He missed Cass like a slice of life itself.

Ben (to Jake?)

"And I'm supposed to do what about that, Mr. I.Q.?"

a prowling mind

The viewfinder in his head

(Ben) mired in war for ~~3~~ nearly three years, Maurice longer than that.

Ben's recurring dream:

catching a pass over his head (like Willie Mays' World Series catch)

(Ben's finesse was under the skull

That was death of a kind, too. (professional blacklist after war)

someone to Ben:

"Congrats. All of a damn sudden you're a captain."

--or Ben thinks: "Tepee Weepy" fries me in butter for months and all of a damn sudden I'm a captain."

Military habits were not his favorite kind, but he'd had to learn to give his surroundings a quick going-over.

Ben has to operate at times in an accelerated mode, as in moments of football.

--When he meets Jake in Club

Ben

And I went for it like a fetching dog.

Ben

felt raw as a peeled potato (in Antwerp)

Ben:

Among the things his mother had insisted on (in Gros Ventre) was classical music.

Ben's wounding: see Riley Ostby details in "WWII details" file

Ben

Despite what (all?) the war was trying to do to him, he had enough mischief in his soul to...

"A symp piece." As in sympathy. And simper. Also simple-minded.

Ben noticed some of the damnedest things.

More than once it had occurred to Ben that TPWP wanted him to shake stories out of these bases. (i.e., do real reporting, shake 'em up)

Ben's generational situation: back and forth between dimensions of the Depression and the world-changing war.

Bean does, in some hot climate?

Lexa ran a finger around the inside leather of her hat, wiping the sweat out.

Ben

the return of the scribbler

someone else calls him "the moving target"

Thomas Wolfe: what does Ben think of his writings?

--Ben Gant?

Ben

One shoulder an inch lower than the other from the horse accident when he was ten.

That woman gave me the kiss of my life.

Ten minutes after I met her, OO....

folder w/ red X across the cover, signifying the serviceman whose records these are is dead.

--series of thsse are handed to Ben or land on his desk, as the war whittles away at his teammates. In one episode, he cd stare at it and wonder "Who now?" The mortal next scene can conceal the victim's name until the end. (possibility for Delbert?)

--similarly, should Ben be assigned to visit each man's family, for the sake of the story he writes about each, after each one is killed? This could be broken off by his posting to London, to his relief.

insert in 7th Heaven scene
- music of 60's
Court

Mitch abt the Sixties: Did we party it away? People always party it away.

use for Ben?

Springs

have Mariah a natural mimic of the last country she was in? (i.e, Scotland, NZ)

--or leave it unstated?

Mitch has some of this innate mimickry, too? (his talk becomes more Western, back to his roots, under social pressure?)

The small stuff was behind them now.

--keyed to saying, "Don't sweat the small stuff."

WB

Below an airplane, time zones, rectilnear survey, interstate roads and railroads--the web of lines we tie thexx continent down with.

21 Dec. '82 diary entry, Kenneth Callahan material.

a superior officer to Ben:

"Treasure Island. Remember it, Reinking? The black spot...? You're the black spot, it looks to me like."

"Sir, I was assigned to this."

"Sir, I didn't ask for the cocksucker to crash."

How the hell did Mauldin do it? (a fresh cartoon idea every day?)

Ben abt Bill?

sturdy as a corner post

Ben's generational situation: he's aware he is back and forth between dimensions of time, his father's era and the one the war veterans are trying to get to. --wonders what it will be like after the war. Another Depression? or (prosperity) He wouldn't bet either way. All he knew is that movies seemed to thrive either way.

He expressly (sent Jones, for ex)...

Ben, ital:

Talk about enemy action. The war didn't invent that particular one.

OO was stumped.

he knew each one's shoe size

Ben loved football for its scope of his peripheral vision. (It was said of him he could see behind him?)

Ben welcomed the 00 of shoptalk.

"O", Ben responded, tired through and through from trying to...

Ben

your typewriter soldier

Ben looked the part (of a war correspondent).

had been around some life.

Ben:

He had a theory that...

Ben:

typewriter jockey

He didn't believe it was in his blood, but...

00 murmured, more or less to himself
said

Ben: There were times when he wished Cass was not so tough.

"Holy smoking Jesus."

Don't get in my face (about this).

, all right?

He bunched his shoulders.

Ben

His words had a life of their own. TPWP's red pencil was not sharp enough...

(to amend them much). It could obliterate, but not (fine-tune).

Ben

He knew stomach-turning things about the war from scuttlebutt and the seepage in wire rooms, and he was aware there must be countless other ~~things~~ horrors about it he knew nothing of.

R7

where I started the journey of life

Ninian?

Otis Pease

--WWII movie C saw in his class is The Greater Glory
-- " troops (Americans) moved on "air cushion" of luxury, technology; Pease said he read ~~8~~80x 80-90 books in the service, saw movies at least twice a week, sometimes even in combat zone.

It still was a scarring thought.

~~scarred over~~

He hoped this was not going to be his life's work.

Just once (Ben)would like to meet somebody in authority who was not mad as hell at everyone under him.

He would, he made up his mind, he would chance it.

He gladly wait.

That way lies madness.

Put Dan S's photo in your locket.

--Put that picture in your locket. (Ben interior?)

need?

That train of thought took me places I hadn't expected.

Ben

I can't give her up. They can court-martial me. I'll...

He knew he wouldn't do anything of the sort; the war counted too much.

Ben:

--has a continuing sense of askew odds: everything tending east in 1st portion of book... other coincidences that happen strangely often?

--some involving Jones?

Ultimately he wonders if he's going a bit nuts thinking about this. Beyond that, does he eventually grasp that the war is so overpowering, it jiggles all the odds on almost everything?

Ben

Did all of life take its shape from a quirk? (for Christ's sake?)
crying out loud?

He understood that it did no good (to pick at himself over timing on Prokosch), but it was the kind of thing the mind does.

law of averages:

at some pt Ben has to think this through, on points such as:

--none and all both contribute to the average (i.e., not just the shadings on both sides of the goldem mean)

--is there an academic/statistical source I can draw on?

--the govt studied and studied soldier death rates and concluded...

--the US way of war is to out-materiel the enemy, not outdie him.

Jake says?

collin

whether
(Lyle) supposed it didn't matter to death, when he arrived scared or not.

--didn't fundamentally believe in death. a guy there

He was alarmed.

another somewhat amended version of lethal truth.

Ben

"Wouldn't that be good."

Who's next? He had asked it of the typewriter keys, the calendar on the wall, the damnable set of orders that tied him to...

statistical death grip

We owe existence a death, incontrovertibly true.

But this minute?
--installment plan?
--can't there be installments?
--how about an installment?

He/she tried to cordon that off.

His mouth felt papery, it was so dried out with apprehension.

...something more than incipient skulls.

bad off. Yet.
I'm not that...

every particle of brain

The only puzzle he saw about death was its blinding shuffle of numbers.

--age: 3 score & ten; if we did not know how old we are?

--war: zeroes of obliteration added onto...

--the final clock time of each of us; was it easier in the ancient time of seasons...? (Eskimoes in winter?)

--he knew the First World War had drawn inordinate blood from Montana

WB

The colors of this restlessness start to blaze through his Swan's written words...

Ben:

Don't hear more than is there.

His mind was ajar.

Springs?
Divide?

use w/ him seeing
no way out of
gravel deal

Mitch felt whipped. Defeated, but also lashed...Bled well.

Ben

shutterstop

--camera perspective, including still-life as well as movie camera, could be a kind of pace or series of angles into life for Ben. He could remember instants from the war, xx in the same way he mentally does camera pans.

--he cd have learned photography on the Gleaner, his father thrusting the paper's Speed Graphic at him to go cover some event.

--he could still have a yen for photo work, but "forbidden" by TFWP military regs; his clerk, Jones, has the rating. At some point, he can't help himself and says to Jones, "Give me the camera." (to shoot something unfolding in front of them).

Ben:

the shadow of fear

This was fear itself.

Bruno's eleven. Loudon's eleven. Not the parentage you would choose if there were any way around it.

the moving wall of oblivion

Like hell. (use @ end of graf. ital for Ben?)

how it is that we end as a sack of bones...

...questing after it is like facing a cave with 50 mouths, each the same--
void and bat-smell...

Ben's wound/scar:

brand-like sear across top of shoulder; inch lower, million-dollar wound, the one that would have ~~kx~~ shattered his clavicle(?) and taken him out of the war; jimmied-up shoulder no worse than you might get in a rodeo or for that matter, football; inch or so lower than that and it would have killed him. His fate was decided, ~~ix~~ out of all the world of war, its earthwide reach, within the width of the palm of a hand.

would have taken out a lung, strayed to his heart

death kept coming

like rain falling in an open grave.

Ben:

chased by death

slapping through the sprockets of his head like a a broken film

It wasn't as if (the team) was clustered together in do-or-die, like 7th Cav'men with Custer, or the Japanese diehards in their atoll caves. No, they were fitted here and there into the worldwide modern machinery of war...

++ fell for it,

dumb as a cork

- use w/ Danza's movie?

·cockpit

This time her words would have etched curlicues into glass.

plexi-

dreamboat

homewrecker

Ben:

Call it some kind of a nervous breakdown.

Feeling oversubscribed, Ben...

Judgment ricocheted in Ben.

isotherms/isobars of war

the circumference of war

the whole festering mess around him

region of the mind

OO's blood changed temperature.

He toyed briefly with that line (of thinking)

swearing militarily but under his breath

shunted (as Tepee Weepy does to Ben)

- like a switch engine

Ben's arrival at a base perpetually making commanders etc. unfomcortable:

More than once it had bccurred to him (or he had wondered) TPWP wanted him to shake stories out of (lackadaisical military).

Once in a great while, people exist again in the breath of words written down.

It takes something like a miracle to bring them honest to the page. Beyond OO.

Past sentiment. ...This was on the mind of Ben Reinking, wondering...

Ben thinks:

At least the bastards can't get us all. Deems is tucked away in conchie camp.

Delbert's on his way home. What there is left of him.

--The score was going up against them fast, though.
more than it had a right to, though.

He was furious at her for this.

Easter Shannon

~~Wyomia~~

--"The damn woman sounds like geography."
religion."

-"She could get to be that."

power of statistics in WWII: see the McNamara biog in hall closet, Promise & Power, p. 31+

Before the war, he would have said he knew (a little) something about life and its odds for or against this or that. Now he wondered if he knew a damn thingx of any kind.

"Sure thing," OO said, although it wasn't.

Memory began to bunch itself there like a rope of muscle.

Takes longer for a man to go bitter than fruit does, but even so.

No, they wouldn't do that. Never do that. (TPWP call off Supreme Team.)

Ben ital:

Bring up the theme music. (tune that fits 1930's-40's)

He told himself what he could,

The quality of mind in Ben Reinking was admittedly rarefied. He liked ... Could not stand...

been around some life

Lingo

Jake ? Ben ?

It happens some. #

(Why should that count?) Because it does. Memory runs everything else.

Ben ital:

Dex? Can't be.

(after Animal's death)

The majority of the team was still alive. But was this like one of those doomed regiments that took overwhelming casualties? Those were cohesive units, military masses susceptible to concentrated firepower on a single piece of terrain; the Supreme Team was scattered across the globe...

Ben to Kenneth

Bounce that around in your head a while, Rankine

Ben had so many things on his mind his head was about to fall off.

The world changes under you. Your footing is no longer your own.

An incredulous laugh broke from him.

Ben dug with the increased feel of life around the dead--it fights with apprehension.

Reinking's boy. (the Senator's version of Ben)

fingered by fate. (Ben interior: Right, given the finger...)

Someone calls him Benny, which he dislikes.

--the military has changed his name from Ben to Benjamin