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The Widow Burden, at the Funeral of Her Late Husband

by Robert Cooperman

His whole congregation stares
as if I'd murdered him:
my guilt for secretly longing
for William Eagle Feather.
"A half-breed," Christians sneer.

Once, rambling on the mountain,
I came upon him, preparing
to spit a recently killed rabbit.
"Best for a woman not to travel
alone up here," he warned,
then invited me to partake.

I found myself licking my fingers
to prolong each delicious morsel,
then reluctantly returned to town,
accompanied part-way by William,
who left me within sight
of our church steeple.

Still pure, at least in body,
I rushed to prepare Thomas' dinner.

Now, innocent mourners silently
demand the run-off of my grief.
I oblige, having to live in this town,
too much to expect that William
will even guess I need rescuing.



Photo by Fred Dickert Jr.

