

The evening, the evening,

~~The evening brings all home.~~

oxd

There on the picnic tarp, Wes immediate and intent across from her, Susan knew better than to remember a golden blush over that time. The two of them had been no perfect fit, from the start they had known which parts were ill-suited for the other. It can grow musty in the loft of the mind; Wes, when he wasn't

activated by politics, tended toward an attic-headed collecting habit: books, rare

~~she had constantly had to wonder, another possession~~
~~letters, language as it was spoken, property. Herself, in among those? Monty,~~
~~that pleased him~~

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being tucked there, too? In turn, Wes understood of her as well as she did that

she was of brusque blood, given to directness when that wasn't the route that had

come to be expected, as a Roman road will fly like a spear from the past through

~~Not a match, a Duff and a Williamson, that either of them would ever have~~
~~the modern swerving muddle. Yet they had coupled as naturally as wild~~
~~dreamed of.~~

oxd

creatures, until they were found out.

"Susan? Something?"

"Yes. We should be getting back."

Angus took his time putting an answer together. After a minute, he was sure. "Green thistle from the old country that I was, Two Medicine life all was a startlement at the time. Sit there trying to have a quiet drink and you'd probably have to dodge a traveling fistfight over whether aces chase faces or vice versa. I did hear that there was a shooting or two in Gros Ventre, before I came. But these ninnies were't kiyiing around here then, if that's any help. Monty, believe me, your father didn't have anything of this sort happen to him or I couldn't have helped but hear about it."

"Maybe not just like this." To Angus, Monty looked as bleak as any human could. "Story's always been, he pulled out on my mother and me. Now I'm wondering."

If it were me, I don't know that I'd be able to put away a night such as this and simply bed down with--well, with me.

Life marched in long review in Adair's nights, and thanks to Susan Duff, this was one of the more restless processions of thoughts her mind had ever set out on. Just hours ago the familiar dark of her bedroom wall had been lit with a pale frieze of shadowvines, the climbing rose at the window sketched into motion

train?

cut or
redistribute?
shd sm be
Susan's pt of
view?
dialogue?

by the headlamps of the approaching automobile; only trouble took to the road at that time of night, and with held breath she had watched the trellis design grow and grow into the room before she undertook to shake Angus out of sleep. And now here in a Williamson guest bed as large as a barge, she lay open-eyed nearest the wall while the sound sleeper in the lump of covers at the outside of the bed was Susan.

It was astounding, how life reacted to Susan. Adair had long ago concluded that Susan was like a hot poker into cider. A savor came from her which, whether it was to your exact taste or not, boilingly changed the flavor of a situation. Adair lay there bringing back that most distant day when she and Angus were wed and all at once a great unforgettable goose of a schoolgirl with the majestic neck she had not yet grown into and those sinewy Duff shoulders stood up tall and in the finest voice gave the one gift that, even then, Adair knew would last:

Adair Barclay, she was there,

Gathering a lad with red hair...

Angus McCaskill, he was there,

Paired with a lass named Adair...

exhausted

cut 7

Feel love's music everywhere,

Fill your heart, fill the air,

Dancing at the rascal fair.

She tensed now as Susan stirred, hoping she had not unwittingly hummed her awake. But Susan simply gave a bit of a dreamer's groan. Angus so often did the same. It was one of his waking excursions, though, that came into her mind now. It had been an evening he spent in Dante and she in solitaire, and she glanced up to find him prowling over to the night-blank north window, where he stood staring out with his thoughts. "*An old penny for them,*" she jogged him as usual. What came was not usual. "*The circles of Hell, Dair, for those who believe that way,*" he said as casually as if noting the weather. "*The Williamsons' is going to need to be custom-made, wouldn't you say?*" Yet here they were, Angus and herself, Susan and poor wishbone Monty, under Williamson roofs while outside one or another of them--she was pretty sure it must be the Major--every so often could be heard making the rounds of the guards put in place against those who tormented the night.

change?