winned for WORK SONG and MISS YOU March 10 '08
Lambing time is the crisis on a sheep ranch. No more complex process exists in the growing of food. Watch:

It begins slowly, a lamb or two suddenly amid the two thousand ewes in late March. A few lambs each day, frail yellow sprawls of life until the ewe begins mothering and cleans it off. A fresh lamb is an unlikelihood, all legs, tail and head, with a body you can easily clamp the palm of your hand around.

As the trickle swells, more fresh tiny bodies bright against the spring earth, the lambing shed is readied. Inside it are rows of jugs—boarded enclosures large enough to hold a ewe and lamb. On the front is a small gate with a wooden button; in back is a small feed rack where hay is put. It is dim in the shed, and because the season is spring, soon it is damp, too. Underfoot is a muskeg of straw, spongy mud and sheep droppings.

If the ewes number several thousand, a gutwagon patrols the grazing band and brings the new-born to the shed. A gutwagon is a sledge—a line of jugs on skids, pulled by a team of horses or tractor. The gutwagon man takes the new lamb and tries to entice the mother into one of the traveling jugs. If he is lucky, she will go in and the door can be slammed behind her. Most of the time he won't be, and the ewe will have to be hooked by the hind leg with a sheepphook or grabbed by the wool and manhandled in.

Lambing is exhausting because of the constant handling and wrestling tipped of the ewes. They are strongarmed into the gutwagon jug, then into their rump to see if the wax of their teats has broken and the lamb is suckling, then strongarmed into a jug in the shed. A ewe will weigh more than 100 pounds, and in a day both the shed man and the gutwagon driver will handle several tons of wriggling sheep.
Besides that, the ewes must be fed and watered -- both done by hand. Flakes of baled hay are put in the feed rack of each jug, a bucket of water put in the jug twice a day for the ewe to have a drink. The water can't be left, because the ewe will spill it, as she likely will anyway.

The ewe and lamb are numbered with paint on their backs. The first few weeks, the lamb looks like a walking numeral, with the numbers covering his entire side. The numbers run from 1 to 999; then start over again in a different color of paint.

The ewes and lambs are shuttled to pasture as soon as weatherpermits and the lambs can travel. Bunches of 00 are trailed off a little distance to graze on the green grass, while other new lambs and new mothers take their places in the jugs.

Jacketing a lamb is a piece of craft. If a lamb dies, another lamb -- perhaps from a set of twins -- is grafted onto her. The dead lamb is skinned, then four leg holes and a head hole are slit into the skin. The skin is fitted onto the adopting lamb like a jacket. The dead lamb's liver is rubbed over the skin. Suspicious, the ewe sniffs the lamb; all lambs look alike even to ewes, apparently. She may butt him a few times and trample him as she makes up her mind. Some suspicion may linger, but usually she makes up her mind promptly. After a week or two, the jacket is taken off.

Some ewes fight the jugs, butting the boards, walking all over the lambs as they circle furiously. Worst cases may have to be tied to side of jug.

All this means the sheep are talked to constantly. "Here, what the hell yuh doin' to him?" to a bumptious ewe. "He's yours; he's yours", reassurance to doubtful mother sniffing a lamb suspiciously. "Damn ye"
We lived on a small ranch with enough acres for several dozen cattle and some dry land farming.

As the ewes charge from the corral, they blat for their lambs. Lambs blat back, the ewe investigates a huddle of several, and with a few quick sniffs claims her own. It was different a few weeks ago in the lambing shed. The new mothers were unsure of their lambs. The shed men make soothing talk. "C'mon here, Momma, he's yours. He's yours." "Come, Momma, come, Momma."

"Here, you old pelter." "Come on, let him have some dinner." To a lamb not sucking readily enough: "Take it, Ikey. C'mon here, Ikey." Dad would imitate the lamb he was holding: "Maaah. Maaah." Snider preferred: "Prrrr, come sheep, come sheep."

pages of ink then too, trying to speak the moments of my parents' earlier war, the battle toward love. My mother's youth and health were in the way, my father's 00 was in the way, everybody's economics were in the way...

That my mother poured an earlier chapter of herself onto paper should not surprise me, yet it amazes me.

(at the same time)
The camera lens is a prism that bends our perceptions. As has been said, an Arbus can make us all look like geeks; toward the other end of the spectrum, every wedding photographer canonizes us. The Brownie box camera that assembled my parents' life before I knew them
My mother's family clung a couple of economic cuts below the homestead life, which is to say not appreciably far above the way tumbleweeds existed. If an occupation can be put to the Ringer family's situation, they were milkers.
I decided to try the trip to the ranch. In a swale, the snow had pooled. I got out, chuffed into the drift to see how hard it was, told myself I could bash the car through it. The car gunned in, bucked, and

mired.

I shut down the motor, sat for a moment listening to the sound of

snow drifting against the car—the softest of nature's keening, and the
deadliest.

Companionless, the ice coarse and ugly, the night full of legend, the
exhilaration of danger, the heart's intensity. It was good to be
there, to be part of the whole.

In the moonlight, the frost, the snow, the path ahead, every
crunch of the snow, the crunch beneath the boots—every moment,

made meaningful the journey.
Spring was the disappointing time. Other seasons would let you down in their own way: summer might be too rainy for good haying, autumn too brief or too cold, winter might be a succession of blizzards, one blizzard after another. But spring had its special disappointments. With the cold clog of winter supposedly broken, you looked forward to warm weather and dry earth. Instead, there might be weeks of mud, every step outdoors taken in overshoes heavy with mud. Spring weather would be just warm enough to make you shed a winter coat, just cool enough to chill you into a cold. And a spring without rain or a late, wet snow meant scant pastures, the grass and hay would not be good.

The melting snow... slush

The deep banks up the coulees could be watched shrinking, crusting into dirty dryness before finally vanishing.

Fences: The countryside was boxed by fences. Driving to town from a remote ranch, or up to a distant pasture, meant opening gates, gates and more gates. (describe?)

There was no telling when the weather would entirely stop being winter.
A heart-to-heart talk, the saying goes. But the hearts of father and son are vastly different ages, pump different streams of experience, race and flutter to different excitement. Perhaps chin-to-chin is all that can be managed. I damn myself now for not telling least that.

Dad,

For never saying: I have something bothering me and I need to talk to you about it. But it was not our style, not the McCaskill way.

But to step in, you never would have known the Medicine Lodge hadn't been in business every day of the past few hundred years.

considered genteel for a family, it made a sizable rectangle—and now all I faced was to excavate to a depth of about seven feet.

Given that I knew the project needed to be done, and that with Alec out of the picture I was absolutely inevitably the one who was
Other times, the ranch seemed to eye me, to wonder why I preferred to wander by myself or to hole up with books instead of enlisting in the daily work. Spring came as a relief from this, because it brought the season I did work alongside the rest of the crew, and was as valuable as any of them—lambing time.

What I found in machine's skeleton, Dad perhaps
It waited in machinery, it waited in horses, it waited in weather; the moment when a person went too deep into thought or daydream, grew forgetful of the rhythm of caution, and the waiting accident happened.

I have had my share. They just never managed to cripple or kill me, is all.
Now this last of the burials in the valley's cemetery. Peter Doig, Annie Campbell Doig, Tom Ringer, Berneta Ringer Doig, Charlie Doig, not much. It was a cemetery space larger than a garden patch they all lay, nearly three hundred years of lives, not a life among them easy or unafflicted. A sum of the valley could be found in them of a sum which will be emerald in one hand.<

Lady, now Bessie Ringer, in her way the hardest to see vanish, because she had been the most durable of them all.

It was cold at the graveside, the same wind-lashed gray day back from my father's burial. The service was hurried through, the casket rapidly

I have been back once, for the sake of writing this. Again I was startled by the sawmill smoke, and startled new by plans for subdivisions. I assure myself I came to hear voices, and to see that one thing had been done right.

...their gravestones, humps of granite against the broad and lofty lines of the valley.
The Ringlings: (Grandma's tape of May 12, '71)

While Ringers were at Moss Agate, a trainload ofEEE dairy cows arrived from Wisconsin. They turned out to be culls, probably bought sight unseen by Dick Ringling. The Ringers were told to select the herd they would run. Cows were turned loose when unloaded, running everywhere, unmilked. Moss Agate didn't even have a barn with stanchions, just a shed, so the cows were milked in there. Some had enormous bags, hadn't been milked for days.

(use this as a memory for Berneta?)

--Dealing by the trainload and letting the peons tend to details such as unmilked suffering is of course how you can behave if barominally born.

--Probably the Ringers were no easy employees, Grandma gimlet-eyed (?) and Tom unsteady, but they could turn out the work.

The Ringlings could afford Montana as a hobby; the Ringers were barely clinging to the planet.
When people go into costume, the camera comes out. (For that matter, is a photo itself a kind of costume, an occasion (dressed) out of the ordinary simply by being caught?)

My mother made a pretty passable flapper.

At least once my father marshaled the entire Doig family.
Dad? He must have wondered at times, what son is this? But he had only one.

(verse in cursive — boldface etc.)
The great river of my childhood flowed in the sky.

Oh, other threads of current went their way past my eyes, as well. The valley's own dab of stream dined and dithered along the flanks of the mountains, like a puppy shadowing its mother. Beyond the Big Belts and across a second valley from ours lay the Missouri, but so new and narrow from its headwaters that it too lacked the proportion to touch and turn a life. But overhead: there, mountain rim to mountain rim and stopless as the seasons, ran the course of might beyond any other I could imagine—the tidal force of weather shoaling in across the ranges of peaks, in blizzard and thundersquall and chinook and trembling heat.

The skewed rhythm of time it brought down on the valley, I remember as if watching ocean waves comb in. Winter, long white winter. Then a pale quick sprig of spring. Then uneven summer. Next an overnight autumn, and suddenly again winter once more. And remember too, even more clearly than the family storm breaking under our roof at the same time, the raging ninth winter of my life, with its shadowless snow across the hills of the Sixteen country. And—such is the eddying of memory—the wrinkled dance of air as July's sun snaked moisture up from green windrows of hay. And the slapping push of a gray afternoon's wind, which I dread to this day. And, do those currents of the sky drum in me now, and, and...

And: the other flashing run through the mind here, taken up by memory just as the torrent of valley weather must be, glimpsed and tasted and let be gone—her.

She counts too, counts so strongly in those years that I wonder at the space of silence my father later managed to keep between her life and our life. I know now, as far
as memory is able to know, that it can only have been a hush like the one that mutes the air after a snag has snapped and fallen, an intensity crowding back in where the din has spent itself. Yet why did that thrumming emptiness last and last after her as it did? And where did it start, when did she and my father begin their struggle? No answer, and by the very terms of the woman, there can be none. She veered into our lives, lit years with her peculiar disquiet, went as randomly as she had come. Nothing about her says that she saw the time with us as anything but a mischance. Give her that. Give us all that.
And one more innocent time together, the four of us now, during the autumn trip Carol and I made to Montana. I found that, with the thought of Carol's first visit impending, Dad had had the vigor to do some work on the Ringling house—a new front step, and the planked boardwalk curving around back to the woodhouse and the outhouse. I laughed and told him the place was becoming a boulevard. He and Grandma and I spent the next ten days touring Carol through western Montana, and in high spirits about this new daughter-in-law, Dad seemed more joyous than I had ever seen him. He teased Grandma, which was the riskiest of routes to humor, and mostly got away with it; she gave her sharp chuckle, as often at him for showing off as for whatever he had said, and I remember only one tetchy moment. It came from me. Leaning ahead in the back seat of the car as he gave Carol a recital of the countryside, Dad said at one point: Good thing you've got me along, that son of mine would drive you right along here without a word. Probably because of the dose of truth in what he had said, I fired back faster and harder than I was aware of: When would I get a chance to put in a word edgewise anyway? Oh, oh, he said, guess I been told. Within a minute, I made some desperate joke in his direction, he returned the josh, and the mood of easiness among us wafted back.

This braid of times together, then, before it came clear that he was in serious illness. I finger apart their
for The Portland Oregonian, Northwest Magazine
first North American rights only

The Timeweavers
by Ivan Doig

"She is familiar," I thought to myself as soon as I saw her, fourth of fifth in the line of bookbuyers waiting to tell my pen their names. She was fiftyish, and stylish in a tailored gray suit, and wearing a matching gray felt hat. Really wearing that hat, in the manner Ingrid Bergman wore hers to the airfield and destiny at the finale of Casablanca: the brim riding down to the right, into a slightly tilted orbit that somehow seemed celestially apt.

The occasion was the Oregon Historical Society's annual Christmas book festivity, replete with wassail bowl, the Gentle Winds Consort wafting carols, and 77 authors on hand all Sunday afternoon to sign

Copyright ©1985 by Ivan Doig
their wares. The book public, Portland chapter, kept thronging through, swapping us their questions and comments for our inscriptions.

"I certainly did like that Big Sky book of yours."

"Well, actually A.B. Guthrie Jr. wrote The Big Sky. Mine was--"

As I signed books and made chat I sneaked glances along the line at her, trying to read her face. It was square-cut but handsome, and I managed to single out the main familiarity in it: her prominent broad cheekbones which built a rugged proportion, corners of endurance, into the look of her. But who, who did she look like?

"The character Jick in this book, is he really you?"

"Well, not really. It's fiction, so I made him--"

This was a reversed role, for me to be pursuing someone else's resemblance instead of one seeking me out. I had just been to Montana on behalf of my new novel, which is set there in the ranch country where I grew up, and at bookstore after bookstore relatives and old-timers informed me how much I now resemble my great-uncle, D.L. Doig. I see so myself whenever I spread the family photos. Strange, how we can be portions of persons from other times; D.L.'s long life ended the summer I was born, 1939. My preference would be to be mirrored in the snapshot poses of my goodlooking father, with his stockman Stetson cocked down just so for rodeo day. Or even in the wedding portrait of my homesteading grandfather, D.L.'s younger brother, judge-serious and neatly mustached. But no, tubby shaggy avuncular old D.L. is my pattern. My beard imitates his in fullness and conformation and, yes, frostiness. I would equal D.L.'s girth
if I'd eat what I want. And he and I have the same askance gaze
at life, which perhaps explains why I've ended up as a writer and
D.L. ended up far along toward his goal of catching every trout in
the Missouri River.

"I know I've seen you before," I said as soon as the woman of
the hat reached me. "Where did we meet?"

She shook her head twice. I still was intent on her face,
those unmistakable cheekbones, but her attention was fixed onto the
books beside me.

"This book--" She reached past my shiny new novel and put her
hand on the display copy of This House of Sky, my memoir of Montana
and my family. "Your father in here, he was so much like mine.
I can't begin to tell you. The way his life never--" and there
she went silent, still gazing down at the book.

I nodded and waited, for I hear this from time to time. That
first book of mine was largely the story of my father's struggle
against hard luck--sickness, horseback mishaps, the Depression,
Montana weather, the early death of my mother. Why was his life
so closely stalked this way? I had written in the pages beneath
this woman's hand. And how was it that he lasted as he did? The
costs that this father of mine paid in all the surviving he had
to do, I know enough about. But about why life had to dangle him
such terms, not nearly enough. My father's was not a singular
story in the high dry West, and at his funeral 13 years ago I could
look around the chapel and see several similar lives, not quite ended yet.
Now I was in her scrutiny. "I never heard of you until I saw this book in a store. I bought it because my maiden name was Doig."

Ahah. I should have known. Familiar was due to its natural antecedent, family. D.L. fathered nine Doigs, my grandfather another six, and by now we are a populace of our own in Montana and elsewhere in the upper West. I simply needed to find where this woman fit into the cousinage.

Huh uh. "I was born in Massachusetts," she told me, "and spent almost all of my life there until now."

"What, no Montana relatives at all?"

"No, none." Her hand and attention were on the book again. "Our fathers, their lives were so—I wish I could make you know, how much of my father I saw in yours."

"Yes, well, that's interesting, but--" I was stymied by our continental gap of kinship. Then I happened to think of the one other place in the world besides Montana where the Doig name crops up. "Do you know where your family originally came from? Was it Scotland?"

"Yes. A town called Brechin."

My face nearly fell out of my head. Months before, I had gone to Scotland to begin a novel about the Scottish emigrants who homesteaded in Montana late in the last century. Wanting to base the story somewhere in the textile area around Dundee where my family originated—D.L. and my grandfather both were tailors there before
they came over to become Montana ranchers—I went from town to town, in search of a community to make my fictional version resemble. The actual home site of the Doigs, Panbride, was too tiny; Kirriemuir seemed too dour; Forfar too big, Arbroath too this, Montrose too that—no candidate town seemed right, until I drove into one I had never heard of, Brechin.

Brechin captivated me at once with its steep High Street wending down to the river South Esk, its Celtic round tower beside its medieval cathedral, its general appearance of having been chiseled complete from Scotland's stone earth rather than built. Since that day and my immediate decision to become an imaginary dweller of 1880's Brechin, I knew to approximate its flinty Scots pronunciation: BREEK'n. Knew, from old census registers, who lived along Union Street near the huge Den Burn linen mill, their ages and birthplaces and occupations. Knew from my wife's photos of the town how clockfaces presided over it, from the cathedral tower, the Mechanics Institute, every church. Knew, and dasn't repeat here, the mischief the weaver girls and my fictional Scotland—leaving lads called back and forth to each other. Knew more about Brechin of then than about the Seattle suburb where I reside.

"From Brechin!" I tried to convey my astonishment to the woman of the hat, point out to her that somewhere there in the Scottish past we were surely related, tell her about my Brechin-born book-to-be. She smiled politely enough, but This House of Sky, in which my father somehow twinned hers, was the only book of mine that intrigued her.
Our conversation kept crisscrossing until we recognized that we both were baffled about where our coincidences led. The bookbuyers in line behind her deserved their turn. I had a plane to catch as soon as the afternoon of bookmanship was over. A last time I tried to evoke Brechin for her. Again from her, "I wish I could make you know, how much—"

The wind consort blew a merry Christmas gust our way. She and I took a final look at each other to store away, shook hands, and she went.

Through the rest of the afternoon I thought of what it had taken to cause our two lives to cross. Our same rare name, our other coincidences. Montana and Massachusetts do not count; time is the true community. A weaver's town, it must be, like Brechin. Where people with faces like ours work our genetic threads on the loom called history. D.L. Doig a century ago decides to refashion the family pattern, leaves Scotland for the American West, and now I write of that fabric of emigration and homesteading. The Doig grandfather of the lady of the hat rejects Brechin, chooses the texture of Boston, and she one day sees a book with my name on it. Small wonder that as the album photos try to tell us, we are not so much ourselves as we think we are but piecework of those before us.

That night, in the homeward plane, the jolt of recognition found me. I realized what I had been trying to read from the woman's features since the moment she appeared in the bookbuyers' line;
who else had worn a hat at that perfect angle, who else had those promontory cheekbones. My father.

###
Sixteen looked like a scattering of houses which had spilled off flatcars as the Milwaukee trains flew down the canyon. Such map spatters along the mainline -- you can read them the whole townless length of the railroad's run through the county: Lennep, Loweth, Ringling, Sixteen -- were so tiny they had no pattern to straighten them at all. A town of even a few hundred people lines itself up into straight-sided blocks of homes and a beeline of main street. But Sixteen added up to maybe a tenth of a small town, and the houses and outbuildings
Fifty-five hundred of us in packing crate decor—bare-wood floors, composition-board walls and roof, unit identical with unit identical with unit across the project's 120 acres

5/1/97
We three and 5, 247 others in packing crate decor

In unit 119B we were a Montana mixed concentration batch, my mother and father and me and of five

my father's sister Anna and her husband Joe,

In unit 199B five of us crammed in, my father's sister Anna and her joining in the husband Joe sharing the first three months of the Arizona venture with my mother and father and me for the first three months of project living. Along with 5500 other Alzonans we bumped along in packing crate decor, but pulling
Packing-crate living. Bare-wood floors, composition-board walls and roof, unit after unit in barracks-like rows. The place was even curtainless until my mother couldn't stand it any longer and hung some dimestore chintz.

We were back in a bunkhouse existence. But making money hand over fist: my father and Joe drawing $00 an hour at the aluminum plant—an hour, for guys who had been lucky to see $000 a month as wagehands in Montana. This was the new world, the shores of Social Security and

the bonanza trees of overtime ($00 an hour!).
Aluminum and Arizona in their wartime tryst produced Alzona Park, the housing project across the street from the Alcoa plants. The barracks-like rows covered nearly as many acres as the Montana homestead my father's family couldn't make a go of, and in Alzona Park lived 5,500 families (equivalent of a military division?) War is quite a compactor. Five of us lived in our set of rooms—my father's sister Anna and her husband Joe had come with us—the men going across West Van Buren Street to their jobs of cutting aluminum, Anna off to work as a maid in an auto court, duties me to my foxhole backs in the backyard.
I can hear (wharfleather)....

Anna & Joe had gone back to MT

She
My mother is alone with
as he tries to sleep off, it's not.
The cares never
There that Sunday, my mother suddenly was what people had tried not
to let her be. All her life, alone. Anna and Joe had gone
were on their way
Tyke
back to Montana. I was in the back yard pushing my roads...

Alzona Park was thronged and alien.

Marriage...
She takes to paper, the lines to Wally...
We had catapulted ourselves to Arizona because he was worried to death
about her.

Which of course worries her all the more,

Her companion, nite.
We were on the cusp of sunbelt life. Just over the sandy rim of all those World War Two bases and defense plants lay...

- Montana was a pump that could be primed. Arizona was a solar-glow suction device, drawing in...

Thucydides would have worn out his stylus. (wartime AZ) And there we were, pocket-deep in it all. Bomber-makers. Alcoans. Self-draftees in the sunward march of America.

AZ was North Africa, the skies of 00 with the clouds withheld; if you screech wanted to rehearse a war, here she be. (Timestripe: Warthogs roar over Tucson, Feb, 13 '91, training to bomb the boots off the Iraqis.)
Alzona Park has festered. The cement block rows that replaced The woodframe housing was replaced by cinderblock desperation, and if anybody in the neighborhood now makes $00 more than likely (would have to be) an hour it is from narcotics. If the footprints I made here were browner in hue, I might still be in this West Phoenix slum.

How old America is for its age.
The house in Ringling was three small rooms and a path. It
had one of the signs of long residency -- the outhouse had to be
moved.

The first several months there was no water. We carried
it in buckets from the Baggetts' wind pump.

A gray scab of ground where dishwater was tossed, an ash
pile, a load of firewood dumped behind the house. More visible
signs of how people lived in those days.

Here was one lawn in town, a small scarf of green around
the house where the Brekke family lived. The house before them had
been owned by a couple who taught school, and the house ever after
seemed to have learning and order about it. The Brekke family
read; I could borrow back-issues of magazines, books.

Just down the slope from us lived Les and Dot Gasset, who
had been if anything 'worse off than we were. Les was a ranch
hand, a quiet block of a man who had bought the saloon and ran
it with little excitement and less profit.

The Baggetts shored us up. Not only did we get our water
from their pump and buy our eggs fresh from their chicken house,
Browning always seemed to be a stunned town, snuffling in its own dust and bleary from booze or boredom or both. The streets were chuckholed.

On our provisioning trips, we would buy groceries for a week or two, fill the gas barrel in the back of the Jeep, see if there was any mail. Grandma won a set of china in a drawing at the grocery store, the last thing in the world we needed to pack around the reservation with us.

We found a point

The Browning Indians were even more mysterious than those who came to Dupuyer; leather-colored people, some with black braids dropping from under their cowboy hats, They dipped and veered along the sidewalk; entire families drunk. The saloons were such millraces of whiskey as to shake even Dad. I see now that theirs was a flattened culture, maulled by the loss of tribal ways.
Granny told me that her sons used to send away for free mailings and put down grandiloquent return addresses: Sagebrush Avenue or Jackrabbit Street. I tried it a few times, and it made the day all right.

Living in Ringling was like carrying on your life behind a pane of glass. Since every house sat out by itself, with the land rising enough to give each site a clear view, everything was seen, more than everything was known. I was in a period when I wanted to bat a ball by the hours, but it was embarrassing to be playing in front of the whole town. When Argus and my older cousins might drive by, I would let the bat trail behind me as if it unexpectedly had flipped into my hand and give a vague half-wave as if I weren't sure who they were and thus they couldn't be sure who I was.

There was always a large gray canker a few feet from the front step where we threw wash water and ashed, I think even emptied the slop pail. The chickens took care of slops, but the lye of the soap and ashed had killed the ground for good.
What I know of her is heard in the slow poetry of fact.

The cantos of name
Name: Berneta Augusta Maggie Ringer, the German-Irish tension, both her
grandmothers... starting off German and ending up Irish

in
Born Sept. of 1913, her first memories thus, like mine, in a world

war.

Away to Montana when she was a half-year old, her parents abandoning

the Wisconsin...

How damaged everyone was. (Tom from lead of his painting? Wally
died of cancer coming at him from every way...)

She slept propped with three pillows (angle of repose)

Tom and Bessie Ringer didn't even try the customary hopeful mistake

of most Montana-comers, homesteading.

*Wisconsin connection, Ringer vs. Rumpkins?

bonomial

Blush and Zettels - cousin's cousin
To be born a girl or to be a target.

victim
Potted
Dogs had no - heady trait
MT bawm, playing out in WWII, compared w/ Z's
compression of that life, 100s per 45 with
The chemistry was unexpected. It was Bessie, who had never been out of Wisconsin before, who took to the Montana sageland and would not be budged, would survive there almost like a coyote. Tom, the roustabout who had the experience of many jobs and much moving, never did well in the new land. And never doing well, he drank the more.
use with desctn of Bernetta:

There have been photos (of her horseback, being courted by my father etc.), but no pictures of the mind. What went on in my mother... (was at odds with her outside?)
When she had enough air, Berneta burned bright. Cavorting on horseback, saddle still the main mode across country to schoolhouse and neighbors and Saturday night dances (the silliness of sidesaddle jettisoned by her generation to ride astraddle, thunderous as the man); displaying a schoolish dexterity of mind, strong in algebra, Latin her favorite subject of all; and, the treasury of the poor, a knack for language (her father had a gift for gab although of that infuriating sort that turned itself on when company came and shut down when merely the family was around; her mother Bessie spoke gems right and left, so that under her example Berneta grew up saying the wonderful eartrick merseys for
Moss Agate's Jersey-cows-in-need-of-mercy, and in a feat of synonym which loses me, a mere male, the neighborhood of the body between the legs was referred to by the Ringer women as the coffee grounds; coddled by her mother and father, wherever they managed to find the moments and energy for such cushioning (vassals can't spend all their time thinking about being vassals); a girl-turning-woman, as she was, on the verge of pretty but well aware she was never going to get there past the inherited broad nose—Wally's face was a borrowed coin of hers, both with an enlivened best-friend quality from the central slight overbite that parted the lips as if perpetually interested and about to ask; but most of all, whether the camera finds her as a sprite in a peaked cap for a grade-school play or as a rhinestone cowgirl of the time, confident five feet of mounted teenager in enveloping leather chaps, or gussied up as a very passable flapper, the young Berneta invariably seems advanced beyond her numerical age at the time, at some pushed pitch of existence not available to anybody else in the picture, trying to be independent as a comet.

Enter the Doigs, at a gallop.

Their place was twenty horseback miles from Moss Agate, which my father
The country my parents came out of was an uphill treadmill. My father grew up in what amounted to a family bunkhouse—he and five brothers barracking in the long end of the homestead house.
My mother's family clung a couple of economic cuts below the homestead life, which is to say not appreciably far above the way tumbleweeds existed.

If an occupation can be put to the Ringer family's situation, they were milkers.
That bonanza of elk was my father's last great hunt. In the eight years of life left to him, he was able to hunt for deer two or three times, but with each autumn his lungs were being nicked farther toward uselessness. Yet what a hunt it was. My father and my uncle and two young cousins came onto the elk herd in the Castle Mountains. When they had done shooting, three bull elk were downed. They gutted the animals and somehow hefted and stowed them aboard Dad's small cab-over jeep. Then they came down off the stone-castellated slopes, four persons and a ton of elk, antlers bayoneting in every direction out of the jeep.

My father sent me a photo of them with the kill, something he had never done before. I remember the coil of pain that twisted in my stomach that I had not been there.
The Fireworker

Bending heat pushes back
at my yearling stare.
The fireworker nods,
tongs the metal
into the glow’s heart
and tensely
slow the bellows handle.
Rain is strewing
quick lakes
outside the machine shop door.
No haying today,
no mending fence nor
riding the sorrel mare.
So we come,
fireworker and boy,
to this minor sun.

The forge edges my world
in hot light:
my hands eager
on the bellows handle;
the fireworker’s sinews
flexing to mend
metal bones of machines.

The anvil doubles all blows,
sends the hammer stroking up again.
Metal fire flakes from the measured clamor.
I stare into this heavy dance
of heat and force.
The forge is a life, and
huge over me
the fireworker
crafts our task in it.

###

Ivan Doig
17021 - 10th Ave. N.W.
Seattle, WA 98177
The bunkhouse men сторied
and whittled
and cussed as evilly as a boy could want.

From waist-high I could see
they were kings.
They were old
and tall
and smelled of horses
and green hay
and lived away from the big house
and never made their beds.
And aren't those kings?

The cook never thought so.
She pinched my ear when she knew
I had been with kings.
But she was a woman and so
couldn't know
about the bunkhouse and bunkhouse men.

Jack rolled his own cigarettes
despite the flash of naked stabs
where three fingers had been.
Mamby tucked snooze under a grand lip.
Dutch John had been to Australia
or at least Albuquerque.
Evenings, rainy days,
they spun dreams.
Nafters which never tasted paint;
bunk beds;
dreams danced there
and glory too when they taught me
what kings know.
To tie a halfhitch.
To cut a willow whistle.
Where a mama rock keeps her nest.
To shape a new hat.
To swear — ah — in Spanish and a little Finnish.

The bunkhouse swam in wonder;
a raft from the manners
and mothers and aunts
and cooks.

Women and the bunkhouse were not friends,
I gladly found.
Except, some rainy day a man
would say a thing about women I didn't savvy
and shouldn't have
and I would look at the floor
while the bunkhouse looked at me.

Even a boy at last sees through years,
spies what and why in then.
Old voices tell that knowing kings
is a rich way to grow years.
As with so much else, the land was stingy with families. My mother's schooling?
This said as if she were talking across the years to her younger self, out of a mouth which had formed very much like those of the Krebs sisters in the oval photo.
Those nights were a ritual of truce which would be repeated. The men wore blue or green at night and the "Hoosier Holler" was instructed to have one year off each month without pay.

For all that, a part-time job was a necessity. A tiered-and a researcher who better than to job. A Phillips A. Ethel and a researcher who

joined the service after just before the rapid silence into the depression began in 1929, receiving the reassurance of even a stimulants pharmacy. "In those years, as a student in

the Forest Service, was a pretty good looking career. The white the depression years meant few pay checks. Those brave to be so as to be expansion and new for

some forestry. Out of the new deal's "year of the

stipend" -- 1933 -- somehow trends and became

sanctuary, by the new emergency measures. The young

of the C.C.C. (Civilian Conservation Corps) emerged

work, remembering the faces of the CCC workers. They give a job of development work.

including building, reconstruction and office buildings at several

places. The "court's special revenue" was expected to create

new employment for men under the Section's administration.

E.C.M. (Emergency Civil Works) funds financed the repaving of

everybody workers who had been laid off in the budget changes.

The effect of field assistance and scientific studies to

help with the Forest Service and other forest problems.
At the Camas Ranch, Dad was stepping back into the foremaning he had done in his younger years.
She knew at least this single thing; in a family was the comfort of old habits, shared times.

Like most other major metropolises centers anchoring the world, Spokane is finding that the best century of growth and development lies ahead, producing conflicts between man and his environment. Unlike other major metropolises centers, however, Spokane is preparing to host a World's Fair. Expo '74, with the environment as its theme.

And the preparations are bringing people of Spokane with a unique opportunity to resolve these conflicts in a positive way.

The theme of the 1974 World's Fair, which opens in May of next year, is "Celebrating Tomorrow's Fresh New Environment." For the six months that follow, Spokane will be host to the world's nations of the world, leading cooperators and innovators, as well as environmental concerns, to explore and experience the environmental theme.

The intent of Expo '74 is to promote a forum for interchange and to provide the opportunity for solutions to the conflicts in our relationship with the environment.
The pure lines of
"You teachers are creating a climate that is favorable for change in
conversations the puppy is stammering crime and circumstance and
conversations workers feel their whole happiness must be important...

"Most of all, conversations must seek the understanding, support, and
improvement of the community." (I)

With today's conversations, leadership looking more to the community than ever
before, the need is clear that some training efforts be community-based.

With sophisticated workers, the need for training is greater than ever.

With our clarity and determination, perhaps the most difficult barrier to winning that
war is the need for young volunteers to fulfill participation to our society.

Conversations educators name their task as well as the task of converting adults to
acceptation this skill.

This paper recognizes an effect of innovation in training for those working with
innovative techniques. It can part of gear up as cutting-edge training. While
innovative techniques are not unique in this activity, it does complete specific methods.


Mrs. Brink didn't play, but would watch a few minutes, inserting gossip or "my, my."

Playing carsata: self-erasing pad was a marvel. Cards passed the time at our end of town, like ticks of clock.
Always I speak of her as "my mother", as Dad called her "your mother": a set of words, no name or nickname to itself
Like light, time is both particle and wave. That Arizona winter of our lives was simultaneously a season complete unto itself and all instants the moments that stippled...

My mother gave her days to me, but when I was otherwise employed in, say, a back yard construction project, she would do a Saturday morning the boomtown traffic of Phoenix, stint of babysitting. Anna sized up, went down the street and got a job as a maid in an auto court for a stupendous $4 an hour.

As Montanans, we of course knew that so far, so good, always really means too soon to tell, too good to last. But we were chancing that Everybody needed