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## Reverend Burden Comes to a Fateful Decision

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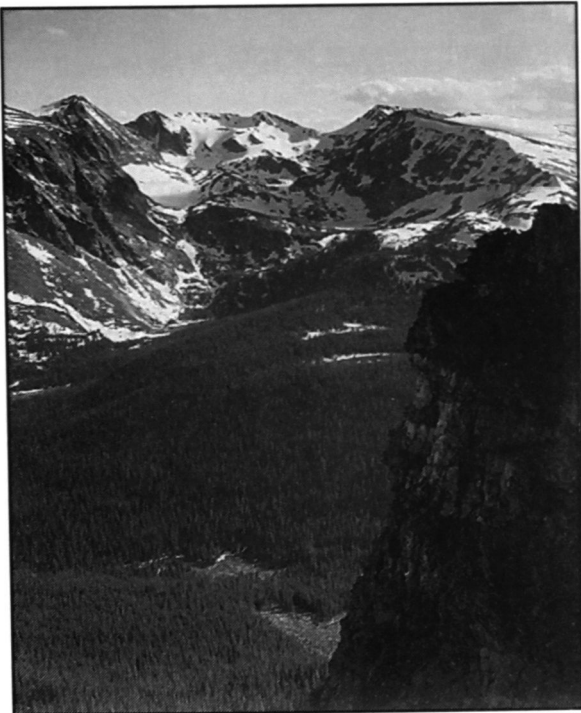
by Robert Cooperman

I've asked the Lord  
if it's necessary;  
He's answered.  
Still, it's dreadful  
to think my wife must pay,  
but a man of the Book  
can't have the skunk whiff  
of divorce clinging to him.

There's nothing for it  
but to pay John Sprockett,  
famous for the deaths  
trailing him like cannon smoke.  
He'll know how to do it clean,  
fast, and merciful,  
not like that soiled dove  
we jerked years back.  
She kicked and thrashed  
like she was in the grip  
of heathen lust.

Though it's not my hands  
on Lavinia's throat,  
not me tossing her down  
the abandoned shaft  
where I pay DeLacey,  
to keep him quiet  
about me and Mary,

still I tremble.



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