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Iron Eyes Cody

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Tiffany Midge

Iron Eyes Cody

An Indian famous for his rainwater eyes,
blazed through Wolf Point Main in a shiny white Cadillac,
smiling & waving like President Nixon,
tossing Tootsie Pops like the Pope might toss rosaries.
Brown-skinned kids snatching a little of their own
Independence Day glory,
congregated the street, abandoned their mothers,
fled toward the famous Indian seen on TV.

All my life the planet has cried for a savior.
My grandmothers ensure their P.O. boxes in heaven,
spend their last few years preaching me the gospel,
their mouths deliver a tongue of living testimony,
proof that *their* grandmothers prayed to the wrong spirit.

Who was Black Elk? Who was Wovoka?

Armageddon lays heavy in the tallest of steeples,
in the grandest of state capitol suites,
in the steam that curls around an old one's pipe.

Iron Eyes Cody consecrated my first communion,
on the day America celebrated liberty from a monarch,
during a year when a war was being forgotten,
in a time when TV was more important
than kings,
than grandmothers,
than preachers & prophets,
than politicians,
than real Indians.