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Robert Cooperman

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William Eagle Feather Changes His Name

by Robert Cooperman

When I gave you the name
Hair Filled With Sun,
you smiled, wore it
more gracefully
than Mrs. Lavinia Burden.

Now, it's time for me
to pick a new name:
Finds the Path,
a name that counts coup
over the white blood
that battles inside me
with the Ute.

Your eyes glitter mischief,
thinking this new name
a vanity
when I should be finding us
a good berry patch,
of if the smoke
you spy in the distance
is a white settlement
or some escaped Lakotas:
even more dangerous
for us to get close to.

But I do find the paths
we follow
in our mountain dodging
of desperate bands,
and of settlers and soldiers
howling vengeance
for Custer.

If half the rumors
whispered of him be true,
an unholy fool.

