

Half-Breed Worries by Peter Morin, 2003

When I was young, my grandmother gave me a story,  
She held my hand, and told me  
Who I was, she looked into my eyes and I believe  
She saved my soul that day, told me, you are Tahltan.  
This is the word, remember who you are.

Sometimes, I believe the lies.

She told me  
It was all right,  
As long as her kids had one father  
Then it didn't matter.

Sister,  
Sister says, 'she deserved it'.  
Sister,  
Sister says, 'I can't be around her for more than two days'.  
Brother,  
Brother says, 'could you please tell your mother to mind her own business'.

The price of the need for a father  
For half white children.

This is the price of  
One little,  
Two little,  
Three little  
Four little half-breeds.

My Half Breed worries are  
a Father who is a white man  
who fell in love with a brown woman.

When I looked in the mirror  
I saw the words that didn't add up.

I saw my white father,  
I saw my brown mother.

When I looked in the mirror, I saw the stones that she left at parties, about how my father congratulated her on giving him one the right colour, or how the hospital wouldn't allow her to leave with me because I wasn't supposed to be her kid. I saw the words that he never said, about someone needing to pay, and this meant he didn't need to be around.

When I looked in the mirror I saw my white father and I saw my brown mother.

I saw the stories of my creation with a hockey puck, tall hair and a slim waist, 1960's White brown love, up north style. Something like, the sister of a brother, of a cousin, or just someone who needs a little warmth on a - 40 night.

This is my creation, I saw this in the mirror, and I thought of me and my sisters and brother, I thought of these half-breed children as humor in the lightest of situations, and humor in the darkest. I thought of these half breed children, as an after thought, Indian and white...

She was always dropping things,

Leaving behind remembrances, so much that I decided that this is what Indian means...and I left behind as much as I could.

I have a story.

I have broken hearted half-breed worries that walk in the world.

I never wanted to be more than I was.

I never left myself behind, never left the words that would mark this skin.

I never was given reason to believe that I needed these more gifts  
From a black Crow Creator,  
Or more words weighted down with colonizer salt.

But grandma, I said,  
What about my white father,  
And my half-breed skin?  
She said, we are made from stories,  
And wind pushed from black feathered wings...never forget the word.

These are my Half-breed worries.

My creator

My creator is a big black crow

My creator gave me river stones, and wind, a mother and a father,  
and a way to walk  
in this world

Remember the words  
My Half-breed worry words,  
The words that you can call me...  
Indian,  
Half-breed,  
Breed,

Mutt,  
Tahltan.