

In montana 1948

essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In Montana 1948, written by Larry Watson, the events that took place irrevocably changed David Hayden's life in several ways, both good and bad. The novel Montana 1948, is written from the point of view of David, the son of the Mercer County's sheriff, Wesley Hayden and features many events which are indelible from his memory. The death of Little Marie Soldier, David's housekeeper, was the first event, which would ultimately change David's life. After her death, David experiences great discomfort in his own home, as he believed that there was "death in the house" and that "every door seemed to require a bit more effort to open and close.

There always seemed to be a sound – a whisper – on the edge of your hearing, something you couldn't quite make out. " The death of Marie also altered the way that he thought about his father, in that before he thought that he was not a true sheriff, saying that he "didn't even look like a proper sheriff" and that he carried "the wrong kind of gun for a sheriff. However, after Marie passed away, David went on to realise that the "hardest part of his job" was not the "dangerous criminals he might face", but doing such tasks as notifying family of a deceased person like he did with Marie. This eventually changed David so that he no longer felt that he "didn't fit his ideal of what he should be. " David's knowledge of his Uncle Frank's crimes, especially the murder of Little Marie Soldier, also permanently changed his life, as after that he could no longer think about Frank in the same way.

Originally, David expressed great admiration for his uncle, "the war hero," saying that compared to his father, who was impressive, was everything that his father was "and more. " Conversely, after the revelation of Frank's crimes, David could no longer "continue thinking" of Uncle Frank "the way

he always had,” saying that the “ charming, affable Uncle Frank was gone for good. ” While this change was dramatic, the greatest change that irretrievably changed David’s life was the death of his once beloved Uncle Frank. The effect of his death affected the entire Hayden family, producing a division between David, his mother Gail and his father Wesley, and his Grandparents Enid and Julian and his Aunt Gloria. This division affected David to such a great extent that he cried as he would “ never see his horse, Nutty, again”.

The division in his family is evident when, at Frank’s funeral, each faction stood on opposite sides of the grave and “ not one of them would dream of leaping across it. ” This remark made by David shows that there was a clear dissection between himself and his parents, and his grandparents and aunty. Despite this the cover-up of Frank’s death also transformed David’s life by giving a cynical approach to history, as the event meant that he no longer believed in the “ purity and certainty” of history. In the tale, Montana 1948, the life of David Hayden is undoubtedly forever distorted by the proceedings of 1948, both in positive and negative ways. The events go on to change his views on his father, as he then gains respect for his occupation.

Yet in spite of this, his life is also changed for the worse as his family is divided, he loses respect for his Uncle Frank and with the concealment of his death, history.