



11-15-2008

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Recommended Citation

Cooperman, Robert (2008) "Mary LaFrance Watches the Posse Return," *Westview*: Vol. 28 : Iss. 2 , Article 34.
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview/vol28/iss2/34>

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Mary LaFrance Watches the Posse Return

by Robert Cooperman

A half-breed out-footed
mounted men, and him slowed
by the Preacher's Widow.
To trap him would've took
a woman using herself as bait:
but no one asked my opinion
about men sticking their necks
into nooses for love.

The posse would've enjoyed him
puppet-dancing from a rope,
then taking turns on her;
but tracking? Too much work.

Sheriff whipped them on—
braying like a wounded mule
to find the Widow missing—
but she'd rather have pulled slack
with a rattler than with him:
and the breed's a fine-looking man.

Now, the posse's pouring
into Sheriff's saloon,
bragging about almost catching,
"The mongrel and his white slut."
But Sprockett smashes his bottle,
and they fall silent, him hating
when any woman's spoken of
like tossed away apple cores;
still, he gives me the creeps
like a spider was grave-dancing
down my face.

I'll have to explain
my belly bump to Judge Sam;
him and me did go a round
or two on them nights
Tommy got stuck with his wife.
Judge Sam'll think himself
a hero to have planted me proper.

