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## From the Diary of Sophia Starling, Concerning Her Night at the Grand Hotel, Salida, Colorado Territory

Robert Cooperman

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*From the Diary of Sophia Starling, Concerning Her Night  
at the Grand Hotel, Salida, Colorado Territory*

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What lies I wrote Aggie,  
afraid to tell her I hoped  
Mr. Sprockett would kick down my door  
like Caesar catapulting molten stones  
at the wood forts of jabbering Gauls.  
I left the door unlocked, not to show  
that half-tamed panther I trusted him,  
but to feel his breath—  
even if it smouldered of bad whiskey—  
scorching my mouth, neck, and breasts.

But he stayed away, afraid  
of the souls he has sent to Hell,  
of the cheap women he has taken  
with not a thought or touch of tenderness.

I'm tired of pretending—  
like all the good ladies of my class—  
that I've no love of the barn,  
have never seen the thrashing dance  
of an eager thoroughbred stud;  
tired, too, of saving myself for staid nuptials.  
I burn as we ride landscapes so glorious  
God must have gasped to create them.

If only John would take instruction  
from my mare, his stallion.  
His nips and nudges set her kicking  
when they're hobbled for the night.  
Still, she takes care not to bloody him  
with hooves sharp as scimitars;  
and after her fit of maiden pique  
she waltzes taunting buttocks into his flanks.

I fear if I were to play such a wanton,  
Mr. Sprockett would leave me in the wilderness,  
as shocked as my conventional sister  
by what he mistook for a nun's purity.

*by Robert Cooperman*

Robert Cooperman's poems are from *The Badman and the Lady* soon to be published by Basfol Books.

TO BE CONTINUED IN FUTURE ISSUES