

The Great Chief

One Voice One Identity

Who is this great Chief with the fire burning inside?
So singularly minded, focused, a heart full of pride
Legend has it she is ten feet tall
A leader of Nations the leader of us all

She is like the mountains, strong, permanent always there when we need her
She is the streams that feed us teeming with life, with eyes that glow like an ember
She is the birds that soar aloft free of earth's pull, always full of life and song
She is the animals that feed us and keep us strong

She is in the cry of the loon which could be heard from across the lake
She is the canoe which glides slowly past with the setting sun rippling in the reflection of its wake
In the distance rays of smoke could be seen rising through the branches of a towering spruce tree
She is the voice crying out in the wilderness, "Oh Great Spirit, Great Spirit, why can't they hear me?"

On bended knee the great Chief gestured upwards with both her hands raised in the air
Do they not know what I am trying to do and do they not care?
I see in my vision a great Nation of Métis peoples built on a foundation of humility, pride and respect
A Nation that will lift us out of despair and a life of pain and regret

One Nation of Métis people united across this great land
One not fettered with borders, titles and bands
Our collective voices will rise into the heavens and be heard by the Great Spirit as one
Only then will I rest, my work here will be done

The great chief grew silent now as she stared at the fire
Her thoughts were hers now, the smoke swirling around her rising above ever higher
Now she rests, tomorrow she will rise again and fight for her people of that there is no doubt
She fights for our survival, one voice, one identity, one nation which is what this is all about.

Written for Grand Chief Mary Lou Parker with great respect and humility
John Gervais

