

We Are All Treaty

I am the bison. I roam the prairies.
There are no borders. Just grass that grows
We get chased off cliffs to provide food shelter and clothes
Our strong bones and muscles make tools and threads
I am a bison and I roam the prairies, as I already said.

We are bison we get killed faster than we live
We drink clean water that the ponds have to give
My mother was killed by pale aliens with lots of hair
They don't give thanks, offerings and prayers.

I am the bison now I live inside thorny metal fences
I feel trapped.
I don't share land with these bounty hunters with no senses.
I miss the fresh water that used to be here.
I am a bison and I miss my connection with the people.

*We are First Nations. Some of us Métis.
Wanuskewin. We are all treaty.
This is our homeland. We share it with you.
Long as the grass is green and the sky is blue.*

I am a baby in a moss bag
And I am cradles in my nikawy arms
In here, I am secure and safe
In winter, this moss bag is warm
I hear Cree all over the village.
We sit around the crackling fire.
The elders are telling stories.
Nistes and nimis I admire.
I see a kihew high in the sky.
Iskwewak tan the hide.
Napewak hunt mooswak.
And elders smudge with pride.

I am an awasis taken away to residential school
Awina am I without my Cree language?
What is a 10 year old to do without a wahkomakanak?
Taniwa can I run away?
Why do I get abused for speaking nehiyaw?
These clothes are not who I am.
These prayers are not my way.
Oh manitou, I do not want to stay.

I am an elder. My body is scarred by pain.
I still smudge with pride, makes me strong again.
I stay balanced in body, spirit and mind.
In my stories, our language survives.
Guidance for the young I can provide.

*We are First Nations. Some of us Métis.
Wanuskewin. We are all treaty.
This is our homeland. We share it with you.
Long as the grass is green and the sky is blue.*

I am the river- beautiful and bountiful
Filling the bellies of young and old
Boats and canoes travel my streams
Along my shores stories are told

Sipi Niya
Lonely and hurt
Taniwa are the animals who came to my shores?
Tante amisk. Tante mahikan.
I don't see mink or martin any more.

I am the river- I am controlled
I go under bridges. I am constrained.
I smell like plastic. I'm not respected
But I still overflow when it rains.

*We are First Nations. Some of us Métis.
Wanuskewin. We are all treaty.
This is our homeland. We share it with you.
Long as the grass is green and the sky is blue.*