scrap bucket and tromped out while over at the stove Mrs. Gustafson was forcefully dolloping hotcake batter onto the griddle in anticipation of the graveyard shift coming in hungry. Susan met Bailey's eyes again across the table, over their coffee cups. She was as sure as in any performance she had ever given that she showed no outward sign of last night, and Wes was managing what she thought was a perfectly passable impersonation of himself as the fated officer who had drawn the duty of the morning. But Bailey knew. All the way since the Missoula hotel room? she wondered. Did he read



forward into people's lives, that clear-as-glass gaze of his more certain any crystal ball, that they would again and again be caught at what they had done before?

We'll see.

Bailey settled his cup to the table and turned back to Wes. "Day after tomorrow doesn't give us enough time to get our ducks in a row, Major. The number one thing I don't like about this funeral business is it splits our force. We can maybe--*maybe*--keep her safe if we put half our men around her there at the graveyard. That leaves us thin here. What would help like everything would be for Rathbun to lay low, keep in his room in case of any snoopers. No prancing around the parade ground on a pony, just for instance."

At this, Dolph looked up from spearing a bite of hotcake into the yolk of his fried egg, wagging his head chidingly in the direction of Monty's place at the table. Susan again wondered about the inner workings of someone like him, human equivalent of a shirttail on Wes or Whit, whichever one on any given day tucked him toward a back pocket of ranch life as needed: milk this, saddle up that, which this time happened to be a Duesenburg. Perhaps he simply saw all this as something he could tell endlessly in the bunkhouse. Certainly he had been sopping in everything that was said since he got here, far and away more attentive

than
1

Dolph
1 up D'burg
10

arrived
1

than he had ever been to chores for her. She tried to set aside her irk at his witnessing this; there was enough else strumming away on her nerves.

Now Wes glanced at the empty plate waiting for Monty. "I know he's entitled to sleep in after singing half the night, but he ought to be in on this."

Bailey left the table, stepped out and said something to one of the guards coming off shift, and was already laying out the plan by the time he sat back down.

"McCaskill would have belonged to the Woolgrowers' Association, I figure we can put three of the boys in the crowd as a delegation from the Helena office of that. Myself and one of the others, anybody asks, we can say we're stockbuyers he dealt with--

"Only if you say it in gabardine, Mr. Bailey," Susan informed him.

"I'm afraid she's right," Wes said impassively enough. "You can't show up there looking like you're dressed for a Butte wake."

Grimacing, Bailey jotted into a notebook a shopping trip to the haberdashery in Havre. "All right. So. The five of us can cover the funeral, just. Now to get her back here in one piece, we'll need to make like she's heading to Helena, then swing off--"

"It's Rathbun!" The guard who had been sent to fetch Monty half tumbled into the room, his footing out from under him in more ways than one. "He's gone off out of here!"

"How?" Bailey looked swiftly at Susan.

"Goddamned if I know," the guard said as the others from his shift boiled to their feet and crowded around him. "I was in the tower but could hear them both in the auditorium there, her playing and talking away and every so often he'd sing--"

"Or somebody would play a recording of Paul Robeson, would she, Susan?" This came from Wes, and was not impassive at all.

Bailey's agonized forehead made her take pity. "Oh, if it makes that much difference to you. Once we were in the auditorium, all Monty needed to do was to go up to the balcony and slide down the fire chute."

"He'll be horseback, with plenty of head start. The whole damn prairie he can choose from." The way Bailey spoke it, Monty had gone to ground and pulled the hole in after him. "Major, how many people am I supposed to protect who won't let themselves be protected?"

*Roland
Hayes*

"He knows what he's doing," Susan told them as if she did too. Hard as it was, she faced Wes directly. In front of the others, he had to hold in the arrowstorm of questions, the sudden entire nightfull of them. She alone saw in his shaken expression the deeps of their time together it came from; motives off the map left a person that way. "Wes, if we take care of our end of things"--the sweep of her words was not lost on Bailey either--"Monty can handle his. You'll see."

Gruff as she had ever heard him, Wes said back: "Try to be reasonable, Susan. We'd know better about that if you'd tell us where he's gone."

"You'll have to take it on faith."

It became the frieze of Fort Assiniboine ever after for those of them in that room, the faces spaced around that table then. Susan had been in front of skeptical audiences before, but these were ready to pucker with it. Bailey was revising her, for better or worse she probably would never know. In back of him, the men on shift when Monty ghosted away into the night looked as if the same case of distemper had swept through them all. Dolph appeared to be in tattler's heaven. Wes had the look of a man whose hand had been forced. Still bleakly turned toward Susan, he said to Bailey: "Ready or not, now we have to."

You have the day for it at least, Angus.

Scrubbed by yesterday's local rain, a piece of weather the rest of the Two Medicine country would have paid hard cash for, the valley of English Creek and the beveled benchlands around it showed a surprise hint of green. Beyond and more than a mile up, the reefs of the Rockies were standing bright in the sun, blue and purple in their cliffs. Susan felt lit by memories. *Ay, you could eat the air here*, her father liked to proclaim on such rare fine mornings. *We'll need to*, her mother would have ready, *if you don't butcher one of your darling creatures*.

Absorbed, Susan glided off from Bailey and his crew and the other earlycomers towards the rows of markers. The graveyard here on the hill held them all now. She visited for some minutes among the stones and their epitaphs. The names, the names. They filled the years of her younger self. Now, with Angus, every family of the Scotch Heaven homesteads was incised, a member or two or all, in this knoll. She stepped last to the graves of her parents; stood there held by the thought of how much the world had turned over in the five years since their deaths.

above GV

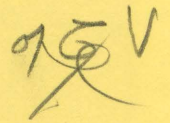
At her back she heard the slick whisk of gabardine pantlegs approaching.

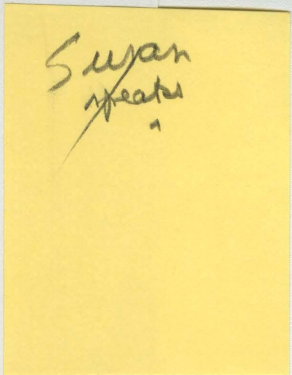
Bailey was gray-sheened as a dove from head to toe, his dandy new Stetson and boots matching the cut of everything but his eyes. "The family's arriving," he said as if introducing himself. "So's half the country, it looks like. It would help if you would get over there"--he was gazing around at the Two Medicine country's sculpted perimeter of buttes and peaks and benchlands but only, she knew, as far as a rifle could carry--"in with the others. What do you say?"

"I'll be where Adair wants me," she told him. "Give them a minute to sort themselves out and then I'll come."

Bailey trudged off to blend with the crowd, one of his men now drifting toward her in the rotation of protection. The air was still, the canopy of cottonwood leaves motionless as a pale-green roof of domes over the town of Gros Ventre, down at the base of the knoll. Somewhere there, Wes at his business. He had dodged like a Nijinsky when she wanted him to attend Angus's funeral. Dealings to be done, he intimated; it would do no good for him to be on hand, he protested, Bailey had set everything possible into place. Under her unquitting stare, he put it at its simplest:

"I'm not wanted there."





Susan
speaks
"

"You know, don't you, I'm not either, with the exception of the

McCaskills."

He had digested that in silence. The past couple of days of tension between them--held off from one another by the forcefield of unsayable motives but in the pull of what each still needed the other for--showed on him as if a mask had slipped. She knew it was all he had in him to tell her when he said at last:

"Some dealings won't wait."

Speaking of. Susan bolstered herself and crossed the cemetery to the graveside. People were pouring in; maybe it was just as well for Wes's vanity that he hadn't come, this was a crowd befitting a governor. This entire end of the county had passed through Angus's classroom, and she catalogued faces by family resemblance. Some gave her a nod of recognition, a good many carefully gave her nothing.

When she reached the McCaskills, Varick as the new head of the family shook her hand and thanked her for coming. Beside him, Beth was resoundingly pregnant. The boy Alec was too old to cry but too young to stand still in the family grouping. Then Adair, eyes glistening, turned from the Bible-holding minister--*Oh, Angus, surely they'll balance that off with a helping of Burns--and*

clasped her. After a little she braced back from Susan, dabbed away the tears which had joined the freckles beneath each eye, and looked off as if for the missing. "Fickle old wind. Angus would laugh, this is the one day it didn't come by to pay him its respects."

Gros Ventre looked as if it could use a customer, any kind of customer, this morning. Wes checked his watch. Patting his pocket to make sure of the day's documents, he climbed out of his backseat workspace in the Duesenburg, parked as discreetly as something like it could be behind the Sedgwick House hotel, and walked on up the empty main street. Still making his calculations but careful of the off-angle set of steps into the Valley Stockmen's Bank, he went in. He could see Potter riffling papers of his own, and he headed on back.

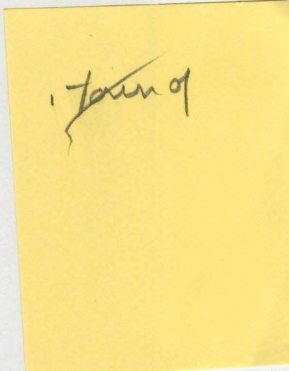
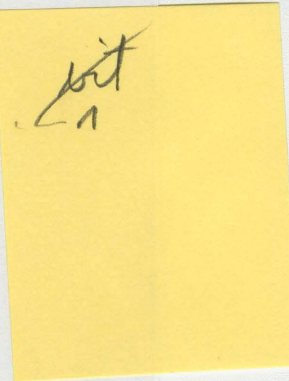
"Well, Major," the banker said cordially, looking up over his desk.

"Business first thing in the morning?"

"That's why daylight was invented, George."

"With me, the only crack of dawn is my sacroiliac as I roll over in bed."

Wes was sure his father had heard the same ritual joke from Potter in one financial



go-round or another in this same room. "But that's how the Double W gets the jump on the rest of us, hmm? Have a seat, and what can I do you for?"

Through the open door of the banker's office Wes glanced out to where the tellers were going about business as usual. He asked idly, "Will you be closing for the funeral?"

"This mother of mine," Varick was saying to Susan at his first chance to do so without being overheard, "has her own idea of how to say goodbye to Dad. But she needs you in it with her."

"Anything," said Susan.

"Whose? McCaskill's?" Potter had the air of genial sharing that he employed on everything from foreclosure notices to remarks about the weather.

"We can't shut down every time there's one less homesteader."

Wes stepped over and closed the office door. He said as though it had just occurred to him: "Do you realize there's only one letter's difference between *skulk* and *skunk*?"

only one

"You lost me there, Major." The banker rocked forward in his chair, staying attentively tilted.

"I'll bet." Wes reached into the breast pocket of his suit and brought out the documentation. *Realm of Pondera County, Invisible Empire, Knights of the Ku Klux Klan*, each of the membership-and-dues cards in the packet was headed. Each was about the size of a schoolchild's report card and was thorough down to height, weight, color of eyes and hair, and date of oath. They were alphabetical, and he riffled rapidly to the *Ps*. He flipped a card across the desk.

Potter's glance rebounded instantly from the card with his name on it to Wes's confronting eyes. "Where the hell did you get those?"

"Don't make me tired. At your house, where else." Wes watched at him as he would something that crawled. "Not me personally, of course, but someone who knows how to deal with firebugs and cow killers and would-be assassins."

"You Williamsons always think you're good at running a bluff." Potter's mettle as a hater was fully in his voice, but so was last-ditch cunning. "I would imagine you're a clubman yourself, Major--you must know there's no law against belonging to a fraternal organization."

kill

max

"Maybe not, but then there's trespass at our place, breaking and entering at Susan Duff's, malicious destruction of property, reckless endangerment--"

"You want to get giddy citing laws, try the one against miscegenation. That woman and that darky you keep around."

"Even if there was anything to it," Wes said, snap coming into his tone, "there's no witness." Dolph by now would be halfway to Chicago on the cattle train, his turnabout job of coughing up those who were wooing him done and a couple of months of bonus wages in his wallet and his provisional Klan card folded away somewhere as a souvenir. "And don't count on any others of that skulking bunch you head up. They're busy being reasoned with." Whit and his men right now were going name to name from those cards through this town. The remainder of Bailey's force was doing the same in Valier, the rejuvenated sheriff and muscular deputies were spreading the gospel of persuasion in the town of Conrad. Across the state at this hour, his old political allies were hitting the Klan with what Wes knew would be varying effectiveness, but some of it was sounding effective enough; the sheriff at Butte had put out a public declaration that any Klan members caught lingering would be shot like wolves.

horse cock
sentence 7
W's rage

Wes @ that
moment
was
arguing us
legal w/o a
congressional declar
7 was

intensity
"snap"

cold rage
snapped
out

downy

The specimen across the desk from Wed made another try at dodging. "I have standing in this town, you're dreaming if you think you can turn people--"

"Potter," Wes said as if instructing the clumsiest member of the awkward squad, "half the banks in this state have gone under in the past couple of years. I'd only need to lift a finger to push yours over that edge. And the bank examiners would pretty quickly find out if any depositors' funds went to pay for white sheets and rednecks and Klan rifles and ammunition, wouldn't they."

The man sat very still, trying to see beyond the corner Wes had him in. He moistened his lips enough to speak. "Maybe I got swept up in this more than I should have."

"Fine. You get to tell that to whatever hooded fools are above you. Now I suggest you close this bank for that funeral. Then go home and pack a bag, and get out of the state. I'm sure you can find a rock to live under, somewhere else."

Monty watched the clock.

He stood still as could be. They hadn't wanted to put him in, this early. But this was the point of day when funerals were held in the Two Medicine country, late enough after morning chores to dress up and make the trip to town,

time left for work in the afternoon. He squared himself up, attentive now on the figure almost shoulder to shoulder with him. Somebody else made a pointing motion, which after the workings-over Susan had given him in the auditorium he did not have to think twice to recognize as a cue.

“Now for your listening pleasure again here on station CINE, our latest troubador of the Medicine Line, Montgomery Rathbun.” The announcer cocked his eyes around to him but kept his mouth aimed at the almighty microphone on its spear of stand between them. “For those of you not fortunate enough to have been introduced to him through his music the past few evenings, Mister Rathbun’s is an unusual strand in our prairie background. Your father was a member of the American colored cavalry--the ‘buffalo soldiers,’ as they were called, I believe?”

“He was,” Monty said easily into his hemisphere of the mike. The first time, he had worried he would need this written out, along with the music, but talking on the radio was proving to be a snap. “Sergeant in the Tenth Cavalry, right down at Fort Assiniboine. He was in charge of troopers, my mother was in charge of laundry, and I seem to be the result.”

last evening

"And a lucky outcome it was for music-lovers," the announcer orated from inches away. "For those of you who do not know the Fort Assiniboine story and the part it played in our Medicine Line past"--here he resorted to a script of what these radio people called canned history, for what Monty knew would be the next two minutes.

Making sure of his music sheets, in that noiseless way they'd shown him so the rustle of paper wouldn't make ten thousand listeners think their radio sets were on fire, Monty drew everything of the past half week into him for the effort to come. That feverish conference with her as soon as they were by themselves in the auditorium, absolutely agreeing they had to get the Major and Bailey into gear somehow. He had left her in loud conversation with herself and the Victrola version of Robeson, thrown her a wave from the balcony, and gone down the chute. Led the saddlehorse out of the fort with the blanket over it. The long ride north, to here, all night and half the next day; it had been like riding in the roundup again, except he couldn't remember ever being so saddle-weary during roundups. By the time he was across the border--the section-line roads he had been following ran out at Canada, the only way he could tell--and sorted out the town of Medicine Hat to find the radio station, he was feeling hard-used. A hot

in absolute
agreement

change
Robeson

30.06 -
take some
to barfords
w/ him.

4, next day
to go into
that night

meal and a scrub-up at the hotel, then presenting himself in full singing rig to the station manager just as she had said to do. The man had been intrigued enough to try him out on a few songs, and then excited enough to sign him on.

All that was lacking was her. He wished like everything she was over there governing the keys for this. Wherever the station had dragged up this accompanist, the woman plowed around on the piano like she was doing Sunday school. But he would make up for it. *Oho! The first perfect singer there ever was?* As perfect as he could make it, this time. The announcer was finishing his scripted patter. "And now, out of that historical heritage, here is Montgomery Rathbun to sing one of the most beautiful of traditional spirituals." Monty took the cue, and out into the air, out over the Medicine Line and the weedy parade ground of the old fort and the time-browned washhouse of the Double W and the silent homesteads of Scotch Heaven, his voice began to travel.

"There's a man going around taking names.

He has taken my mother's name...

Susan held her head high, waiting there at the brow of ground in front of them all. What bits and pieces we are made of, Adair was causing her to know

copy
in
back room

a full cut
to start

anew. *"You sang in his schoolyard, you sang at our wedding,"* she had said as tranced as if telling a fortune. *"You can't stop short now. And it's my one time to do a bit of rhyme for Angus."* The two of them and the stiffly-dressed crowd were watching somberly now as Varick sprinkled a handful earth slow as salt into the grave. When he stepped back, Susan and Adair blended their voices, one pure and one striving.

"World enough, world enough

Did I search till there was thee.

And at last, oh at last,

The orbit of your charms

Is world enough for me."

His voice finding stairs to new places it could go, Monty put forth the words as he never had before.

"There's a man

going

around

taking

Susan

names.

He has taken my father's name..."

Across the miles, the other two in this trio of tribute lifted their song of
Scottish counterpoint as if it could reach over horizons.

"Long enough, long enough

Were my heart and I at sea.

Now at last, oh at last,

The circle of your arms

Is world enough for me."

On oldest maps, a cloud maestro blows tribute to those who sail the edges
of the world. Monty similarly gathered breath and all else into the last of song:

"There's a man

going around

taking names.

He has taken my dear friend's name,

Angus McCaskill was his name.