

The Spinster Widow

By Joe Reynolds

Her funeral eyes, buried and burned,
bear an embarrassed cross, heavy on crushed shoulders.
They said she was fat,
at a time when it was considered ostentatious to be fat,
'Where did that come from? Answer me that.
More than her fair share of rations.'
A coat, stretched on its button,
shoes, sensibly flat.

They said,
she had taken her comfort
under the counter, with belly pork,
on top of her eggs and rashers,
and cut her hair short,
tar and feather styled,
to save them the trouble,
the prattling scale-scraped wives.

She smells of lavender water and milk, pushes a perambulator,
stoops self-conscious in widow's weeds,
leans forward, blows a kiss and smiles.
And it is assumed, but not witnessed, gets one back.