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Betrayed

AGNES REGAN

Since the night of the fire I haven't said anything about what I saw. Dad told me to forget I was even there and sometimes I don't think about it at all for a couple of days. Sometimes I almost think I didn't see it. I wonder if I dreamed it or made it up like Dad said I did. Then I walk up past the old laundry where the walls are still partly standing, black and broken. Or I see those Indian kids, looking at me, just like they know, and I want to smash my fist into all those black bead eyes, staring at me. Or I wake up in the night seeing the smoke and red glow above me and I know I saw it all. And I know I can't forget.

I almost wish school would start again so there'd be something to do all the time besides think about it. It's been more than a month since it happened. It happened just a couple of days after school got out but it was hot already and dusty in the streets except where they're paved by Pat's house. Pat and I had been sitting on the steps in front of the school store drinking orange pop and trying to cool off. Across the street the Gozas' old dog was lying in the shade under the faucet drip, panting, just like he does all summer. His sides sucked in and out and he wheezed like a dime-store paper accordion after it's been torn a little. I was wishing the watering truck would come by so we could run along in the spray and then let the sun dry us out before dinner.

Pat started pegging little rocks at the dog. "I wish I was at the lake now," he said. "In two weeks we'll be going up to the lake for all summer."

I thought about how the lake looked on a hot day, green and cold and sparkly on top, like it's been sprayed with that silver stuff on angels' wings in Christmas plays. When you lie on your stomach on the end of the dock the water's so clear you can see the colored rocks on the bottom and sometimes a little minnow swimming quick, in and out of the shadow under the dock. I wished we were going to the lake for the summer.

"Jeez, I'd be in swimming if I was up at the lake now," Pat said.
"Ya," I said, "when your old man was elected I thought the pool here was going to be fixed and the reservoir and the Hilger road, too."

Pat got sort of mad. "I guess my old man's the best mayor this town's ever had," he said. "I guess your old man would be a lousy mayor."

"I just don't see the pool gettin' fixed, that's all," I said. Even if his old man's no good I don't like to fight with Pat. He can't help the way his dad yells at us for playing on the grass or making too much noise. I guess you got to stick up for your own father even if you sort of wish he'd be different. But that doesn't mean I have to like Pat's father or the way he talks to my dad, like Dad doesn't know anything. When it's Mr. Hale he's talking to, it's the other way around, with Hale the big shot and the mayor just like one of the mill workers. Dad says I better not go around saying I don't like Hale, or Pat's father either, if I want to keep on eating. Mom says if Dad and the other men would worry less about getting fired and use some spunk maybe things would be different here in town. But Dad says he's satisfied being foreman at the Hale Mill and I'd better watch what I say.

So like that day, I don't fight with Pat even when I know I'm right. We didn't have time to argue though because just then we heard the sirens and started down to see where the fire was. When we ran down Lawrence we could see the trucks roaring up Boulder Street past the Post Office and crossing by the bank. On Main Street we could see the smoke, way up in the old buildings by the laundry. There was already a big crowd watching the firemen and the smoke where it came pouring out of the building above Greenburg's second hand shop. Old Greenburg was standing in the middle of the street with a pile of junk around him, waving his arms and talking as fast as he could. Every once in a while he'd think of something he'd forgotten and try to dash back into the building but the police would stop him.

By the time the firemen got the hose connected the smoke was getting thick and there were some flames around the front of the second floor. The first story was brick but above that the building was frame with dirty yellow paint chipping off. Once the gang sneaked in to see what it was like but the whole place was empty and we didn't see anything except the rickety stairs and some rooms full of old chairs and books and stuff from Greenburg's. Since then some half-breeds had been living in the back rooms, three or four families who worked at the mill. They were standing around now, every kid holding a chair or some blankets.

Pat and I squeezed around until we got up toward the front of the crowd where we could see the firemen and the trucks. Pat's father and Hale came up and people moved apart to let them through up to the police in front.

I heard one of the men from Lester's drug say, "That fire department sure takes its time," and someone else said, "You'd
think they'd be on the double quick, this being Hale's building and all."

The firemen weren't doing much about the burning building but just watering the low stone building next to it, where the Exchange Bar is. One place in the hose leaked and they kept wrapping tape around it and for a while the stream of water at the end would be high. Then the water would leak around the tape and the stream would be weaker at the end and they'd start wrapping the hose again.

"I bet they've got a hose from the hydrant up on Baty," Pat said. "Let's go watch."

We cut around the block and down the alley to the back of the building where there's sort of a parking lot with a high wall around part of it. There weren't any fire trucks or hose or people in the alley. The back of the building wasn't even burning and there was only a little smoke. After the noise and crowd in front it seemed funny that no one was back there at all. We stood there and listened to the echo of the noise in the street.

"If we was up on the wall maybe we could see in the window," Pat said.

We dragged a garbage can over to the wall and Pat stood on it and pushed me up to the top. Then I saw the old woman. She was up in the third floor window in the middle, waving at me and calling. The noise in front drowned out what she was saying but I could tell that she saw us and was trying to get me to look at her. There was a light behind the window so she was silhouetted and I couldn't see her face but I know I saw her.

"Hey, Pat! There's somebody up there," I said. Pat started to climb up in a hurry and the can tipped over and he fell off and had to stand it up and climb on again. I pulled him up on the wall after me and turned to point to the window but she wasn't there anymore. The smoke was beginning to sift out of the second story window.

"She was there," I said. "An old woman up there in the top window."

"Maybe somebody's caught. Maybe the smoke's got her," Pat said.

"Hey," I yelled. "Hey, where are you up there?"

We looked up at the window but no one looked out. The smoke was heavier. Pat waved his arms and shouted. Then we both yelled together, "Hey! Hey, up there."

We stood there a little while waiting but she didn't come back. Then we jumped off the wall and ran back down the alley around to the front. There was a lot more noise, dogs barking and kids shouting and cars honking down the street. The police were pushing the crowd back so the firemen had more room to sprinkle the buildings next door and the flames running up the sides of the windows. Benton, the chief, was talking to Pat's father and Mr. Hale when we pushed up to the front.

"There's an old lady up there," Pat yelled. "Joe saw an old lady up in the back."
We ducked under the policeman’s arms and ran up to the three men.

"Joe saw somebody still up there," Pat said. "You can get her from the back. Nobody’s around in back at all."

"Go on, scram kids," Benton said. "Stay outa the way now."

"But there’s someone up there still," I said. "We saw an old lady at one of the back windows."

"Everyone was taken out long ago, Mr. Hale," Benton said. "Now get the hell outa here, you boys."

The cop started to push us back but Pat grabbed his father’s arm. "She’ll be burned," he yelled. "They could get her from the back. There’s no one around in the back at all to get her."

The mayor turned around and shook him loose. "Go home now," he said. "Go home out of the way."

The cop shoved us back into the crowd with Pat screaming, "There’s an old woman up there. There’s an old woman burning up there."

A couple of men turned to look at us. "There’s an old woman up there," I said. "Up in the back where no one can see."

Some more people turned. "Hear what the kid said?" one of them asked the cop.

"Everyone got out a long time ago," he said.

"But I saw her," I was almost crying. "I saw her up in the window."

"Don’t worry, sonny," one of the men said. "They got all them breeds out a long time ago."

"But she’s still there," I kept saying. "I saw her in the window."

But nobody was listening. Everybody was staring up at where the whole top of the building was blazing, with the smoke rolling up above and the water pouring on from the hose.

"It’s going to fall!" someone yelled and everybody started to shout and back down the street. Somebody stepped on my foot and I stumbled and with everybody shoving I was pushed back too, but Pat broke away and ran up to his father again. There was so much noise I couldn’t hear anything but I saw how mad the mayor looked when he turned around. For a minute I thought he was going to slap Pat like he did the time we broke the window in his house but he just said something and turned away. Pat looked scared and walked away and I knew he was going home.

Everybody was shouting and the fire was roaring like the inside of a stove; then there was a crash and the whole front of the building smashed in with pieces of wood and bricks falling into the street. The crowd rocked back again and I couldn’t see for a minute. When I looked up the back was still standing but the whole inside was on fire, glowing like the middle of a bonfire. The top floor was caved in in the middle, by the center window.

I felt sick and couldn’t look anymore. I just let the crowd push me back to the edge and then I started home. Most of the way I ran but I don’t even remember which way I went. I must
have fallen in the alley because when I came in Mom saw my pants ripped at the knee and she started to bawl me out for tearing my clothes and being almost late for dinner. I didn’t hardly hear her. Dad was there, too, and he told me to wash up and pay attention to my mother. Mom asked me where I’d been and I tried to tell her about it. I told them over and over what I saw but Dad didn’t believe it any more than the other men. He said he was just off shift and tired and for me to shut up and eat my dinner. I couldn’t eat anything. Mother thought I was sick. She made me go to bed. I didn’t think I could sleep either but I must have because when I woke up I couldn’t remember for a minute what had happened. Then I felt sick again and I got up and went downstairs.

As I came into the kitchen Dad was saying, “—he had it covered for fifty thousand. Some out-of-town company. Put on a big show for the town.”

“It wasn’t worth even fifteen and you know it,” Mom said. “Something should be done, Joe.” Then she saw me and they both stopped talking.

I didn’t want to look at the paper but it was right there on the table. They were both looking at me so I picked it up and tried to read it. For a minute I hoped I’d been wrong all the time. I hoped it wouldn’t say anything about the old woman but I knew it would and it did. It said they’d found her late last night, what was left of her. It said the other halfbreeds had thought the old woman was away when the fire broke out and no one had missed her until it was too late. There was a long speech by Hale but I didn’t read it.

Mother and Dad were watching me. “It can’t do any good to talk about it now,” Dad said. “Try to forget you were there, son. You weren’t there and you didn’t see anything unusual. You and Pat didn’t go away from the front of the building. Do you understand? You didn’t see anything that everyone else didn’t see. Anything you thought you saw you made up. Can you remember that, son?”

I looked at him and started to say something and then I stopped. I’d never seen him look that way before, not mad exactly but as if he hurt inside, and so serious it sort of scared me.

“Do you understand?” he said.

I didn’t, but I said, “Yes, sir,” and sat down at the table.

Mom didn’t look at me. She put dishes in the sink and said, “I fixed you some orange juice, Joey.”

I drank the orange juice and ate some toast but I didn’t taste it much. I went outside and tried not to think about it. Then I wanted to see Pat. I went up to Pat’s house and knocked at the back door like I always do and the maid came and opened it.

“Pat ain’t here,” she said. “They’ve gone to the lake.”

“They’re not going yet,” I said. “Not for two weeks.”

“Well, they left this morning, him and his ma,” she said. “Run along now.”
I just stood there and she said "Run along now," again and closed the door.

I walked down by the school and saw some kids. They were going down to see the place where the fire was but I didn't go with them. I sat on the steps on the school store and watched the Gozas' dog lying under the water drip. I wondered if anyone would believe me if I did tell or if they'd think I made it up like the men at the fire and Dad. I tried to think of somebody who'd know I was right but there wasn't anybody, except Pat maybe, and he'd gone to the lake already. I started feeling almost like I had at the fire, just before the building caved in, sort of like I was going to cry and mad, as if I wanted to hit somebody and my hands were tied up behind me. I tossed a little rock at the dog across the street. It hit him on the back and he squirmed and went on panting. I picked up a handful of gravel and started pegging it at the dog.

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Two Poems

WALTER KING

PRAYER

Close over me, earth, and bury me well.
Enfold my suppliant limbs. No one can know
with how great readiness I go
to lay me down within your restful depths.

I care not for the dubious future of my soul,
if such a thing as soul there be in me.
I merely hope it may be so
that afterwards from out my body's transfused chemistry
there may come forth some lovely thing to live
even a transient while, in which the whole
world may perceive infinitudes of beauty,
share an ecstasy
transcending greatly anything, very likely, I shall ever give.

HELOISE AT PRAYER AT PARACLETE

"Oh, Holy Father, God . . . oh, my dear Pierre—
there like a maggot burrowing through dead flesh
his name intrudes, cancels my flagging prayer,
and in its stead remembrances come fresh
as spring-time rains of yesterdays we two
reveled and gamboled in . . . But still no word
from him these ten years gone . . . Might they be true,
those bruited whisperings that I have heard?
Men say, 'He never loved, who once so hot
lured to his bed the steadfast Heloise.
His lecherous body gelt, he has forgot
the love he simulated with such ease.
He loved her not. It was but lust'—Oh, no!
And yet I pray, fearful lest it be so."
Montana Study
HELEN LUND

Last Thanksgiving Baker Brownell, director of the Montana Study, accompanied Reverend Harvey Baty to a "community dinner" in the little town of Lonepine, west of Flathead Lake. While being drawn into the warmth of the closely-knit community circle, Mr. Brownell, who was still absorbed in the Montana Study, saw in this town an ideal testing ground for the new study guide prepared by the Montana Study Staff.

Because in this state population is largely rural and community life is yet strong, the Rockefeller Foundation chose Montana as suitable to promote this research project for studying ways to improve the quality of living. The study guide was conceived as one of a vast number of projects of the Montana Study, carried on by the Greater University of Montana and financed initially by the humanities division of the Rockefeller Foundation. Initiated this fall with offices on the campus of Montana State University at Missoula in Craig Hall, the Montana Study will continue for three years. Professor Baker Brownell of Northwestern University was secured to direct the work; while Joseph Kinsey Howard, Montana newspaperman and author of Montana: High, Wide, and Handsome, and Paul Meadows, assistant professor of sociology, were named research associates of the study.

This staff in various projects is tackling specific sociological problems in Montana, one of which is the loss of population because of the movement of young people away from the state. Fewer people live in Montana at present than did in 1920—since 1940 Montana has lost nearly 80,000 people. Although many of these may return at the war's end, many small communities are disintegrating and disappearing entirely. Young people are draining off to the great cities. The average Montana family has only 1.8 children. These facts present a serious problem—a challenge which the Montana Study is meeting.

It is through such projects as the study guide at Lonepine that the Montana Study Staff is planning its attack. Certain merits of the community set it forth as a favorable one in which to conduct the study. Located in the Little Bitterroot Valley and surrounded by mountains, the settlement gains its livelihood by retail business and diversified farming on small tracts. Neither spurts of prosperity nor sudden depressions are probable as there is no room for undue expansion of the farming land, and yet irrigation insures a steady production of crops.

When the reservation was opened, the settlers, a fairly well-educated group, moved into the valley. Now approximately 350 people in 90 families inhabit the valley, and, as a homogenous section of society, they have been mutually helpful and have established many strong community ties. A single church was built to serve all denominations. There is but one school in the valley, the superintendent of which has lived there for many years. A hall was built for general town get-togethers, and the
combined general store and post office, where a bulletin board carries announcements, is a daily meeting place.

While this little settlement, peacefully snuggling between the mountains, presents many of the characteristics of an idyllic rural life, it has problems to solve. The main problems today are the passing on of the farm tracts of the older people who are ready to retire and the finding of a place for the young people in the community. Should the sons buy the farms so that the parents have money with which to retire? What if the parents are not ready to quit farming when their sons are ready to make their own living? Will the sons be able to gain their livelihood in the town in some small business? Will the young people be attracted to the cities? Will college educations encourage them to leave the state? Will the young men want to come back after the war? These questions all relate to the one general problem Lonepine people are trying to unravel.

But by no means is this problem local—it extends over the whole of Montana. For instance, a recent survey of students at Montana State University showed that half of the co-eds do not plan to live in Montana when they finish school, largely because there is, they feel, no opportunity for them here.

In Lonepine some opportunities have been found for making a living in small business as well as in diversified agriculture, while several families of the second generation have found places for themselves in the town. But in Montana as a whole, as well as in Lonepine, the young people feel there is no room for them; that the larger cities hold more for them. A dean of a large school has told the Montana Study Staff that 40 to 70 percent of his best students leave Montana forever when they graduate.

But it is not entirely the question of making a living that draws young people east to Chicago and west to Seattle, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. "It is not merely lack of economic opportunity. It is also because Montana’s communities do not provide appreciative and artistic opportunities which high-grade young people want—in other words, interesting living," said Mr. Brownell in analysis of the failure of Montana life to attract young people.

The staff of the Montana Study believes that few towns make room for the young people so that they can take a really significant part in community activity. And this is not entirely the fault of the older generation; the younger generation has not taken it upon itself to form ski clubs, hiking clubs, dance clubs or other organizations for their own enjoyment. While the young people of Lonepine have an organized club and a community band, they have found that many other activities could arise in the town itself. And in the rest of Montana this phase of community life has hardly been recognized.

In solving this complexity, the Montana Study Staff is not essentially interested in economics; but it recognizes that if a town has unemployment, ups and downs in prosperity, very little can be done in the way of trying to hold the young people until
there is a sense of stability and a faith that they will be able to make their living in the town. Lonepine, in its study, has been doing economic planning for the change that will come after the war. To preserve present security they realize that it is necessary to have more diversified industries. The following small businesses have been listed as possibilities for enlarging the community enterprises, and as offering potential jobs for young people and returning veterans: a mechanics repair shop, a cream station, an enlarged cheese factory, a feed mill and store, a wood yard, lumber shed, a drug, soda and candy store, a shoe cobbler, a carpentry shop, and a radio shop. Lonepine's veterans will have a place for them when they come back.

Besides providing places where their young people can make a living, the townspeople know that they must develop a community in which the young people will want to take part. Music, drama, literature, sports—diversions which interest groups of young people—are emphasized under the Montana Study Staff guidance.

"The reason some rural life is dull," says Mr. Brownell, "is because of lack of education, and isolation from others with similar interests. If people are well-educated, and have the opportunity to get together with a common interest in some type of expressive art or sports, they will find life interesting."

Given cultural advantages and a place to make a secure living, young people would be more attracted to life in Montana. The small community and the family where each member has an important place are the hub of the American democratic way of life. For this reason the staff believes that more can be done towards stabilization of community and family life in Montana than in the great urban states of the East.

The Montana Study is an experiment—nothing like it has been done before in this country. If reasonably successful, it will probably be extended in some form to other states.

In many ways the study guide at Lonepine exemplifies the spirit of the Montana Study—that of developing and encouraging a stable, culturally-enriched life in small towns and rural districts. While Lonepine is already strong, the study guide has brought its problems before its eyes. The people have become aware of the need for a cooperative planning of their future on the basis of the insights gained through discussion. To show their appreciation for the guidance of the Montana Study Staff, these pioneers in a study for the advancement of Montana have already invited Mr. Brownell and the other members of the staff to another "community dinner" scheduled for the time when the course is completed.
Seven Poems
SGT. WILLIAM D. PERKINS

SONG
Here is a song for Evelyn,
Chanted for her delight alone
When winds were swinging clouds around
And the bright sun shone.

Linka-low-low-low in the woods
And you run there
With the shadows on your knees
And in your hair.

Throw a rock into a pool,
Frighten bluebirds into flight.
When the evening time is cool,
Chase the sunset into night.

Carry the song to Evelyn,
Chant it for her delight alone,
And kiss her lips and kiss her hands
After the day has gone.

VILLANELLE
I will not love you less
Than angels love their place
In Heaven’s happiness.

However Earth may dress,
In green or snowy lace,
I will not love you less.

Unswervingly, I bless
Your laughter and your grace.
In Heaven’s happiness,

The angels have distress—
For they kiss not your face.
I will not love you less

Than these, who cannot press
The hand my fingers trace.
—In Heaven’s happiness,

They envy our excess
Of love, our sweet embrace!
I will not love you less
In Heaven’s happiness.
BALLADE

Twenty years is not enough
To fill the belly full of life.
Listen, now, and do not laugh—
Look at me: I have no wife,
I do not know if love is gay
Beyond a kiss or two. I fear
That nothing I have now will stay,
If I go back to dust this year.

I capture, with a sudden hand,
A bit of air—but it is gone:
Nor can I capture this dark land,
For I must go my way alone,
And other men will follow plows,
And other homes will rise up here.
No one will know this was my house,
If I go back to dust this year.

Now, Fate, I want a word with you.
You are my master—well agreed—
And I have seen that your blade slew
The good and bad of every breed.
True, I can give you no reward,
But kindly turn aside your spear,
For I will surely take it hard,
If I go back to dust this year.

Envoi

The sun arises with a shout
To tell me life is very dear;
Fate, we shall have our quarrel out,
If I go back to dust this year.

ON MEETING A GERMAN PRISONER

We looked into each other’s eyes,
And looked away
With something deeper than surprise
Or dismay.

A thought of tragedy or mirth
Took us and held,
And curled around our earth
And quite dispelled

Our passion in the war outside.
Within our hearts
We saw that hating lied,
And killing, and the gentle arts.
GRAVE DETAIL

Comrade! we have come too late
To keep you from among the slain,
But it was hardly brave to wait
With your own bullet in your brain.

We understood that there was glory—
Orators have given breath
Saying so. You mar their story,
Trading all of it for death.

No matter, comrade, we have brought
Crosses for all, and here's a spade,
And we will bury those who fought
Beside the ones who merely stayed.

WHEN LIFE HAS BEEN ENTIRE

There will be no dusty old accounts to keep
If this earth can fill my soul with fright
And pack it up to bursting with desire,
Give it girl's love, drown it in deep delight,
Revive it halfway back to life and to the fire
Of death, death's pain and the long sleep.

There will be no dry grief, no one bent to weep
At graveside or by the fragile candlelight
In some dim chapel. Death cannot inspire
Tears, when it but seals down, as the night,
The day of life, when life has been entire,
Into slumbers deeper than the sea is deep.

COMMENT ON A MARTIAL SPEECH

Whatever was said
Was hardly worth the saying,
Since he who spoke of slaying
Already is dead.
The Man
FLORA SAGEN

Even as a little boy, the man was very strange. It is because he is an orphan, people would say. After the boy heard that, he began to notice his grandmother's old, wrinkled face, and her knobby, dry-looking fingers, and he wished she looked like the girl's mother, who was young and very beautiful. All day he would dream about having a mother, sometimes, and he would kick his feet and dig his fingers into the ground until the pricks of the sharp little rocks reminded him it was getting late. Then he would go home, and sit on the porch at night, holding the old bear he had always had. Then one night he stole into the kitchen and gathered a handful of matches, and sat in the yard staring as the battered little bear turned into smoke, thick as the bear's legs had been, and smelly. He loved to watch the flames curl the short little fur up before it dissolved... and he liked the belching little flames when the cotton stuffing caught fire. Then the grandmother discovered him and spanked him with her skinny hands, and told him he was a strange boy. And the boy shivered from the touch of her bony fingers, and went out to dig in the remains of the bear again, and see if there had been something inside. There was nothing.

One day in school he confided to the girl that he wished her mother were his, and the girl said her mother held her on her lap and sang to her. Then the boy stared at her, and said he was glad his mother was dead, but he said it too loudly, and the teacher told him he was a strange boy, and made him stand in the corner. All day he stood there, being glad his mother was dead.

When the boy got older, the girl used to love him, and she would sit in his arms in the darkness. The boy was happy then, but one night he pushed her away, and he never saw her again. The boy couldn't explain that he didn't want her, for he did; but there was another thing he wanted, and how could he tell the girl if he didn't know?

The boy grew into a young man, and when he came home and found the grandmother dead one day, he folded her hands and looked at the wrinkle-covered bones. Then he left the house, and walked alone in the night, and tried to think what it was he wanted. Much later, after the grandmother was gone, he went to a play one night. A very strange play, and as he listened, he thought, this is what I want. I will write a play. And so he went home, and worked until far into the night, and many nights after. He thought, many people have written this play called God, but they did not have the words. So he carefully measured and calculated, and worked for many nights by himself. One day it was done. It was a beautiful play, and he thought, now I have God in my drawer. This is what I wanted. But when he read the play over, search as he would, God somehow escaped him,
and so he burned the pages and watched the smoke go up. Up into the evening stars.

And once the man saw a beautiful picture, and he said to himself, this is what I want. Nights and mornings he painted, and then one day he sat and looked at his wonderful picture. But as he looked, he suddenly began to shiver; and then he carried the picture to the river and watched it sink. And he thought, this too was not what I wanted. I wonder what it is I want?

And so he set out into the world, and for many days he wandered about, searching in faces, in trees and buildings. One day he saw the face of a woman, and at once he thought, this is what I want. I will love this woman, and she will be mine. And so he began to love the woman—the beautiful, aloof woman. One day she smiled at the man and said she loved him too, and they went away together. This is what I wanted, sighed the man. And he was very happy, until one day he left the woman, and went out into the world again. The woman's face was streaked with tears, but it was not the tears he wanted. I love her, but she is not what I want, he thought, and he left her behind forever. Perhaps I am a strange man, he thought. There is nothing I want. There is nothing in the world big enough for me to do, and I need to do something big.

One day as he crossed a street a car hit him, and suddenly as he lay on the hospital bed he thought, now I have found what I wanted. Now I have found what I know how to do. This is a thing that is big enough for me. And when the doctors came to his bed he said, now I am going to die nobly. That is the thing I know how to do best, and the biggest thing I or anyone can do. Why did I never find it before?

Soon the man closed his eyes, and he saw many things, this strange man. He saw a little bear with nothing inside but burned cotton; and some skinny, ugly hands. He saw a girl close to him in the moonlight, and a story which God escaped, and a wonderful picture that made him shiver. And he saw the beautiful woman standing alone, with her face streaked with tears. These are not what I wanted, he thought, and he turned and looked at death.

And the last breath of the strange man was a long, shivering sob.
The corporal lay flat on his stomach concealing himself in the browned, crackling grass. Autumn wind plucked at the seed heads of the grass and whipped a cold shudder through his lightly-clad shoulders. Slowly and deliberately the soldier raised his bared head and brought binoculars to his eyes. His entire manner grew tense and alert as he searched the countryside beneath his low hillock. For long, tedious, treacherous minutes the binoculars rested on single points, moved slowly in a minute arc, stopped for study, and moved on again. Minutes climbed their sixty steps to an hour and the corporal, repeating his deliberateness, brought the glasses down from his eyes. He bent his head to his arm and closed his eyes. Not seeing, he strained his ears, listening with instinctive alertness, but with a studied relaxed body. The wind did not cease its threatening iciness, and the shoulders struggled to quiver with the cold.

Again, the soldier raised his head; and again the power of the binoculars reinforced his eyes. Minutes again ticked their way. The soldier studied. Suddenly he cursed a sharp curse and his head shook violently. And a curse came in a low whisper to himself, reprimanding his spoken words and the sudden movement of his head. He drew a hand slowly from the glasses and wiped the tears from his eyes, cursing the strain inwardly, and cursing the weakness of his eyes.

A glance at his watch showed some hours until nightfall. An overcast sky, threatening bleak, sordid rain seemed a dreary thing. The corporal groaned a tear that was not of strain.

To either flank of the field and to the soldier's rear there were the forests, resplendent in fall colors. Deciduous trees cast wantonly their confetti to the chill fall wind; the leaves whipped in tiny whirlwinds and danced a merriness oblivious of the occasional screaming shells and deep reverberations of explosions.

The corporal's body ached. He knew that in the trees there was concealment, there was opportunity to stretch his cramped limbs, to build a small fire and thaw his frozen flesh; a blanket waited there, and food perhaps. And there was water for his dry throat. A scant few hundred yards away, a few minutes' walk, half as much running, and there was protection and security. The corporal mused on the irony, and the thought of a blanket made his body seem even colder. His thirst grew, and his stomach seemed to be pleading for food.

Almost visibly, and with self-irritation, he shook aside the musing, and brought his glasses to his eyes.

A slow, malicious grin curled his lip, and he laughed a low, grim chuckle; his eyes peered with a cold hardness through the lenses. With one hand on the glasses, he reached beside him and carefully drew a telephone to his mouth and ear. He blew
a low half-whistle into the transmitter. And because he was so conscious of silence, because he was so intent in his study, he was startled even by the faint voice that reached him with "What's up?" Startled, he wondered why the voice was so faint in the forest, and immediately knew that his feeling of silence had been sensed. "Can you hear me, Mac?" he half-whispered. "Two by two," was the low reply. "Can you hear me now?" the corporal asked more loudly, still grimly grinning. "Four by four," was the reply. And without preliminaries, the soldier spoke. "From check point four, two hundred and fifty yards northeast, in direct line with checkpoint one. At least a dozen there by my count; probably more. Put up a round of smoke."

A minute passed, and the corporal's eyes were glued to the glasses. The hand gripping the telephone was white with tenseness. Sweat was in the palm of the hand. There was no cold, no shudders, no overcast sky, no blanket, food, water or security. There was nothing save the man and his objective. A minute and a dull boom in the hollow of the forest was followed by a swift, shrieking whistle high over his head. The white phosphorous smoke gushed into the lenses of his far-reaching binoculars. "Fire for effect," he snapped in a sharp voice. There was no silence. "Good shooting," he muttered into the phone, and heard the now-clear voice reply, "Yeah." Dull booms sounded in the woods, and whistles shrieked overhead. "That's thirty-six rounds on the way," spoke the voice in his ear. "Cease firing, target neutralized." And then, "Put some smoke in the building to the east. There's something there." And the smoke came. "Range correct, deflection one fifty, light fire for effect, and quickly." And the earth shook as an ammunition dump exploded. "Good shooting, target neutralized." And the corporal dropped the phone and wiped smarting eyes with a grimy, sweaty hand.

Dusk approached, and night fell, and the soldier crawled to the woods. He wasn't thirsty nor was he hungry. He dropped into a foxhole and rolled in a blanket.

"How was it?" asked the lieutenant.

"Rugged," was the tired reply.

"I'm going in the morning before daybreak."

"O.K., wake me up."

And it seemed only an instant later that silent hands shook him. "I'm going," said the officer's voice in the darkness, and the lieutenant moved off.

The corporal crawled from his hole to an adjoining bunker and brought a telephone to his ear. He waited, looking to the sky for breaking day. He mused of the comfort of the woods, and became alert at a low half-whistle. "Charley F. O., Charley F. O.," called the corporal sharply into the transmitter. "Tap if you hear me. Don't talk, tap." But there was no sound.

The corporal turned to the man lying in the bunker. "We can't go out and get him, Mac," he said slowly, "It's getting
light." And the corporal walked to his blanket, to his concealment, his security and protection, his hot food, and his water—the beauty of the forest in the fall.

II

The corporal had returned from France. He was tired and worn, battle fatigue showing in his haunted eyes, his pale and lined face. He sat relaxing and smoking as the train moved its clattering way, by-passing the summer-green English countryside. Oblivious to the panorama outside his window, his eyes stared through the blued cigarette smoke rising in the compartment. There was a ghost of a half-smile on his slightly crooked lips. He was musing, as a tired, aching, sorrowful man muses: This is my furlough. Seven days. Seven days and where to go or what to do. To Scotland, and from there I do not know. I'd like to read and relax, rest and sleep. Look at a sky without aircraft, a field without shell holes. I'd like to look at the ocean, talk to people, do everything and nothing. I'd like to be home, going home. It almost feels like going home now, only there is no home.

There were the dreams of what he could do if he were going home. The tired face became relaxed, the half smile began to grow more full, the haggard eyes more bright.

A soldier sat at his side and spoke. Shaken from reverie, the corporal, annoyed, began a sharp remark, but stopped for no reason except that he did not want to be sharp. He listened to the anxiously talking soldier:

"You from 505?" was a question.
"Yes," replied the corporal quietly. "I'm from 505."
"Know a guy named Smith? Joe Smith from ——Company. D'ya know 'im, huh? Big guy, black curly hair, good lookin', always laffin'."
"Yes," said a slightly amused corporal, "I know him, why?"
"Well, he had a brother in my outfit. A year younger, I guess. Looked alike they did. Jeez! like twins they were, and crazy about one another. Only kids in the fam'ly. Brother name a Mike. Know him?"

"Nope, I don't reckon I know Joe's brother," replied the corporal, "but I know he has one in your outfit. Why?"

"Cripes, I went t'ru basic trainin' with um, and they was in my jump class. Good kids. Joe was down to our outfit lookin' for Mike. Joe was on a furlough. We tole him Mike was missin' in action. Jeez I saw him blowed apart meself. But we said he was missin' in action, 'cuz Joe was on a furlough. D'ya think that was right? Cripes, Joe will be mad when he finds out."

The corporal did not reply quickly. He offered the man a cigarette, and took one himself, and there was a silence as two men, quiet, blew slow lungfuls of blue smoke to the ceiling.

"No," said the corporal, "He won't be mad, and you were right." The corporal mused sadly, almost with a smile on a now suddenly tired face. Philosophically: - - there's more time to be
dead than there is to be alive. Joe won’t know Mike is dead for a week or two, perhaps. Then he’ll learn. He will be better able to take the news then. Mike will stay dead until then.

The Corporal came back to camp. Each day he laughed a “Howdy” to Joe Smith. Each day there was a joke. A laugh and a joke was returned.

One day, before the laughing “Hello,” the corporal saw the face of Joe Smith. The corporal did not feel like laughing a “Howdy” or cracking a joke. But he did, with the same forced gaiety. Joe Smith said “Howdy,” and added, “My brother Mike was killed in France. I just found out.”

“Is there anything I can do?” asked the corporal.
“No,” said Joe Smith, “not now. Mike is dead.”

III

The corporal snapped open the bolt of his rifle, and pressing the release, withdrew a clip that had only three cartridges remaining. Automatically he reached to a bandolier and drew a fresh clip from the sagging pouch. With a quick glance for dirt in the shining brass, he squeezed the fresh clip into the magazine of his piece, deliberately pressed the safety catch, and dropped his tired and grimy body on the ground a few yards from a sergeant who lay in a clump of grass.

The corporal looked at the sergeant’s sweating face and gauged the face as a fighter gauges a face, with an intangible and unexplainable instinct. He searched through his numerous pockets meanwhile and found a crumpled packet of cigarettes. He mused: It’s strange that soldiers always have crumpled packets of cigarettes. They are never stiff and straight and round. Carefully he extracted a rather bent and crushed cylinder and put it between his parched and cracked lips. He flipped the packet to the sergeant with a terse “Cigarette?” and began searching for a match. The sergeant was a little quicker and produced a lighter. “It’s a Jerry job,” he said, “but it works OK.”

For a moment the men were silent, smoking. And then the rumor of the moment began as conversation. Somewhere along the line someone had said that the regiment would be relieved. The men, exhausted and weary with weeks of fighting, were awaiting the day. And at long last the rumor had gathered a positive momentum.

“You’re from HQ,” the sergeant said. “How true is all this crap about gettin’ relieved? By God, me, I’m personally in the need of a rest.”

“So am I,” replied the corporal, “And I know only what you seem to know, that we will be relieved tomorrow, which is about a day and a half from now.”

The men were silent. And the battle about them seemed even more silent, for troops were ahead pushing the Germans, having relieved the lead company to which the corporal was attached.

The sergeant stretched out his arm and pointed with his
finger. "See that body out in the field there? Well, I got that bastard, as clean as you want 'em."

And he dropped his arm limply and sighed a tired sigh. "I reckon that's the last German I'll kill for a long long while now."

The corporal laughed and said he hoped they would stop for a while, and because he had to report to his officer, said, "So long, Mac," and walked off along a hedgerow going to the rear.

The corporal felt good himself. The idea of a relief that had been officially announced lifted his spirit. And he felt that he would be able to sleep that night.

The next day the Germans counter-attacked and forced a wedge into the allied line. Reserve companies who had had only a very few hours to get some rest were called on and an attack was launched to drive back the wedge. The corporal, with re-supply of ammunition and grenades, started out to join a company. In the midst of the attack he located the officer in charge, explained his mission, and went on. For perhaps an hour there was a stalemate, while fighting was bitter and fierce. But suddenly the fighter instinct and the fighter aggression of the paratroop soldiers cracked the German wedge. The men were quick on the heels of the retreating enemy, taking the advantage of disorganization to regain lost ground and establish on new territory.

Far out into new territory the corporal went. He knew that in a few hours fresh troops would arrive and that a situation had to be prepared for them. And his troops would do that preparing. A few hours passed, and fresh reserves came. The corporal walked as guide with a lieutenant to locate a position for a machine gun. They walked carefully. Approaching a hedgerow, they sought a way through that lead to a road. The corporal went through and stopped short.

His eyes looked on an American soldier, quite dead, his chest almost completely pulverized. A few feet away, pinned to the ground with a bayonet, was a German. From behind the corporal the lieutenant's pistol cracked, and from an opposite row the body of a German tumbled, his machine pistol clattering to the road. It was a good shot. Cold-bloodedly the corporal stepped to the rifle that pinned the German to the ground and wrenched, trying to free the bayonet. It would not come loose. He reached down and freed the blade from the rifle, turned with the piece in his hands to the dead jumper, and placed the rifle across his body. Then slowly, as though talking to himself, he said, "I reckon you were wrong, Mac. I reckon you were wrong."

IV

They moved quietly, quickly down the narrow streets, tense and alert. The corporal mused: "First time I walked through a street like this, I couldn't keep my knees from clattering like a bunch of jigs shooting craps. Now I don't even try." He chuckled drily. "Thought there'd be a sniper in every damn window." And quickly he flattened himself against the wall as a machine gun opened up from across the street. With the instinct of war
his eyes followed the line of fire, his pistol coming into line. He heard the human cough of man, and felt and saw the body hurtling from a third story window, grunted and spat as the body thudded to the ground, and like a springing panther he moved in and kicked aside the rifle that had clattered to the walk. Without thought, without wasted motion or feeling, without compunction, there was pressure of his right hand, and from the snout of the graceful, lovely looking pistol, unseen lead ploughed a straight furrow through the head of a still-thrashing, still-fighting mass of man.

There was no smell of acrid gunpowder. The smell had long since ceased to inflame the nostrils. There was no last gasp of breath from the body. Death reached it as soon as the heavy sound of the pistol reached the living ear. He waved his pistolled hand to the flanking Tommy that all was well.

"Strange how the sun does not glint on the blue steel," he thought. "I always read that it did. Good shooting by the Britisher. The rat might have got me. I wonder when the rations will come."

And, still moving, still watchful, pistol ready, he touched a match to a broken cigarette.

**THOSE WHO WIELD THE PEN**

AGNES REGAN makes her third consecutive contribution to the Mountaineer with Betrayed, her first short story to be printed. She has written a story heavy with social implications and has written it well, in prose that is simple and charming. Here is a story that is well worth the reading.

HELEN LUND'S article on the Montana Study is one which should interest every well-meaning citizen of the state. Read it carefully for the efforts of the Montana Study Staff touch all of us. Helen is a Sophomore in the school of Journalism, is a member of Alpha Lambda Delta, sophomore women's scholastic honorary and has served efficiently as circulation manager of this year's Mountaineer.

SGT. WILLIAM D. PERKINS may be remembered by the upperclassmen on the campus for his memorable verse which appeared in the Mountaineer in 1942 and 1943. Dave, ex-'46, served on the Mountaineer editorial staff during his freshman year. One of his poems recently appeared in Poetry magazine.

FLORA SAGEN, outstanding for her work in several campus plays, appears for the first time in the Mountaineer with her fable-like tale The Man, a subtly psychological story of a man who was "strange."

WALT KING, whose poetry and prose have appeared in the Mountaineer since its first publication in 1942, writes poetry again for this issue. Walt is well-known on the campus for his characterization of Papa in last Fall's Masquer production. Papa Is All.