

Tom Buzzard's Widow

A car wreck took him
before the first snow
covered the coal house roof.
They carried him up
to Copper's Mine with
a team of mules.
Six big men had to haul
the coffin up the hill.

She is Katherine Runyon now,
and David is a kind, strong man.
In spring, he follows her
to the garden, pulling dirt
onto mounds of potatoes,
helping her stake up tomatoes
with strips of Tom's shirts.

She still plants Buzzard beans
from seed she saves in old envelopes.
In winter, they simmer on the stove,
filling the windows with earthy steam.

Sometimes, when she walks between
the rows of laundry on the line,
she lays her cheek against a worn-out sheet.

Sometimes, of an evening,
she goes down to the creek bank
and whispers his name to the water.