

Poetry by Wilson Elijah McCreary

Thinking about Indians

The Odd One

The crew stands together
 the owner contemplates the five of us
 from little to first or fore
 and me, the one to himself
 standing away from the others
 as perhaps a leader
 or, more likely, one
 who is too odd
 to stick close to the crowd.
 We work well together though
 grasping in opposition
 and moving things in a way
 unimaginable to such as
 horse or unicorn.
 There've been good times and bad
 my owner with his other crew,
 the left, pressing strings
 as we on the right pluck
 or both crews pressing
 soft, tender, willing flesh
 caressing exciting, secret places.
 Then there's the bad
 our middle guy pecked to the bone
 by a mad chicken
 at the tender age of four
 me losing my nail countless times
 always growing one back
 looking a little different
 but good as new.
 It's dicey for the left guys
 when we're made to hold
 knife or hammer
 owner slicing or
 banging away at things.
 We'd all like to tell him
 to be more careful
 but there are even more
 scars and lost nails
 on the left
 than here on the right.
 It's like people,
 separated, then pressed together
 they often make music and love
 and often try to kill each other.

"Cowboys and Indians"
 an essential part of life
 as a child.
 and I found out later
 and was proud to proclaim
 that my Mother's Mother
 was half Cherokee
 and I wanted that
 to be who I was.

Even later I discovered
 that to live
 in this part of the country,
 their country,
 my Indian ancestors
 had to hide
 and that I had enough
 of the blood
 to have turned to ash
 in the ovens
 of that little man
 with the funny mustache
 had he won the world.

In Mom's family picture
 they look so sad.
 I've been to Oklahoma
 the supposed end
 of the trail of tears
 and been brought to tears
 on seeing women
 a waitress or some other
 who look like my Mother
 and my Grandmother
 maybe Indian
 maybe not
 in this so-called
 melted nation.
 Me with a double dose
 of Scotch/Irish
 some Dutch and/or German
 native American
 and of course
 that black woman
 in Africa
 from 200,000 years ago
 Grandmother to us all.

I'm settling on
 just not knowing
 who I am.
 There are so many of me.

Wilson E. McCreary is a semi-retired computer systems engineer. Connected to Jung through poets, lots of reading and conversation, Wilson writes a little poetry, makes a little music and talks to his archetypes—his people inside—when they will.