Summer 1991

Only Men Go to Garnet

Robert Andrews
Only Men Go to Garnet

One is handsome, a young Indian, black braid splitting his back. Three whites in a Biscayne have a case of beer for their passenger. Another man drives a red truck and looks lean, grim and stupid. An empty gun rack means he had to hock his rifle or it’s across his lap.

Twelve miles back when the pavement dropped off I knew this was a man’s road. I’ve been fooled by other roads that start off wide and wide open like something in Dorothy’s dream, riding the curve of a grassland till without apology the pavement leaves you to gravel and soon not even that. Just hard pack and ruts for twenty miles.

Pick your tragedy. It could happen on this road. Slow violence or sick too far from help. A drive off the edge to be one of Montana’s white crosses. But so far from town, it wouldn’t make much of a warning. Just a sign that someone didn’t reach the ghost town or never got very far away.