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Sophia Starling: Diary Entry

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Sophia Starling: Diary Entry

Mr. Sprockett has gone to sleep,
and the stranger who wandered in
from yet another of the blizzards
that keep us imprisoned.

Mr. Crane's fists screamed frost-bite
when he pounded on the door,
his head a battering ram of desperation.
He claimed to be a convalescing consumptive
sent west by the dean of his seminary-
dry mountains a miracle for his lungs.

We bid him share our dwindling stores
and saw trouble immediately:
a hunger to devour everything;
I sense he has fed like a locust
on the supplies of others,
why he was put out in such fatal weather.
He apologized that recovery forces him
to eat like blood-drunk wolves.
A hunger in his eyes as well:
he stared, then quickly shifted,
seeing Mr. Sprockett's one eye
on him, jagged as a blade.

For the sake of safety, I asked
about Boston's opera house,
its climate and leading citizens.
Mr. Crane talked only of London,
averred it the one place in the world
a civilised man would call home.
"Or lady," he smiled, more oil
than blood in his lips.

"You'd best turn in,"
Mr. Sprockett rose, huge and grim
as the bear that had etched
terrible claws down his face.
There *will* be trouble, only I can avert,
but how, I keep accusing myself.

by Robert Cooperman

Cooperman's poems are from *The Badman and the Lady* soon to be
published by Basfol Books.
TO BE CONTINUED IN FUTURE ISSUES