

“Life and Death in *The Orenda*” and “Here We Shall Remain”

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Abstract

Aboriginal relations are explored in one essay and one play. Joseph Boyden's *The Orenda* contains graphic depictions of violence which proved divisive for readers and critics alike. However, these depictions are both accurate and significant to not just the contents of the novel but to violence in the world. Ernest Becker's ideas on death anxiety and culture are used to explain the violence as ritual, allowing readers to understand the nature of violence between cultures and to take away positive messages from Boyden's novel. In a play about Tecumseh, taking place during the War of 1812, issues aboriginals struggle with today are reminiscent of issues aboriginals experienced over 200 years ago. The question remains: how far have we come in over two centuries of shared history? Moving forward, aboriginals and non-aboriginals must learn to live together otherwise the consequences can be destructive and potentially fatal to individuals and entire cultures.

Keywords: Aboriginal issues; ritual; cultural studies; Ernest Becker; Tecumseh; violence

Dedication

To Bonita and Kenneth Flekke, my loving (and very patient) parents who tried and tried to teach me that violence is not the answer (among other things). I paid attention. Sort of.

And, to my wife, Sarah, who is just as if not more patient than my parents.

I'm not sure where I would be without you three but I know it wouldn't be here.

I love you.

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Life and Death in *The Orenda*: Looking Behind The Violence

Joseph Boyden's *The Orenda* is a cultural tale told at a time when the world needs to experience just such a tale. The violence in this cultural tale has become a controversial topic: some of the criticism is that this is pornographic violence (Canada Reads, 2014) or that it reinforces stereotypes of the 'savage' Indians (King, 2013). When we view these violent scenes using Ernest Becker's ideas on death and culture, we arrive at a much different conclusion. To begin, I will first introduce the topic of blame before I look at the descriptions of the violence in the novel. I will then discuss how contemporary readers might interpret these scenes and explore why they might interpret them this way. After bringing in Becker's ideas, best expressed in *Escape from Evil*, I consider the violent actions in their cultural context. This approach should allow the contemporary reader to reconsider violence in contemporaneous social contexts and interactions. If I am successful, hopefully many readers will conclude that there must be an alternative to violence.

The Orenda is a tale of what happens when cultures meet. It is most importantly a cautionary tale about the ensuing interactions between and among those cultures. In the book, tensions are rising between the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat cultures, while the French culture is attempting settlement of a foreign land. All three of these cultures interact in this drama in the early 17th Century. This tale reminds us of what history has demonstrated time and again: these interactions are often turbulent and sometimes end in violence, bloodshed and attempted domination by one culture over the other cultures involved. The scenes in *The Orenda* where violence occurs are particularly memorable for their detailed descriptions and intimate nature. The tale is told from the Wendat perspective and we are given accounts of torture inflicted upon them and the missionaries working with them. Eventually, we participate in similar fates inflicted upon the Haudenosaunee prisoners, from the perspective of the Wendat narration.

I will use the different narrative perspectives of the novel to explore the violence presented therein; how the different characters interpret and respond to the violence they see and experience demonstrates various responses readers may have when encountering the novel. In order to explain the violence using Ernest Becker's ideas I will explore how we commonly misunderstand violence. Misunderstanding violence does not provide adequate solutions to violent situations. We cannot separate the violence within

the novel from the violence of the outside world; our exploration and understanding of violence will have consequences extending beyond the novel. The first aspect of our misunderstanding of violence involves the idea of blame.

BLAME

When approaching culture and cultural practices it is important to remain as judgment-free as possible, no matter which perspective we are approaching from. As the unnamed narrator tells us at the beginning of the novel in the chapter titled *One*, “it is tempting to place blame” (Boyden 3). We can blame the Haudenosaunee for the torture they perform, the raids they perform, the mayhem they cause; we can equally blame the Wendat for the very things we have blamed the Haudenosaunee for, thereby allowing ourselves the freedom to label both cultures as savage; at the same time we can blame the French or even all of Europe for being invaders and for spreading their cultural ideas and practices like a plague. It is not just tempting to place blame, it is easy. What is it about blame that is so tempting?

We gain very little in the way of progress when we fixate on placing blame yet blame has become an important, powerful human instrument. What is blame exactly? When is blame used? How does blame benefit us? These are questions to consider for understanding the personal and social role blame plays in human interactions. Once we understand the nature and implications of blame, we can hopefully find an alternative which does not contribute to the reciprocation of violence.

What is blame? Blame is when we assign responsibility for a fault. When a fault occurs, we are left with the problem of what do we do now? It is common to wish for retribution or punishment. Our penal system is full of people who have committed wrongdoings and are paying a price for those wrongdoings. We have assigned responsibility to those individuals (blamed them) and are seeking either our retribution or their punishment. In response to the question of what now, we seek and create avenues of retribution and punishment. Why do we use blame to this end though?

Psychologically, blame is comforting. When we are not the responsible party, we do not have to feel any of the guilt or shame associated with wrongdoing. Sam Keen notes that “to blame is to deny both one's responsibility and one's potency” (21). When someone commits a wrongdoing against us, blaming that person allows us to commit similar or even worse wrongdoing against them. We deny the role we play by blaming

the other party. Blame gives us permission to do exactly what we did not want to happen to us in the first place, or to commit even worse atrocities in return. When a fault has occurred, we are motivated to place blame as a tension reducing strategy, alleviating the stress from the initial wrongdoing. But what do we get when we continue to blame each other?

Keen observed that “blame produces blame” (21). If violence is committed against us, we can blame the perpetrator or perpetrators for that violence and then commit violence in return. It does not stop there. The previously mentioned perpetrator can blame us for the reciprocated violence, making them our new victim. They can, in turn, feel justified in committing more violence. This cycle is endless but it does not have to be. The cycle can be broken through one of two means: either one party involved is annihilated and can no longer return violence, or both parties decide to stop. If one party is annihilated then a third party may get involved and blame whichever party survived, thus allowing them to enter the cycle in place of the annihilated culture.

The first option does not guarantee a discontinuation of violence. The second option might be a better choice. If all parties involved consciously decided to stop committing violence, and if those parties followed through on their decisions, we will, ideally, have no more violence between cultures. In other words, we could stop blaming each other and hurting each other in return. As the unnamed narrator of *One* tells us about placing blame: “loss should never be weighed in this manner” (Boyden 3). How then do we measure loss?

Is there a chart or diagram which will easily portray the quantity of loss which occurred? Must we factor in some value system to account for the quality of loss which occurred? Or is it only important that loss has occurred and we need not measure or describe and evaluate it? If we spend our time measuring loss, trying to score it somehow, and compare it to some other loss, then we have not really accomplished much. Time might be better spent understanding each other and seeking a mutually respectful outcome when cultures collide. The lesson is clear: if we do not stop committing violent acts, then no matter who writes the history books of the future, the world will have nothing more than a detailed catalogue of human brutality.

Keen argues that “[h]ealing begins when we cease playing the blame game, when we stop assigning responsibility for war to some mysterious external agency and

dare to become conscious of our violent ways” (91). Accepting our own responsibility is the key to ending violence and allowing healing to begin. Our unnamed narrator in the novel states that “[i]t’s unfair, though, to blame only the crows, yes? It’s our obligation to accept our responsibility in the whole affair” (Boyden 153). This is the first step in ending violence between individuals and between cultures. If we continually focus on the other, or the enemy, then we neglect our responsibility, our potency, in keeping the cycle of violence in motion; if we focus on ourselves instead, we can attempt to end the violence on our part of the cycle, ideally stopping the motion, or at least setting the stage for this to happen. I will now look at the torture scenes themselves, to get a sense for the type of violence we should avoid.

TORTURE SCENES

The torture scenes in the novel are graphic. I hope to demonstrate here that the torture is more than just graphic violence: it is ritual violence. Senseless violence serves no purpose other than being an end in and of itself. Torture as ritual has its own method and order, its own significance and has implications for the future of the society. The torture in the novel is different from random mayhem. First, I will go over some details of the torture scenes and then I will discuss those scenes as ritual.

The chapter titled *Caressing* is Bird’s detailed account of the torture inflicted on the Haudenosaunee captives. These descriptions are what contemporary readers must reconcile themselves with in order to understand the anti-violence message of the novel. If we cannot come to terms with these actions and accept them as the characters of the novel do, then we are less likely to move past cycles of violence and blame in our personal lives and, socially, in the world.

During the torture, we are told how the captives are forced to walk through fires while their legs are stabbed with burning sticks. After “they’ve made enough passes that they’re having real trouble walking” (Boyden 272) Bird asks them “to lie down on hot ashes that have been spread at either end of the longhouse” (272-73). Bird then describes how the burning backs of the captives stink. Bird proceeds “to break each of his [the captive’s] fingers and then, using a rock, the bones of his hands” (273). Bird takes “a burning stick again and insert[s] it in his ear” (273).

At this point in the torture, some of the women are invited to join in: they “wrap each of his wrists with leather cords that they rapidly pull back and forth until the skin

beneath them ruptures" (273). The captive is beginning to lose consciousness now so "they revive him with some cold water" (273). When they have done all of this to their first captive, they move on to their older captive. They are worse to this captive because he remains quiet throughout the burning sticks and hot ash bed.

Bird tells readers that they "are particularly cruel in [their] breaking of his hands" (273). Bird inserts a burning stick into his ear and still the older captive does not react. Bird uses a clamshell to cut off two of his fingers, then, to prevent the captive from bleeding to death, Bird cauterizes the wound by coating "the bloody nubs with burning pitch" (273). The captive continues to remain quiet. Wendat members then line up to cut the captives' arms, legs, chests and stomachs. One of the captives has his genitals burned by an "extremely focused woman" using "a red-hot brand" (273).

One captive's chest is bleeding so they pour burning pitch over it to cauterize it. One captive has become too weak to walk around so they carry him from participant to participant, "pausing to give others the chance to take more vengeance on him" (275). As this captive nears an older woman she begins to stitch a "gaping wound across his stomach" because he is "responsible for killing [her] favoured child" and she does not want him "to bleed to death just yet" (275).

By now, Bird states that his people's resolve is weakening as the captives have neither screamed out in pain nor begged for mercy. Bird observes that the "captives look more like skinned bears than men" (276). As the captives are prepared for their death, a young warrior pours scalding water over their heads and other warriors insert the burning hot "brands into the two men's orifices and when they still don't cry out, the warriors pierce the men's eyes" (276). Bird's warriors then "use their sharpest knives to scalp the hair from the captive's heads, then pour burning pitch onto them" and eventually club their heads to finish them off.

This is a gruesome selection of quotes from a gruesome chapter. The detailed torture, quoted above, is more than random violence. The torture is part of a ritual the participants call *caressing*. I will first discuss how contemporary readers may react to these quotes and this scene from the novel. Then, to understand the torture as caressing, I will provide a brief introduction and summary to Ernest Becker's ideas. Once I have done that, I will explore the different characters' reactions to and observations of the torture scenes and then share sections from the torture scenes themselves which I

think contribute to understanding this violence as a ritual instead of mere savagery.

REACTIONS TO TORTURE IN THE ORENDA

The contemporary reader might interpret these scenes as brutal or senseless savagery, a sort of meaningless evil; the reader may perceive these scenes as humiliating or even as perverse entertainment. Readers interpreting *The Orenda*'s violence as such are in good company. Stephen Lewis, of The Stephen Lewis Foundation, spoke about the violence in *The Orenda* while participating in CBC Radio's *Canada Reads 2014*: he said that the violence was "so extreme" that he wanted to refer to it as "torture as pornography". He felt that readers would be "deeply unnerved by the explicit nature of the torture" and would not focus on the message of the novel. He called it a missed opportunity to raise awareness about aboriginal issues such as pipelines, land claims and the history of residential schools. Lewis then made reference to aboriginal critics of the book who shared similar opinions.

Hayden King, Assistant Professor of Politics and Indigenous Governance at Ryerson University in Toronto, Ontario, is one such aboriginal critic. King, writing for *Muskrat Magazine*, describes *The Orenda* as an alibi for colonialism. King's focus was on Christophe Crow, who King believes to be the main character of the novel. King describes the book as being about "Indian savages" and "do-good Jesuits and the inevitability (even desirability) of colonization". After this, King reinforces his stance that the book is degrading to aboriginals by saying that the novel is "where violence and torture is both the exclusive domain of the Indians and endemic in their societies since time immemorial. The inevitable conclusion is that Indians were really just very violent." King's reading concludes that *The Orenda* is "a difficult book to read. At least it will be for many Native peoples. For Canadians, *The Orenda* is a colonial scribe and moral alibi." King focused his argument on colonization and misrepresentation of the Haudenosaunee. What could have contributed to King's and Lewis's reactions to the violence?

What does torture mean to the contemporary reader? When we explore this we will hopefully have a better understanding of the forementioned reactions. For many contemporary readers, perhaps the most readily available source of information on torture is the Abu Ghraib scandal. In 2003, the United States army was involved in torturing, humiliating, raping and killing prisoners in the Abu Ghraib prison. These human

rights violations were performed by military personnel and members of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. Explicit photos were released cataloging the torture and its consequences. The combination of the pictures and the descriptions provided to the general public contributed to the deeply unnerving realization that torture was not simply a possibility but a brutal reality. Furthermore, it was not some mysterious bad-guy, driven by evil plans, committing the torture; it was being carried out by American soldiers, presumably the good-guys in the good vs. bad dichotomy. Abu Ghraib remained in the media for years while many were looking for someone to blame or for some explanation. Nonetheless, torture continued in many parts of the world even as the Abu Ghraib scandal continued. So, the impact of Abu Ghraib was not to eliminate torture. Perhaps its true impact is the residual emotional effects that the photos and descriptions of torture left imprinted on readers and listeners worldwide.

Again, and sadly, Abu Ghraib is not the only place known for torture, before or after its occurrence. According to the Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT), "Torture has been called the 20th century epidemic. Amnesty International estimates there are more than 90 countries in the world that systematically practice torture" (*Canadian Centre* 2014). Contemporary societies are no strangers to torture. The CCVT provides information about and services for survivors from all over the world. The Centre describes torture and its implementation: "A fundamental characteristic of torture and ill-treatment is that it is an integral part of the institutional structure of many states. Contemporary warfare has increasingly become a matter of insurgency and counter-insurgency, with the result that governments and security forces respond to political dissent using torture and state terror as instruments of political strategy" (*Canadian Centre* 2014). With the topic of torture readily available, it is easy for contemporary readers of *The Orenda* to react strongly to the violence carried out in the novel. I would like to draw the contemporary reader away from this conception of torture and toward understanding the ritualistic ceremony of caressing, which, hopefully, will be viewed as separate from torture today. The ceremonial caressing must be understood in its social context in order for readers to make fair assessments of the novel. To do this I will provide a brief introduction to Becker's ideas about death anxiety.

ERNEST BECKER'S DEATH ANXIETY AND THE RITUAL OF CARESSING

The most important aspect of the human condition for Becker was dealing with death anxiety. Becker believed that humans are uniquely aware of their imminent

demise. Not only are we aware of our demise but our creativity allows us to become anxious about death, to worry about it. The terror of dying is so overwhelming we are motivated to alleviate this anxiety. Alleviating this anxiety means finding a way to transcend death. Mortals cannot realistically transcend death but we can symbolically transcend death. Becker describes this motivation when he states that “man’s innate and all-encompassing fear of death drives him to attempt to transcend death through culturally standardized hero systems and symbols” (*Escape* xvii).

In the end, the symbols do not matter so much as culture itself. Culture is inherently an immortality project. Becker notes that “it is culture itself that embodies the transcendence of death in some form or other, whether it appears purely religious or not” (*Escape* 4). Symbols and hero systems are central aspects of culture that can be quite complex and hold great significance. Simply put, for the purposes of this paper: culture alleviates our death anxiety. Our problem should be resolved, or at least reduced to manageable levels, at this point. However, what happens when our culture meets another culture? What happens when that culture does not share the same ideas and practices as ours? This culture is a threat to our culture. Our culture is a death denying construct and a different death denying construct threatens ours. We may feel the need to defend ourselves and our death denying system. This potential threat rekindles the overwhelming terror we try to protect ourselves from: the terror of death. This is what we see play out in *The Orenda*.

The Haudenosaunee and Wendat are attempting to overcome their death anxiety when they battle each other, and most importantly when they caress each other. The caressing must be understood for what it is: a ritual. Each aspect of the caressing ceremony is ritualized and each participant, whether ‘victim’ or ‘perpetrator’, plays a significant role. All participants are vital for the ritual to have purpose. When we see culture as a death denying system and have gained some insight into motivations for cultural clashes, we perhaps can come to terms with the violence. To understand the violence as caressing and not as senseless bloodlust, we must first explore what ritual is and why we use ritual.

Ritual is when actions are performed in a prescribed order for a specific purpose. Rituals do not have to be religious. For Becker, “ritual is a technique for giving life” (*Escape* 6). Not only are rituals a chance for rebirth or renewal but they have a much greater power: “by means of the techniques of ritual men imagined that they took firm

control of the material world, and at the same time transcended that world by fashioning their own invisible projects which made them supernatural, raised them over and above material decay and death" (*Escape* 7). Ritual does not just give life, it allows mortals to feel as though they have control over something they ultimately have no control over, life itself. All mortals will die and decay, ritual allows mortals the opportunity through illusion to control this fate. Humankind will continue wanting to have control over life and death and rituals are used to do exactly that.

To understand the caressing ritual we turn to the character's descriptions of the ceremony and explore their motivations for participation. Christophe Crow offers a unique perspective to readers. On one hand, he offers a perspective condemning the practices, much as the contemporary reader may, yet on the other hand he offers a Beckerian insight into the context and meaning of caressing. Christophe is clear about his distaste, which we will look at, but interestingly his tone changes abruptly as he explains his perspective and the practice itself to Gabriel.

CHRISTOPHE'S UNDERSTANDING OF CARESSING

Christophe begins with his realization that "the Huron are bringing back prisoners and will soon partake of their brutal ceremony" (Boyden 256). He then describes to Gabriel that "[t]hese people are extremely imaginative in their torturing" (256). He does not think highly of these practices. However, this is just how Christophe initially describes the caressing. The interesting turn in Christophe's thinking is when his perspective shifts to acknowledge the reality that this kind of violence is not unique to the aboriginal cultures, in fact, it is closer to home than Gabriel, and the reader, may consider.

Christophe acknowledges that the imaginative brutality of the Wendat is "as imaginative as any inquisitor ever was. Maybe more so" (256). Christophe notes that "[t]here's nothing random in their practice. Everything is intentional. This is one of their highest ceremonies" (256). He understands the ritualistic nature of the practice; he understands that it is not random and senseless, that it has meaning. When asked why they perform these ceremonies Christophe replies: "Why does the Spanish Inquisition do what it does?...Why does our own Church burn witches at the stake? Why did our own crusaders punish the Moors so exquisitely?" (256) Christophe has an awareness that his own culture is guilty of torture practices. This allows him a more universal and less judgmental view on the violence committed by human to human; this allows him to see

the violence in its context and to understand the motivations for such violence.

Christophe understands the value of the violent practices. He provides the reader a Beckerian interpretation of the caressing. Christophe explains to Gabriel why humans torture each other and the explanation reads as though it comes from Becker himself:

“Of course it’s easy to say that we mete out punishment to those who are an abomination in God’s eyes...But it’s more than that, isn’t it? I think we don’t just allow torturers but condone them as a way to excise the fear we all have of death. To torture someone is to take control of death, to be the master of it, even for a short time” (256). The purpose of torture is to overcome the fear of death. For however long the caressing ceremony lasts, the participants are masters of death. They have achieved the ultimate goal we all wish for when confronting our death anxiety.

SNOW FALLS UNDERSTANDING OF CARESSING

Snow Falls also holds an anti-violence perspective on caressing. However, Snow Falls does not offer us the same anti-violent perspective as Christophe does. Christophe understands the cultural significance of the practice as well as the universal human practice of torture, whereas Snow Falls sees the warring cultures as one; Christophe believes it is a savage act and Snow Falls acknowledges it as a ritual. As Snow Falls observes the beginning of the ceremony, she begins to see the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat as one, recognizing their similarities while the thin line of their differences blurs, then fades away.

Snow Falls’s thoughts regarding the caressing are clear from both the language she uses to refer to it and her hopes that it does not last long: “I wonder if they’ll all be tortured together or one by one. I hope it is together, for I don’t want to go through days of this. I secretly believe no one else does, either” (Boyden 268). This is an important distinction to make, to refer to what is occurring or about to occur as torture instead of caressing. Recall that Bird makes the same distinction when speaking about the *torture* of living with the unavenged deaths of his family versus speaking of the *caressing* of the captives. Not only does Snow Falls refer to the ritual as torture but she also shares with readers her desire for it to end quickly. She does not want to endure days of witnessing and hearing the torturing of the captives, who would? She hopes they are tortured together instead of one at a time so that the ritual may end quickly. Furthermore, she considers the possibility that nobody wants this torturing to last for days, the possibility

that she is not alone in her distaste for the process. It is important to note that Snow Falls does not condemn the torturing outright. She has accepted that it will happen. In later paragraphs she understands that her people have performed these same rituals on Wendat captives. Yet, she is far from approving the practice.

Snow Falls is not comfortable looking at the captives knowing what their fate is. She does not want to witness the violence and death, and she considers being far away from the torturing when it begins: "I don't want to watch him die. I don't want to watch any of them die. I don't like this at all and I think that when it begins I'll go away, far enough away I don't hear any of it" (270-71). She takes a particular liking to the youngest captive. She eventually asks Bird to spare his life and bring him into the family. Bird agrees to this request because he says he cannot turn down a request from his daughter. This request by Snow Falls is one step away from the cycle of violence between the the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat, which has been going on since Snow Falls was a child, and much longer before that.

Snow Falls is already against violence by the time the Wendat prepare for their caressing ritual. What she observes during the preparation strengthens her perspective against violence while moving her toward an idea of togetherness. She describes to readers how the Wendat "all praise these Haudenosaunee for their bravery thus far and for their excellent singing" (270). The captives are not demeaned, belittled or made to be less than human in any way; the captives, the enemy, are not dehumanized as described in Keen's *Faces of the Enemy*. In fact, the opposite occurs in *The Orenda*. The captives are brought into and accepted into the captor's culture before being tortured and killed. As the captives are being brought into the Wendat group they are held in high regard: "The warrior is called exceptional, and people take turns praising his great skills" (Boyden 270). A great amount of respect is shown the captives, as opposed to Abu Ghraib where very little to no respect was shown for those captives.

The amount of respect for the enemy captives culminates with Snow Falls no longer seeing the two cultures as separate, and indeed the Wendat no longer treat the Haudenosaunee as separate during this part of the ceremony. The captives are invited to dance along with the Wendat and eventually they are part of the crowd. Snow Falls is overwhelmed by the beauty of this scene, she says "I don't want this to end" (271). There is no visible difference between the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat in this moment; there are no captives and captors. There is only dancing and togetherness.

Snow Falls describes it as follows: "The feeling in this place is that we are all of the same woman, Aataentsic, the flawed one, and that we have all tried to do as well as we could, but some have failed, and some have been unlucky, and some now control their destiny, at least for a short while, and some no longer do" (271).

I consider this last sentence to be a judgement-free observation and appreciation of the human condition. Snow Falls does not condemn either party involved in the conflict. She does not condemn the French missionaries and their colonization or the unintended consequences of that attempt (i.e. disease). She does not condemn the practice of torture. Snow Falls eloquently states that everyone comes from the same place and everyone is trying to do their best in this world. This type of compassionate statement and the understanding behind it are something we can benefit from. But this moment is short lived. Once the captives have finished the ceremony, it is time for the caressing ritual to begin. What we need to keep in mind is the respect shown leading up to the ritual, because this respect is what separates the caressing from senseless torture.

This is not to say that the practice of caressing is something to praise or that it is valuable enough to continue. Rather, it is a practice which held tremendous value for the cultures involved. Until we respectfully understand each aspect of the practice, I do not think we can properly replace the practice with something less violent. Now that we have seen these characters describe their thoughts about the caressing ritual, we can look at what information we have to understand the practice as ritual.

BIRD'S UNDERSTANDING OF CARESSING AND HOW IT IS RITUALISTIC VIOLENCE

To understand the torture violence of the novel as ritual, there are some aspects of the process I will investigate. I will discuss these aspects here before moving on to understanding the torture from the captives' perspective. A great deal of thought, effort and preparation go into torturing the captives. The Wendat do not randomly take Haudenosaunee warriors and decide to maim them until finally clubbing them to death. The ritualistic aspects are present from preparation until the death of the captives.

Bird's account in the chapter *Caressing* provides details of the ritualistic aspects of the practice. Bird states that the "prisoners must live until morning light so the sun can bear witness to their death, as is the custom" (Boyden 272). Bird and his warriors must

also “make them cry out for mercy during the night or else [they’ll] certainly face misfortune in any future battles with the Haudenosaunee” (272). The torture is a custom for both cultures, and the captives must beg for mercy before the sun rises or the implications for the captors are serious: future battles will not be in their favour if the captives do not beg for mercy. It is considered bad behaviour allowing the captives to die in the night: “[t]o allow them to die before the sun’s face witnesses it is especially poor behaviour and will only invite bad luck upon our heads (276)”. Poor and inappropriate behaviour are big themes for the caressing ritual.

The Wendat are deeply invested in this practice because the stakes are so high. To ensure beneficial outcomes in future battles, rules are put in place for all Wendat whether they are participating or not. “[T]hose who’ve come to participate and to bear witness act in a calm and orderly fashion. There’ll be no drama or inappropriate behaviour” (273). The rules extend to how people behave when they are not near the captives or the longhouse where the caressing takes place, including sexual practices: “We’ll continue to practice restraint all night, and word’s gone out throughout the village that no one shall partake of sexual intercourse as a sign of respect for all involved” (273). The Wendat are expected to behave appropriately before and during the caressing because their future, their safety, is invested in the practice.

There are aspects of the final death of the captives which are ritualistic as well, and some of the Wendat behaviour could easily be interpreted by contemporary readers as poor or inappropriate. During the final moments of the captives’ lives, we learn a few of the reasons behind some of the gruesome actions performed. Bird watches as “young warriors make cuts in their own necks and line up below to allow some of the dead men’s blood to drip into their bodies” (277). The reason they do this is because “this way, they know the Haudenosaunee will never catch them by surprise” (277). This may not seem rational to contemporary readers but contemporary rationality is not what this ritual is about. There is a point when Snow Falls knows that she is getting near to her people, the Haudenosaunee, and she knows this because she can feel the proximity of her blood relatives (147-48). Blood in *The Orenda* has its own mystical powers and as such is important for the ritual of caressing.

The heart also has mystical significance. Bird observes some warriors “cut open the captives’ chests and remove the hearts. They will roast and eat these, thus acquiring their courage” (272). The Wendat perform some gruesome acts as the captives are

dying but these acts hold meaning for the Wendat beyond causing pain. Whether it is absorbing courage or being prepared for future ambushes, there are very specific reasons for performing these actions. From the preparation ceremony to the final moments of the captives' lives, the violence inflicted upon the captives is part of a cultural ritual. The purpose of that ritual is coping with death anxiety, on both individual and social levels.

Caressing, as a ritual for dealing with death anxiety, is different from senseless violence. We are given enough information in the novel to determine that caressing is separate from killing. Bird and Fox, warrior leaders of the Wendat, do not appear as the type of characters who enjoy random mayhem and senseless violence. Immediately following the caressing ritual, Bird asks Fox how he feels about caressing the captives. Fox's response to Bird may come as a surprise to readers who think the perpetrators of this torture enjoy torturing people: He shrugs and replies "Tired. It isn't something I've ever enjoyed much" (277). We know that Fox, a warrior and leader, does not enjoy the practice of caressing. We can consider the possibility then that he carries it out because of the significance it holds for his culture—that is, the significance the practice holds for his peoples' and his immortality project.

We have an earlier example of Bird and Fox killing Haudenosaunee without first torturing them. From the beginning of the novel, *A Man Should Feel Happy*, Bird asks Fox to kill women survivors and Fox kills them quickly. Fox slits their throats even though he is being told by other warriors to make it slow. This killing isn't about ritual and it isn't about pain, it is about killing those who will not survive for long, and the women are not tortured slowly to death. This killing scene is different from the caressing ritual but it is important to consider for understanding the type of violence involved in the ritual.

THE CAPTIVES'S UNDERSTANDING OF CARESSING

Now that I have explored the ritualistic nature of the torture, I can try to understand how the captives interpret the ritual and the roles they fill in the process. The captives are treated with a seemingly unusual amount of respect considering they are the enemy. The most notable example of this respect is Bird's voyage with the prisoners in the chapter *Serpent With A Lynx's Head*. Bird is transporting the prisoners, via canoe, to the Wendat village where they will be tortured and put to death. Bird considers the possibility that the prisoners would tip the canoe and try to drown themselves because Bird "would

certainly do the same. Drowning is far preferable to the alternative” (Boyden 259). To Bird’s surprise the prisoners go along peacefully, singing their songs. On the voyage along the river, Bird keeps looking for a specific rock wall with paintings on it.

Bird is bringing them to a place which holds great significance to him: the place “where [he] found [his] secret name” (260). Bird has a strong desire to share this place with the prisoners, he becomes anxious that he has not found the correct place: “For a few moments [he] [worries] this isn’t the location as [they] continue up the cliff. [He] [fears] looking weak and foolish” (260). Bird’s anxiety about sharing this special place with the prisoners is fascinating. Bird has a special connection to this place and when he visits it something mystical happens.

Bird traces his finger on the rock painting, then he places his “palm flat upon the rock, it feels as if [his] hand sinks into the stone, as if [he] [enters] another world through its hard shell” (260). Bird then tells readers that the “world [his] body’s entered is as real as this one, bathed in light” (260). Bird tries to share this transcendental moment with the prisoners. The prisoners do not share the experience and act awkwardly about it. But Bird still wanted to share this moment and this place with them, he just did not anticipate that they would not be able to share the experience when touching the rock.

When Tall Trees, one of Bird’s Wendat warriors, shares the experience and Bird observes this he cannot wait to return to Fox to tell him about it. Bird feels that Tall Trees is someone who “might one day be close to a son” (260), someone who he is “able to entrust with [his] life” (260). Bird is so overcome with joy about this whole scenario that he considers removing one of the prisoner’s bindings but decides it would not be a good idea. Bird demonstrates a great amount of respect for the prisoners by bringing them to this rock wall.

Prior to the caressing ceremony, Bird brings his captives to a place with special meaning to him. As the ceremony begins, we see the respect shown to the captives when they are invited to dance and sing with the Wendat. During the caressing, the captives are praised for their fortitude and their ability to continue singing and also to remain quiet. As the sun rises and the prisoners are put to death, Bird announces that “[t]hese two are the bravest men I have ever had the pleasure of meeting” (276). Bird does not have to treat the prisoners poorly. In fact, the opposite occurs.

In Sam Keen’s *Faces of the Enemy*, we are told about how the people we consider

our enemies are distorted in order for us to commit violence against them. In *The Orenda*, this distortion does not need to occur. In the novel, the enemies are welcomed into the community and then tortured and killed. Bird describes each captive as taking place of a lost loved one. Bird also brings them to his rock wall covered with paintings which hold special meaning to him. The prisoners are treated with respect throughout and their faces and image are not distorted in order to make the Wendat comfortable with hurting them. The prisoners are aware of the ceremony and what their immediate future will be and they accept their role.

One of the prisoners “urges those who reach out to stab his legs with burning sticks to do a good job, to make sure they amuse themselves as they take their time killing him” (Boyden 272). I believe the use of the word ‘urge’, instead of something like ‘taunt’, demonstrates the prisoner’s understanding of the ritual; I believe that this prisoner is aware of why he is being tortured and he accepts not just his fate but his chance to prove his worth, his heroism. Prior to and during the caressing, one prisoner continues to sing his death song as long as he can, without screaming or begging for mercy. The death song tells the story of his life. He is complimented for having a nice voice. He does not curse the Wendat.

Bird and others are impressed by the two prisoners. “The eldest asks to walk the length of the longhouse once more, and amazed, [they] allow him to” (274). One prisoner makes an attempt to burn the longhouse down and escape. Bird observes that there is nowhere for him to go and very little chance he will escape, he says “I continue to be impressed by his strength and now his cunning” (275). The prisoners are treated with a strange form of respect throughout the ritual, they are even complimented upon death. To have a better grasp of this practice we must consider our fourth, unnamed narrator.

UNNAMED NARRATOR COMMENTARY

There are four narrators of this novel, each offering a unique perspective on the action: Bird offers the Wendat perspective, Christophe the French missionary, Snow Falls the captured Haudenosaunee, and an unnamed observer looking down from the sky. I read their reactions to the violent action and gain some insight into the captives’ reactions through these narrators. The last unnamed narrator raises some interesting questions about the human condition which I will consider in relation to our

understanding of violence. This fourth narrator is sitting with Aataentsic. The narrator observes the action of the novel and interprets Aataentsic's reactions to those events.

The fourth narrator appears in four sections: *One*, *Two*, *Three* and the concluding paragraphs of the novel. The narrator introduces each section of the novel and then is the last narrator. I have covered the topic of blame above; other topics brought up by the unnamed narrator include our sense of time and the word, 'unclean'. Before I explore the significance and implications of this word I will discuss the idea of time as mentioned by our fourth narrator.

We are told in the beginning of the novel that "[T]his, on the surface, is the story of our past" (Boyden 3). Underneath the surface it is much more than that. On surface, it is the story of the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat, and the story of the beginning of the French settlement in what would become Canada; underneath, it is a story of the history of humanity and its relationship to violence—it is the same story that has been told throughout history books when groups change but their motivations remain the same. Whenever two cultures meet, there will be some change involved but that change does not have to be violent. That change does not have to end with the annihilation of one culture. Violence is an effective answer to resolving cultural differences, but it does not have to be an answer at all.

Becker explained both violence and evil through our motivation to deny our inevitable deaths. As, hopefully, demonstrated above, the violence in *The Orenda* has taught us more than the idea that those involved were uncivilized savages; hopefully, we can see our resemblance in the characters, and, if not in their violent actions, in their motivations behind these actions. Becker's argument about death denial applies to any culture anywhere at any time. It is an argument concerning the existential human condition and transcends cultural and individual differences. The problem of human violence does not arise because of an evil nature, but through a desire to have meaning and significance in an uncertain world where we are consciously aware of our imminent demise. I believe that this thought and the feelings behind it are what drives the violence of the novel more than revenge or necessity. This is one of the possible reasons why the unnamed narrator tells us that the novel is on the surface about their people's past.

Another important theme to focus on regarding the torture within the novel is the word 'unclean'. Our narrator relates the following: "And when they cawed that our magic

was unclean, we laughed, took a little offence, even killed a few of them and pulled their feathers for our hair. We lived on. But that word, unclean, that word, somehow, like an illness, like its own magic, it began to grow” (Boyden 3). When we stand in judgement of a group we are, in effect, handing down a sentence to that group. We do not call a practice ‘unclean’ because we approve of it, or find it useful or find it meaningful. We do so because we do not like it. Labelling something as bad or wrong does very little toward understanding what that something is.

When we refer to the caressing ritual as torture, or even “torture as pornography”, we are doing little more than referring to it as ‘unclean’. When the narrator says that their practices were unclean to the foreigners, the narrator means that the foreigners did not take the time to understand the rituals. They certainly did not suggest less violent rituals, they simply labeled them unclean and called the practitioners savages. Ironically, Christophe condemns the practice as vicious savagery while being fully aware of the similar practices of which his culture is guilty, as are cultures everywhere. Christophe is also unaware of the violence involved in absorbing another culture, as is his goal, and the violence of leaving large groups of individuals without social identity and isolated among foreigners in their homeland.

If the contemporary reader labels caressing as unclean then we lose something valuable from this novel. When we explore the practice, keeping in mind what Becker has taught us about living with the fear of dying, then we have an understanding of why the caressing ritual exists in the first place. From there, we can move toward finding less violent means of alleviating our death anxiety because we understand what the motivating force is. If we judge another culture and practice negatively, we are committing more violence, exactly what we should avoid when different cultures meet.

Whenever two cultures meet, some sort of change is inevitable. The change does not necessarily result in one culture becoming extinct. Sadly, the Wendat and Haudenosaunee did not find a respectful middle ground and the French settlers did not find a middle ground; just as today the Israel-Palestine conflict is not finding a middle ground, and Canada has the Truth And Reconciliation Commission to help deal with not finding a middle ground with the aboriginals in their past. Whether we are attempting to annihilate another culture or absorb another culture into our own, we are using violent means to ensure the continuation of our culture at any cost. It does not have to be this way.

The narrator of *Two*, sitting in the sky with Aataentsic, describes it as follows: "The world must change, though. This is no secret. Things cannot stay the same for long...new worlds are built as old ones fall apart" (Boyden 152). Whatever we think of change we know that it will happen. What causes problems for us is when the new world is being built violently and at the cost of the old world. The old world falling apart is one thing, the old world being torn apart, wiped out, or absorbed is an entirely different thing. The unnamed narrator does not tell us that the world must change through violence, just that it must change.

The Orenda is a story of that change occurring through violent means. As we try to survive, we are capable of committing great acts of evil. We cannot blame the other cultures involved and pretend that we are justified in our violence. "We all fight our own wars, wars for which we'll be judged...We all fight our own wars, so maybe it's best not to judge, considering it's rare we even know why we fight so savagely" (321). If we do not know why we fight so savagely then we should not judge other groups who fight just as savagely as we do. More importantly, the unnamed narrator states: "In times of war, and especially in the aftermath, the question she [Aataentsic] begs is the one each of us needs to ask: How do you keep going when all that you love has been lost" (321)? This is a hard question to answer but it is a question that should be considered, and answered. Violence will only create more loss for someone else, placing them in a similar or worse position than ourselves. As more cultures become extinct, with all that remains of their existence being labelled as artifacts stored in an anthropology museum, it becomes clear that violence is not the answer to this question.

When considering violence, and especially violence as exhibited in the caressing ritual, it is important to keep in mind that the fault is ours. The fault does not belong to a deity or even to human nature. The fault is actually the result of our attempt to deal with our anxiety. The unnamed narrator of *Two* relates a story about praying for a god to intervene and stop the disastrous clash between the Wendat and Haudenosaunee: "But Aataentsic only need remind us that humans, in all their many forms, are an unruly bunch, prone to fits of great generosity and even greater meting out of pain" (153).

To understand why societies are capable of causing violence and meting out great pain we will first look at ideas presented by Rene Girard, *The Scapegoat*, and Russel Jacoby, *Bloodlust: On the Roots of Violence from Cain and Abel to the Present*. These works will inform us on how we typically misunderstand violence by exploring the

roots of violence. Both arguments begin with the idea that violence arises from similarities not differences. We tend to believe that the threat of violence is when a stranger wishes to do us harm, Girard and Jacoby lead us to the uncomfortable conclusion that the stranger is not the most likely person to do us harm. In fact, the real danger is closer to home than we want to admit.

JACOBY ON THE FAMILIARITY OF VIOLENCE

For Jacoby, someone familiar to you is more likely to be a threat of violence than someone who is a stranger to you. Jacoby argues that throughout history violence between humans involves family, friends, neighbours, and community members. We should not fear groups we refer to as *others*. Using historical atrocities as examples, references we have all heard about or studied in school, Jacoby demonstrates to readers that our threats are closer to home than commonly believed.

Jacoby analyzes what we consider to be cultural clashes in history and shows us the reality behind our apparent opposing factions. He describes many situations the Jews have found themselves in throughout history. When he focuses on Germany leading up to World War II we begin to see what he means by similarities causing tension and violence instead of differences. He observes that the Jews in Germany during Hitler's rule required arm patches so they could be identified, in fact "[t]he German Jews were extraordinarily well assimilated and successful. They were the very opposite of outsiders...German anti-Semitism targeted neighbors, not strangers" (X-XI). Germany is not the only site in recent history to witness this scale with regard to mass killing.

Jacoby also discusses the wars in Bosnia and Rwanda, where two very similar groups tried to eradicate each other. The murdering between Serbians and Muslims was murdering between and amongst friends who had "lived together for centuries in Bosnia and had intermarried and worked together" (XI). Jacoby states that we commonly believe some foreigner is out there challenging our way of life when "[t]he truth is more unsettling. It is not so much the unknown that threatens us but the known" (IX). In Rwanda the idea that the groups were dissimilar is absurd: "Even to one another, Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda were not clearly distinguishable" (XI). We cannot argue that violence and hate arise from differences when our examples of violence and hate demonstrate the opposite.

"The German Christians and the German Jews, the Serbs and Muslims, the Iraqi

Sunni and the Shiites, the Hutus and the Tutsi knew each other well. Fratricide does not arise from a lack of understanding. Its origins may be just the opposite” (XI). Jacoby’s goal is for us to understand that similarities which are shared between individuals and among groups are the cause of tension, and this tension is what leads to violence. It is unsettling at first to consider that fratricide stems from understanding and not a lack of understanding. Jacoby states that “[w]e disdain and attack our brothers – our kin, our acquaintances, our neighbors – whom we know well, perhaps too well. We know their faults, their beliefs, their desires and we distrust them *because* of that” (IX-X). The problem is not that some *other* group is out there threatening our way of life, the problem is that people are too familiar with one another. This idea may seem fresh but it is not a new idea.

Jacoby states that “The literary and philosophical critic Rene Girard may also help illuminate the menace posed by the familiar...similarity leads to aggression and rivalry. Not differences but their absence is the danger” (XIII). Girard’s ideas center around something he calls *mimesis*. According to Girard, humans are imitative creatures. As we imitate each other and imitate each other’s desires we are put into conflict. This conflict continues as long as we continue to imitate each other’s desires, something we cannot help but do. We get into conflict over our shared goals. Violence stems from here. The violence itself eventually becomes another point of mimetic rivalry and then the violence escalates. Trying to be like each other, trying to connect with one another, is what causes the type of tension leading to violence. We do not have to get to know our enemy or our *other* to prevent violence, we already know our enemy.

GIRARD AND THE IDEA OF MIMESIS

Early groups remedied this mimetic tension through a sacrificial victim. The group selects a scapegoat whom they will sacrifice to establish order over the chaos of mimetic rivalry. This is the core of Girard’s idea on violence. The imitation leads to conflict, violence eventually erupts, and the only way to maintain society is to sacrifice someone. This sacrifice relieves the tension created by our naturally occurring mimicry.

There is a major problem with this solution we have put in place though: sacrifice only leads to bloodshed. The mimetic rivalry will continue. The sacrifice can only work for so long before another sacrifice is necessary. Society must realize that sacrifice does not remove or replace mimetic rivalry. The sacrifice of a scapegoat momentarily soothes the

tension created by that rivalry but eventually the tension returns. When mimetic rivalry is in place there are two things we cannot do: we cannot protect ourselves from *the other's* violence and we cannot protect ourselves from our own violence. In order to find a solution to this situation we must first understand where the rivalry originates? This mimetic rivalry begins in desire, something Girard calls *mimetic desire*.

According to Girard, when one individual begins to desire to imitate another individual then both of these individuals naturally reach for the same goal. A tension is built between the individuals as well as within each individual. Any time one of the individuals outdoes the other in this interaction there is the potential for violence. Girard calls this process *mimetic desire*, he states that "Violence is generated by this process; or rather violence is the process itself when two or more partners try to prevent one another from appropriating the object they all desire through physical or other means." (*Scapegoat* 9). The sacrifice does not stop the cycle of mimetic desire from continuing; the sacrifice is merely another outcome of the mimetic desire cycle.

Girard's solution for the mimetic cycle can be found in his reading and understanding of Christ's Passion from the bible. "In future, all violence will reveal what Christ's Passion revealed, the foolish genesis of bloodstained idols and the false gods of religion, politics, and ideologies" (*Scapegoat* 212). History as bloodstained idols and false beliefs is a daunting yet accurate description of human civilization through the ages. What we need, according to Girard, can be found in what the Passion stories reveal for us: "the mechanism of the scapegoat, the genesis of all mythology, the nonexistence of all gods of violence" (*Scapegoat* 207) . Girard explains our mimetic relationship and finds in Jesus a solution. Girard recommends we desire to be like someone who will never desire to be like us: desire to be like God. As God will never desire to be like us we will never find ourselves in a mimetic relationship. This new type of relationship should lead us away from false gods and ideologies, bloodstained idols, and an ever-increasing history of violence.

Christianity is not without fault and Girard points out that "[l]ike so many previous religions, ideological, and political enterprises, Christianity suffered persecution while it was weak and became the persecutor as soon as it gained strength" (*Scapegoat* 203). Girard believes this does not take away from his conclusion however. The society that does not interpret the Bible as Girard does will continue along its bloodstained path. The society that does not take away from the Bible what Girard has taken away will continue

to do what other societies have done before; these societies will continue the cycle of violence, the cycle of mimetic desire and rivalry.

Girard explains how the Gospels will cancel out other myths and reveals how they do not work for us, thereby leading us out of the rivalry and away from the violence. "In reality these myths have little importance. They are merely the outposts of a stubborn resistance. By decoding mythology, revealing the role of scapegoats in every culture, and resolving the enigmas of primitive religion, we inevitably prepare the way for the forceful return of the Gospel and biblical revelation. From the moment we truly understand myths, we can no longer accept the Gospel as yet another myth, since it is responsible for our understanding" (*Scapegoat* 204-05). The Gospel, for Girard, does something that other myths do not: reveals the role mimesis plays in how cultures shape themselves. Girard believes that in doing so the Bible demystifies violence. Once we understand myth and violence we no longer need to choose violent paths. A brief look at Girard's understanding of mimesis and the Bible will help us to understand how the Bible solves the problem of mimesis.

Girard believes that mimesis starts at the very beginning when the serpent convinces Eve to desire the fruit and Eve in turn convinces Adam to desire the apple. When they are caught by God Eve blames the serpent. Girard observes that Eve is in the same position as Adam since she also imitated someone else's desire. Satan, Girard concludes, is the embodiment of mimetic desire. Satan rules by allowing violence to control violence, by using violence to fight violence, which is what Jesus means when he talks about Satan driving out Satan, or Satan expelling Satan. Jesus says that this cannot work forever because a house divided against itself cannot stand. As soon as people recognize that the accused victims are innocent this system will fail. GIRARD'S SOLUTION

Girard's solution is the kingdom of heaven. This is still imitation-based but we are imitating the one that will not imitate us. We can imitate God and God will never imitate us back. This type of imitation does not produce conflict and violence. Girard's solution to the mimetic rivalry is found here in this relationship because it does two things: one, it allows mimesis to occur (as Girard states that mimesis is inevitable) and two, it removes the conflict from the relationship. There will be no mimetic violence. There will be no mimetic escalation causing more and more violence. Girard says that we need to respond to violence with non-violence, we need to deny the mimetic escalation. We

cannot prevent mimesis from occurring, but we can prevent the violence.

Girard's solution works but it only works insofar as the violence being discussed fits the parameters of his definitions. The solution will work as long as the violence we are witnessing or attempting to prevent is mimesis-based. If the violence has some other roots then Girard's "kingdom of heaven" solution will not work. This is where it is important to understand how Girard's portrait of violence does not apply to the violence depicted throughout *The Orenda*. Understanding how this violence differs from Girard's mimetic violence will help us find a solution suitable to the problem, and therefore a solution that will work.

GIRARD'S MOBS AND THE CARESSING RITUAL

One aspect of Girard's theory that does not apply to the Orenda is his idea of mob formation. Girard discusses mob hysteria and how persecutors form mobs to overthrow systems and punish perceived threats. "The persecutions in which we are interested generally take place in times of crisis, which weaken normal institutions and favour *mob* formation. Such spontaneous gatherings of people can exert a decisive influence on institutions that have been so weakened, and even replace them entirely" (*Scapegoat* 12). This description fits types of violence like we see with mass hysteria, and they certainly fit the types of scapegoating Girard goes on to discuss but they do not fit the violence in *The Orenda*, specifically the caressing ritual. Girard notes that "[U]ltimately, the persecutors always convince themselves that a small number of people, or even a single individual, despite his relative weakness, is extremely harmful to the whole of society" (*Scapegoat* 15). Although this may be an accurate observation of mob hysteria, *The Orenda* presents us with something very different. As we witness in the *Caressing* chapter of *The Orenda* the participants involved cannot be explained away as a mob formation. As well, the individual selected for death is in fact harmful to the whole of society, he either has killed members of society or will one day kill members of society.

Girard's mob and the Wendat/Haudenosaunee peoples are very different. The groups performing the caressing ritual are engaged in a meaningful act meant to help deal with death anxiety. This meaningful act is not driven by paranoia and fervor. It is not driven by mob hysteria. Girard's mob creates a narrative, however true, and in that narrative a very dangerous threat is dealt with. The problem, Girard points out for us, is that the small group or the individual is not a real threat but an imagined threat. The two

groups in *The Orenda* are actual threats to each other as they are at war. The mob makes irrational decisions based on faulty logic while the groups in *The Orenda* make calculated decisions as part of ritual. Hysteria and ritual are two very different things. Hysteria is a form of madness while ritual, although seemingly mad at times, is a set of precise behaviors with a clear goal in mind. Understanding the caressing of *The Orenda* as meaningful and goal-oriented separates the caressing from Girard's idea of mob-hysteria based violence.

To understand it, we have to see the caressing as ritual instead of hysteria. It can be difficult for us to perceive the violence of the ritual without judgment though and this is related to our perception of violence. Girard speaks to a common misunderstanding of violence in his essay *Mimesis and Violence*. He states that "Violence is discussed, nowadays, in terms of aggression" (*Reader* 10). Girard wrote this in 1979 yet it still applies to the way violence is viewed today. The terms violence and aggression are almost synonymous. The problem which arises here, as noted by Girard, is that the "problematic of aggression does not go to the root of human conflict. It is unilateral, it seems to suggest that the elimination of something called aggressivity is the problem" (*Reader* 10). When we focus on aggression as the root of human conflict we will never find a proper remedy to violence. Girard suggests that mimetic rivalry is the cause of violence; any attempt at a remedy which stems from an idea of aggression instead of an idea of mimesis will fail. If you address this concept of aggressivity but do not account for mimetic rivalry then you will not remedy violence.

Girard goes on to introduce his understanding of sacrifice: "Sacrifice stands in the same relationship to the ritual crisis that precedes it as the death or expulsion of the hero to the undifferentiated chaos that prevails at the beginning of many myths. Real or symbolic, sacrifice is primarily a collective action of the entire community, which purifies itself of its own disorder through the unanimous immolation of a victim, but this can happen only at the paroxysm of the ritual crisis" (*Reader* 11). This understanding and definition of sacrifice move us closer to understanding violence in *The Orenda* than his ideas of mimesis. The Wendat and Haudenosaunee are collectively purifying while they caress and we know that this ritual does not solve the problem of violence between the two cultures. In fact, and obviously, caressing helps bring the cycle around again with greater momentum. Girard's solution to violence is not a solution to what we experience in *The Orenda*. We can look to Russell Jacoby here to try and solve our violence cycle.

GIRARD'S AND JACOBY'S CONCLUSIONS

In *Bloodlust: On the Roots of Violence from Cain and Abel to the Present*, Russell Jacoby offers his ideas on what the cause of violence is. Jacoby observes that we typically consider violence as something strangers perpetrate against other strangers. This misunderstanding of violence requires our attention if we are ever to get beyond violence. Jacoby demonstrates that it is actually on the similarities between people that we should focus.

Along with Girard, Jacoby narrows our scope to the basic interaction between one person and another. Jacoby argues that when people are too similar the small differences between them become tension points. Jacoby states that Girard “declares not only that it is misleading to believe that opposites give rise to conflict but that the reverse is true: that is, as opposites recede, tensions advance” (152). Our problem is not that we do not know each other but that we know each other too well.

Jacoby goes on to explore one part of our current social system that should trouble us. If we are to agree with Jacoby's perspective we should be concerned about how industrialization has shaped our day-to-day interactions. Jacoby observes that “[P]eople forced into the thrall of industrialization emerge more and more alike” (152). Individual uniqueness is removed in the process of participating in an industrialized society; as people become more and more alike the potential for conflict and violence increases. A society that regulates its members and removes or limits individuality is perfectly designed, intentionally or not, to create violence.

Jacoby reinforces the Girardian idea that the loss of distinctions gives rise to violence and chaos. Jacoby refers to Girard's work as a *tonic* to challenge our “fetish of opposites” (152). We are comfortable in believing that we should fear strangers, that we should fear some *other*. The problem here is apparent when Jacoby spends the first half of his book demonstrating how violence is perpetrated by those who are close to us much more often than by strangers. The fetish of opposites is more comfortable than the truth, it is even more widely accepted than the truth. But Jacoby provides statistics, literary and historical examples to counter this idea of opposites.

Jacoby does this because our understanding of violence is incomplete and incorrect. Without a proper understanding of violence the cycle will only continue. Girard's solution of imitating a being who will not imitate us back works only within the

framework in which violence is imitation based. Jacoby's observations, however true and well-intentioned, do not provide a satisfactory account of the ritualistic violence of the caressing ceremony in *The Orenda*.

Perhaps the strongest statements from both Girard and Jacoby are at the end of their books. After making their arguments and demonstrating them through both philosophical and real-world examples from contemporary and historical incidents, their concluding paragraphs are two well-crafted appeals for non-violence. Jacoby concludes his work with a brief overview of how Romulus killed his brother Reemus, resulting in the founding of Rome.

Jacoby states that the founding of Rome introduced the feminine to the stage as "the new settlement discovered they needed females" (158). The feminine brought a sort of humanism to warfare. It had a calming effect on the violence. Jacoby writes: "the tide turned in favor of the Romans with the fratricidal Romulus rallying his troops. Amid the slaughter of the neighboring warriors, in the account of the Roman history Livy, the Sabine women 'with loosened hair and rent garments' pushed their way between the battling armies. 'They parted the angry combatants; they besought their fathers on one side, their husbands on the other, to spare the curse of shedding kindred blood.' The curse still troubles the world. The women of Sabine may have something to teach us" (158). They may have something to teach us indeed. The women of Sabine know that the bloodshed they are witnessing is blood being shed between family and friends, between people who have more in common with each other than they think, between people who should not be killing each other.

Girard's conclusion to *The Scapegoat* is a similar plea for non-violence. Girard's text reads more desperately though: "In future, all violence will reveal what Christ's Passion revealed, the foolish genesis of bloodstained idols and the false gods of religion, politics, and ideologies. The murderers remain convinced of the worthiness of their sacrifices. They, too, know not what they do and we must forgive them. The time has come for us to forgive one another. If we wait any longer there will not be time enough" (212). Our bloodstained idols and false gods still have their following in religion, politics, and ideologies. This is not to argue that Girard was wrong, or that Jacoby is wrong at present. It is more an observation concerning what societies have yet to learn from their collective past.

HOW BECKER PROVIDES A FITTING EXPLANATION

We have examined the views of selected thinkers who provided commentary on violence through the ages. We have analyzed ideas from Rene Girard, Russel Jacoby, and Sam Keen, each of whom has contributed to our understanding of violence. From these thinkers we know what types of interpretation to avoid. For a complete understanding of ritualistic violence in *The Orenda* our most suitable guide is still Ernest Becker. Becker's ideas offer a more complete understanding of violence in *The Orenda*. Girard and Jacoby explain their ideas coherently but they apply only to a certain type of violence. The caressing ritual has a very specific purpose: overcoming death anxiety. When the participants in the ritual are burning, stabbing, torturing, and killing the victims, what they are in effect doing is gaining control over their mortality and ultimately experiencing immortality. The participants in the ritual are, in one sense, purchasing more life with each victim.

To understand this concept we turn to Becker and find an explanation from *Escape From Evil*¹. In the section "The Logic of Scapegoating" Becker describes the type of ritualistic violence referred to as *caressing*. After considering ideas from this section we will have an appreciation of *The Orenda* that we cannot achieve through Girard's or Jacoby's works.

Becker understands ritual and scapegoating through his death denial lens. For Becker, when men kill each other the simple explanation for their motivation is that "[m]en use one another to assure their personal victory over death." (*Escape* 108). The positive side of this situation is the genesis of culture and social groups: the bringing together of human beings to create a counter-narrative to the reality that we are mortal. The negative side to this is that we can kill one another to assure our victory over death. Each solution works as an immortality project.

Becker further explains this when he quotes Otto Rank: "the death fear of the ego is lessened by the killing, the sacrifice, of the other; through the death of the other, one buys oneself free from the penalty of dying, of being killed" (*Escape* 108). Each time we kill someone we buy ourselves some portion of immortality. Each time we kill someone we fear death less. Becker follows this with the observation "No wonder men are

¹ I strongly urge readers to consider this book alongside Becker's *The Denial of Death* as *Escape from Evil* is an extension of the ideas originally presented in *The Denial of Death*.

addicted to war” (*Escape* 108). If the act of taking a life is a conquering of our immortality then war is a large-scale opportunity to do this. There is never a shortage of immortality expressions in the midst of war and our world has known war for a long time. But this relieving of our death anxiety is not permanent, it will pass and we will need to perform the act of killing again.

Becker wrote that “[i]f anyone still thinks that this is merely clever phrasing in the minds of alienated intellectuals trying to make private sense out of the evil of their world, let him consult the daily papers” (*Escape* 109-110). When Becker wrote this in the 1970s he was describing the world around him; it is just as fitting a description for the contemporary reader’s world. It is hard to open the daily papers and not see violence and evil. Becker had the horrors of Vietnam and its aftermath to live through and deal with; we have Iraq and Afghanistan as recent wars on a long list of horrors. The fact that Becker’s observation and defense of his ideas are relevant four decades later is a testament to their validity. Becker’s ideas have not only stood the test of time but they have been strengthened over time, they are just as applicable today, if not more so, as when he wrote them down.

The problem is that we are not working from a Beckerian foundation. We know that violence between cultures is still present today; we know that torture exists today and is practiced by groups from first world powers to third world armies; we know that what we have thought were solutions or remedies have either not been working or have not been attempted. This can be said using the ideas of the authors whose works and ideas we have considered. I want to place greater emphasis on Ernest Becker’s ideas. Despite their enduring relevance, Becker’s ideas have not been the primary focus of most explorations of violence. However, I believe that Becker’s ideas concerning the genesis of violence as a personal and cultural immortality project are of great importance for understanding many forms of violence, especially that between groups who are contesting ways of life.

The heart of my argument can be found in *Escape from Evil* when Becker states that “[m]odern man lives in illusion, said Freud, because he denies or suppresses his wish for the other’s death and for his own immortality; and it is precisely because of this illusion that mankind cannot get control over social evils like war” (109). When we are not honest with ourselves or we are unaware of what drives and motivates us, we are bound to continue our cycles of social evils. History demonstrates this time and again.

We have to find the root of social evil.

Our ideas of hero worship are very telling when considering social evil. But what does hero worship tell us? Becker argues that “very few of us, if pressured, would be unwilling to sacrifice someone else in our place. The exception to this is of course the hero. We admire him precisely because he is willing to give his life for others instead of taking theirs for his” (*Escape* 109). We are creatures interested in self-preservation. We can accept that preservation under varying circumstances. Becker states that “Not only enemies but even friends and loved ones are fair fuel for our own perpetuation, said Freud” (*Escape* 109). With pressure we will allow others to take our place, even friends and loved ones. We do not sound very noble or idyllic.

With enough pressure we would accept someone else being sacrificed instead of us. The hero does the opposite. The hero is a reversal of what is common. This is the appeal of the hero. “War is a ritual for the emergence of heroes” (*Escape* 109). We admire heroes because they do what we do not, maybe even what we cannot do. The hero confronts death head on, accepts death. Heroes go into certain doom, destruction, annihilation, knowing what they are doing. A species terrified of death, which does anything it can to fight against mortality, can only look on the hero with awe. Our hero worship highlights our death anxiety. We prefer to kill others over being killed. This is survival, self-preservation, and it is only normal and natural to our creatureliness.

The logic of killing others in order to affirm our own life unlocks much that puzzles us in history, much that with our modern minds we seem unable to comprehend, such as the Roman arena games. If the killing of a captive affirms the power of your life, how much does the actual massive staging of life-and-death struggles affirm a whole society? The continual grinding sacrifice of animal and human life in the arenas was all of a piece with the repressions of a society that was dedicated to war and that lived in the teeth of death. It was a perfect pastime to work off anxieties and show the ultimate personal control of death: the thumbs up or thumbs down on the gladiators. The more death you saw unfold before your eyes and the more you thrust your thumbs downward, the more you bought off your own life (*Escape* 110).

This paragraph describes our struggle today. We do not know how to interpret something like the Roman arena games. Similarly, we do not know how to interpret something like the caressing ritual. When we use Becker's death denying lens to observe these behaviors we can understand them without judgment. We can have a full appreciation of why the caressing ritual happened.

We have to agree to some uncomfortable observations and truths about our

creatureliness in order to appreciate and stop cultural violence. “The longer people looked at the death of someone else, the more pleasure they could have in sensing the security and the good fortune of their own survival” (*Escape* 110). Instead of death reminding us of our mortality here what we have is death invigorating us, someone else’s death renews our life-feeling. The type of ritualistic death, be it in a gladiator ring, on a gallows, or at the hands of a collection of individuals, this type of death is different. We have to be willing to consider that other people’s deaths feel good or benefit us in some way. Becker says this invigoration “is why the public display, humiliation, and execution of prisoners is so important” (*Escape* 111). We can consider the *caressing* as a public display of humiliation. But this seems to me to fall short of understanding the ritual. It verges on a racist approach in place of cultural awareness. If we bypass attempts at understanding this violence and choose to view it primarily as humiliation then we are preventing ourselves from overcoming these kinds of violence in the world. The *caressing* is not about humiliation, and, as already demonstrated, the selected victims are respected with honor in place of being humiliated.

The *caressing* can be understood along similar lines to the Roman arena games mentioned above. Becker observes that “[t]he Roman arena games were, in a sense, a continued staging of victory even in the absence of war; each civilian experienced the same powers that he otherwise had to earn in war” (*Escape* 111). Each individual participating can feel the power of victory over death. The *caressing* is a staged victory and follows a precise order—it is a ritual and not random bloodshed. We have to accept that the participants of the ritual experienced something similar to the arena games and for similar reasons. “If we are repulsed by the bloodthirstiness of those games, it is because we choose to banish from our consciousness what true *excitement* is. For man, maximum excitement is the confrontation of death and the skillful defiance of it by watching others fed to it as he survives transfixed with rapture” (*Escape* 111). Becker draws attention to our willingness to be repulsed instead of understanding. We can only be repulsed if we consider the action foreign to us. We have to accept that social evil exists today because these actions are not foreign to us. We have to accept that we know these motivations because we share something with the participants: fear of death. The repulsion we show toward the Roman arena games mentioned by Becker is the same type of repulsion we show toward the public ritual in *The Orenda* today. The contemporary reader who does not face their fear of death will have a similar repulsion to these types of violence.

If we consider the caressing as barbaric or meaningless and savage then we are working against ourselves, we are ignoring our own death anxiety. Becker addresses the problem contemporary audiences experience when looking back to the types of violence portrayed in *The Orenda*: "Other things that we have found hard to understand have been hatreds and feuds between tribes and families, and continual butchery practiced for what seemed petty, prideful motives of personal honor and revenge. But the idea of self-preservation explains these very directly" (Becker, *Escape* 111-112). The *caressing* ritual is not about petty, prideful motives of personal honor and revenge. We view the ritual this way because we are in a much different social environment than the Haudenosaunee and Wendat. Our social system is organized differently, our standards and worldviews are different; we do not share the same world. Their world is a part of our history but a lot has changed since the 1700's. Our creatureliness and motivations have not changed. Becker's explanation of self-preservation and death denial allow us to consider the ritual instead of dismissing it. Again, the explanation of evil and social violence that Becker provides is existential and located in the human condition itself, a condition that crosses historical and sociocultural boundaries and applies to all human individuals, societies, and cultures.

To further explain how death denial factors into our violent rituals Becker discusses Otto Rank's view of social groups. Becker notes that Rank saw these specific social groups, those that participate in ritualistic sacrifice, as "a sort of soul pool of immortality-substance" (*Escape* 112). Rank observed that if this soul pool is depleted by even one member of society then each member in the society becomes more mortal. Rank believed that this depleted *immortality account* needed to be addressed. Any offence against this account was experienced as an offence against the *spiritual economy* of the group. These types of offenses could not pass unaddressed.

Becker describes how the purpose behind addressing these offenses is to balance the account again. The inevitable problem here is that once one group balances their account the other group must necessarily balance their own account. This cycle of violence will only end with the complete destruction of one or both groups. The Haudenosaunee and Wendat in *The Orenda* had been at war with each other for a long time before we enter into the story; it was only a matter of time before one or both groups no longer exists. We typically misunderstand this situation between the Wendat and Haudenosaunee when we interpret the violence between the two as Girard or

Jacoby would interpret it; we conclude that the torture is a form of mob hysteria and that the roots of the cultural violence are in mimetic rivalry. We can remedy this misunderstanding with Becker's ideas regarding the fear of death and humankind's attempts to gain mastery over their mortality. If we use Becker as a starting point instead of Girard or Jacoby we will find a more suitable solution to the problem of violence.

CONCLUSION

We witness a great deal of the meting out of pain in the novel, as well as in history books and accounts of culture clashes. If we are the cause of the problem, and that problem is a misguided solution to some other problem, then surely we can work toward finding a better solution, one that does not involve such destructiveness and pain. The better solution mentioned can only arise if we keep in mind our motivations behind our destructiveness, if we keep in mind our death anxiety and our need for immortality projects.

The Orenda tells the story of immortality projects colliding. The Wendat and Haudenosaunee hunt, torture and kill each other, while the Jesuits want to eliminate non-Christian cultures and convert everyone to their faith. Amongst these three groups there are different types of violence. The physical violence, considered torture by some and caressing by others, is what I have focused on in this paper. Using Ernest Becker's ideas about death anxiety, I have tried to demonstrate that the caressing ceremony is about more than revenge or bloodshed. It is about overcoming the anxiety created through our recognition of human mortality. The ceremony holds great significance for the culture practicing it because the outcome of the ceremony determines future battles, settles blood debts, and allows the captors brief control over their fate.

In *Escape from Evil* Becker stated that "[m]en spill blood because it makes their hearts glad and fills out their organisms with a sense of vital power; ceremoniously killing captives is a way of affirming power over life, and therefore over death" (*Escape* 102). I believe that this statement sums up the violence in *The Orenda*. We have read Bird describe the vengeance he desires; we have read in the chapter *Caressing* how other members of the Wendat were exacting their revenge for the death of their family members or loved ones. Snow Falls describes herself as a cause of violence and murder because the Haudenosaunee want her back and keep hunting the Wendat for her. The revenge aspect of the killings cannot be overlooked. However, contemporary readers

should ensure they do not downplay or overlook the last part of Becker's quote above: "ceremoniously killing captives is a way of affirming power over life, and therefore over death" (*Escape* 102). This sentence describes the significance and purpose of the caressing ritual; caressing is not about brutal and meaningless savagery, it is about taking control of that which we have no control over, death. If we cannot understand caressing as a ritual, with a distinct purpose, then we just condemn ourselves by passing judgement and contributing to the continuation of cycles of violence between and within cultures.

Becker did not think that people were inherently bad. He observed in his *Preface for Escape from Evil* that his "previous writings did not take sufficient account of truly vicious human behaviour" (xvii). In order to escape evil, we have to understand what it is. Understanding what it is entails understanding where it comes from. Becker believed that we need reason to try to balance destruction. In *Escape from Evil*, he observed that "it is one thing to say that man is not human because he is a vicious animal, and another to say that it is because he is a frightened creature who tries to secure a victory over his limitations" (169). We do not have an evil nature; the characters in *The Orenda* do not have evil natures nor are they evil characters. Our existential nature is more complicated than a word like 'evil' can sum up.

When *Snow Falls* is observing the dancing and togetherness of the captors and the captives, she has a judgement-free thought regarding the human condition: "The feeling in this place is that we are all of the same woman, Aataentsic, the flawed one, and that we have all tried to do as well as we could, but some have failed, and some have been unlucky, and some now control their destiny, at least for a short while, and some no longer do" (Boyden 271). This is similar to Becker saying that man is a frightened creature trying to secure victory over his limitations. If we do not acknowledge this observation about our nature then we are likely to commit more violence in the future.

When we finally see the leader of the Haudenosaunee we are left with a less than flattering image of him. Tekakwitha, the leader, is painted red and arrives among the rubble of the church, having already taken the village by brute force. Christophe describes him as follows: "as tall as Bird and me, with a scar that runs across his cheek and to his mouth that gives him a permanent snarl. He wears his hair in the standard thin roach down the middle of his plucked head, the hair reaching to his lower back and

decorated with a beautiful assortment of feathers. His face is painted a solid blood red” (472). We do not get to know more about Tekakwitha. He orders the torture of Christophe and kidnaps a woman and two children. But Tekakwitha is not very different from Bird, similar actions have been performed by each. Bird appears to foreigners as Tekakwitha has appeared to readers here. Contemporary readers may see the entire novel in the same light as we see Tekakwitha.

What we should focus on is the similarities. Focusing on the differences may only lead to more bloodshed. “When you fall asleep laughing in the evening, it’s difficult to awake crying in the sun” (487). This observation by the unnamed narrator describes the position we find ourselves in when change is met with cycles of violence. This is why the *The Orenda* should be read as a cautionary tale with Snow Falls’ perspective at the centre of the novel. Snow Falls has a unique perspective on the violence in the novel: she is at once both cultures and neither culture. Snow Falls was born Haudenosaunee but from the beginning of the novel she is raised Wendat. Snow Falls can legitimately identify with both cultures yet chooses to recognize that she is neither. She falls somewhere outside of this classification system, one which has resulted in violence and bloodshed. A literal consideration of her name is that when snow does fall it does so indiscriminately. The snow does not choose sides. Boyden, himself of mixed and recently scrutinized (Fine 2016) ancestry, is in a similar position to Snow Falls, and it appears that his message to readers is similar: he does not wish for violence. The contemporary reader should be made aware that rejecting the novel based on strong reactions to violence may prevent its anti-violence message from being received. The unnamed narrator observes Aataentsic laughing at humans: “[s]he laughed because we couldn’t see our own demise coming” (Boyden 487). But what if we do see it coming? We can presumably find a way to prevent to it. We can be as Snow Falls is when she watches the two cultures dance and sing together, eventually becoming one. We too can be in a state of bliss, wishing for this moment to never end.

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Tecumseh: Moving Forward Together

I chose to write a play about Tecumseh and the War of 1812 because I believe he is a largely uncelebrated Canadian hero. Although he was born in the Ohio Valley and lived over 5 decades before Canada became a country, I intend to show in the following pages why this country could not exist without him and why his specific story is important for the future of this country. I start with historian James Laxer, consider ideas from Walter Benjamin as they relate to a character in my play, touch on ideas put forward by activist Jack Forbes and conclude with John Ralston Saul's understanding of the aboriginal situation in Canada. Throughout this introduction, I hope to spark the interest and fascination I had with Tecumseh when I first learned of his existence as well as provide the necessary context for readers and audiences to understand the importance of the topic being presented.

In *Tecumseh & Brock: The War of 1812*, James Laxer discusses what he calls the *Endless War*: “[t]wo bloody conflicts fused to become one during the War of 1812. The first was the American campaign to seize the land of the native peoples along the western frontier. This can be called the Endless War. The second conflict, properly called the War of 1812, was the one the United States fought against Britain” (1). The War of 1812 was merely an extension of the greater Napoleonic War yet it was still a defining moment for this country. If the United States had succeeded in annexing Canada from Britain then history would be entirely different regarding the Canadian identity. In short, had the War of 1812 been lost we would not be celebrating 150 years as a country this year. In fact, we would likely find ourselves living under an American flag and the 49th parallel would have little meaning other than as a state line.

The United States lost their war to gain Canada. However, they did win the war to seize land from the native peoples, what Laxer called the *Endless War*. Had Britain kept their word to Tecumseh and his warriors then a peace agreement would not have been reached until land was set aside for the aboriginals. Something to consider when understanding Tecumseh is that he initially spoke with the United States and offered support in exchange for sovereign land; an understandable arrangement as the Shawnee homeland was on their side of the border. The United States declined the offer. That is when Tecumseh turned to Canada. He was promised land in exchange for military service by General Brock. Warfare was nothing new to Tecumseh, violence

nothing new to the aboriginals in the area. Tecumseh had been at war with white settlers long before the War of 1812. It was a matter of protecting his interests and the interests of all aboriginal groups in the area.

Perhaps the most important aspect of Tecumseh's story is the goal of creating a movement where all aboriginal groups came together and worked as one instead of allowing themselves to be divided. What the United States was particularly good at was getting what it wanted from one group of aboriginals when another group turned them down. Tecumseh considered chiefs who signed treaties *accommodationists*. He did not think the way to live with settlers was by giving in to their way of life, by giving them land that they had no right to claim, nor by putting them before you. There is still division between groups today. There are obvious divisions where groups have always identified as separate but there are also divisions where groups look out for their own best interests instead of a collective interest. Here in the Lower mainland there are many different groups of aboriginals, some are involved in treaty processes and others are not. Some are part of a larger nation where the decisions are made with the collective benefits in mind. Different groups want to get on board with pipeline developments to transport crude oil while others do not. Indigenous groups are not working together yet. We have forgotten the larger picture here, we have lost perspective on what Laxer refers to as the Endless War.

The concept of the Endless War presented here by Laxer is important for understanding what is happening today in Canada. This war is still being waged right now and it is not just about American Indians, rather it is about all original inhabitants in North America. There have been many different groups waging war on the same group. Laxer states that "[t]he war of the native peoples against the Europeans and later the settler invaders was an endless war. The conflict shifted from region to region over time as the British, the French, the Spaniards, and later the settler regimes took one piece of territory after another from the original inhabitants (9)." Here in Canada we are still at war over land. The war over land is nothing new and is not slowing down and the fact remains: this beautiful country is built on stolen land.

There have been many attempts over the years to get land rights back or to be properly compensated. "Tecumseh was not the only leader to envision a union of native peoples living on their own land. Others came before, and still others tried after him. But

in his time, he was peerless – a man of enormous energy whose political gifts and willingness to work with others, whether they were native or white, made him singular in his determination to change the history of the continent.” (208). I do not believe we have had a leader as relentless and focused as Tecumseh. What we see today is the opposite; Tecumseh said the land was not for sale and he believed the notion of buying and selling land was absurd, whereas the land has a price in certain areas and so long as the aboriginal communities make a fair profit the land and the accompanying rights are for sale. In certain respects it could boil down to the reality of capitalism and consumption of natural resources, but it could also be a lack of determination.

Tecumseh’s movement died with him. “Tecumseh’s confederacy was the final occasion in history when native forces played a crucial role in determining the outcome of a geostrategic struggle in North America. The inspired concept of a native state reached the peak of its influence in the years prior to the War of 1812 and during the first year of the conflict. With the Treaty of Ghent in 1814, the concept became a lost cause” (297). The Treaty of Ghent ended the War of 1812, this was signed by people who were more interested in peace than they were in creating a native state. The British wanted to end what they considered a “strategic annoyance imposed on them by the Americans” (297-98). When peace with the Americans was made possible the British quickly gave up the push for the native state, as Laxer notes “they quite easily shelved the concept when it became a barrier to achieving peace” (298). Peace with America was more important than native statehood. Tecumseh would have never agreed to the peace treaty when it ignored what he had been fighting for his entire life. “Tecumseh lived and died as a warrior in the Endless War, which began in North America nearly two centuries before his birth and continued well after his death” (295). This war is happening all around us and we each have a role.

One of the roles I have chosen is that of a storyteller. This play is a story that I would like to tell. But it is not my story. It may not even belong solely to Tecumseh. I believe the story is Canada’s story and it belongs to all the people who make up Canada. The story stands as an interpretation of history but also as a warning about the dangers of not working together. If we do not get along enough to co-exist then the future of Canada will resemble the past more than I am comfortable accepting. One way to attempt to prevent this cycle of the endless war from continuing is to share the story and trust audience members will take some message with them when the curtain drops

and the house lights come up. I wanted to create a story that would spark interest and Tecumseh's life was interesting in many ways; he was a son, brother, husband, father, and a leader of a movement which had never been seen before.

A cursory look at the literature on Tecumseh will reveal a fascinating story with fascinating characters throughout (Drake, Eckert, Edmunds, Gordon, Klinck, Poling Sr., St-Denis, Sugden, Tucker). Writing a play or any other piece of fiction about Tecumseh should be relatively easy; the plot is there, the characters, the action, the ending is even written for you. Filling in the blanks in between or organizing the piece in a meaningful and creative manner was my biggest challenge. I settled on a series of narratives running concurrently. I have the story of Tecumseh and his wife, the story of Tecumseh and his brother, the story of events related directly to the war, and I have it all held together with this story from a character called: STORYTELLER.

I have named this character STORYTELLER and I have intentionally not given him a proper name. This character relates the story of Tecumseh to a group of children. The audience is mentioned specifically in the stage directions for these scenes, I intended for the audience to complete the circle of children by the end of the play; the audience is finally treated as equals instead of outsiders who merely overhear the stories being shared. The STORYTELLER character came from the realization that Stephen Ruddell, taken as a captive and raised as Tecumseh's brother, was a main source of stories about the man I wanted to explore.

Knowing how important Ruddell is to the legacy of Tecumseh I wanted to respect him and everything he did for Tecumseh, but I did not want this character to be named Ruddell. I wanted a more universal appeal from my STORYTELLER. My early draft had him named Ruddell throughout but that was merely out of convenience. I had no intention of leaving the name there. I was not sure what I wanted for a name but when I finished the script what I was looking for was right there in front of me: a storyteller. I wanted the type of character I would like to see relating stories to other people. Why would an unnamed storyteller be ideal though?

Storytelling is a fundamental building block of society. The individual has a life narrative; no matter how seemingly benign or extravagant, the life narrative is there for everyone. There are narratives that people tell themselves and sometimes one another.

Our creation myths are creation stories; narratives about how the universe came into being. History books are academic accounts or re-tellings of stories that happened. The story can be a poem, a book, a song, a verbal passing on of ancient cultural wisdom, or, in this case, a play. Humans tell stories at home, in schools, at pubs over drinks, at the dinner table over food, in religious and spiritual gatherings, in rituals specific to their belief system, on the transit system, whenever people ask how you are doing or how was your weekend or what have you been up? Stories are everywhere. Storytellers are everywhere.

I like the idea of an anonymous storyteller. The old joke of the great poet and author Anonymous comes to mind. Think of all the things this storyteller achieved seemingly over centuries and across cultures and continents. It would be quite the accomplishment if it were true instead of a punch-line. However, it is impressive because one thing all the 'Anonymous' authors had in common was their ability to tell stories. Their stories had meaning, sometimes it may have been specific to their time and their culture but often they are stories that are meaningful to human beings, and as such they are relatable across time and place.

Naming my character STORYTELLER allowed a sort of timelessness to the character and his scenes. If I named my character Ruddell I would have been placing a specific boundary on his stories. I would have limited that character to certain years and as speaking to very specific audiences. There would be nothing inherently wrong with this. Yet, my vision extends beyond Stephen Ruddell and what he accomplished. I hope to pay tribute to these characters while providing a more universal story. I would like my universal storyteller, a sort of Everyman-STORYTELLER, to share his stories with people in such a manner that they take the stories with them. I would like for the audience, as listeners, to be able to connect to the story and to see some significance in this story's importance. Walter Benjamin, in his brief essay *The Storyteller*, states that "[t]he storyteller takes what he tells from experience – his own or that reported by others. And he in turn makes it the experience of those who are listening to his tale." (87). This shared experience has the potential to change. But this potential is made possible by allowing the story to be told in such a way that audience's can draw their own conclusions.

Benjamin notes that information plays a large role in destroying storytelling. He states “[e]very morning brings us the news of the globe, and yet we are poor in noteworthy stories. This is because no event any longer comes to us without already being shot through with explanation” (89). We do not receive the raw information but are fed a processed version of whichever story is being relayed. The problem with this is, simply put, that a story does not need to be explained; “it is half the art of storytelling to keep a story free from explanation as one produces it” (89). When we fill our stories with explanation we are, in effect, preventing the listener/reader from drawing their own conclusions based on their experiences and knowledge. Perhaps even this introduction limits the story of the play by providing too much context or intention. Audiences can still see or read the play without reading the introduction though, and some may find interests peaked through an introduction just as well as from the story being told.

The ability to for the listener/reader to draw their own interpretations is one of the most powerful aspects of the storytelling situation. When we allow the story to be passed on free of explanation, the story has a greater impact on listeners; “The most extraordinary things, marvelous things, are related with the greatest accuracy, but the psychological connection of the events is not forced on the reader. It is left up to him to interpret things the way he understands them, and thus the narrative achieves an amplitude that information lacks” (89). Ideally, I would like my play to demonstrate the significance of the history behind the play and characters as well as the significant relationship these events and characters have on issues we see today regarding aboriginal concerns in Canada. Even more ideally, I would like the conclusions be drawn regarding any culture or group that has been colonized, disenfranchised, or otherwise deprived of their right to live and exist independently.

Even with the best intentions and preparation the story being shared can be misinterpreted or misunderstood with ease. Rudyard Griffiths notes, in the Preface to *Our Story: Aboriginal Voices on Canada's Past*, “[i]t is difficult, if not impossible, for one culture to capture the historical reality of another culture that it has displaced. As hard as non-Aboriginals might try to correct for biases, our history and traditions are different” (2). Essentially, two different world views will struggle to see the world from each other's view. “This is not to say that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures are incapable of creating common understandings and mutual respect. What we need to work on is finding new ways – after more than four hundred years of living together – to hear each

other's stories anew" (2). It is absurd to think that we have co-habited for over four hundred years and still not found a way to live together but that is what we are working on. Our goal should be what Griffiths considers *Our Story* to be: "not only to better understand and appreciate each other, but also to move forward together" (3).

What we do have in common, which we need to consider if we are moving forward together, is the shared reality of our cultures not understanding each other. Jack D. Forbes's *Columbus and other Cannibals* is a text which reads as an activist's critique of modern civilization. It is very precise in pointing out a problem and very forgiving of the human condition that brought the problem to fruition. Forbes has some remarkable ideas about the types of horrors humans commit against each other and he shares them openly and honestly. To challenge these horrors we should explore Forbes's idea of what he calls the wétiko, which I consider to be our shared madness.

The problem of modern civilization begins with the wétiko. It is a large problem for humanity. Forbes states: "For several thousands of years human beings have suffered from a plague, a disease worse than leprosy, a sickness worse than malaria, a malady much more terrible than smallpox" (XV). This disease is what Forbes calls "a disease of aggression against other living things and, more precisely, the disease of the consuming of other creatures' lives and possessions" (XVI). He calls this disease the *wétiko* psychosis, wétiko meaning cannibal.

I cannot improve on Forbes's strong language so I will leave his paragraph here:

The rape of a woman, the rape of a land, and the rape of a people, they are all the same. And they are the same as the rape of the earth, the rape of the rivers, the rape of the forest, the rape of the air, the rape of the animals. Brutality knows no boundaries. Greed knows no limits. Perversion knows no borders. Arrogance knows no frontiers. Deceit knows no edges. These characteristics all tend to push towards an extreme, always moving forward once the initial infection sets in. From the raping of a woman, to the raping of a country, to the raping of the world. Acts of aggression, of hate, of conquest, of empire-building. Harems of women and harems of people; houses of prostitution and houses of pimps (XVIII).

The wétiko psychosis is the cause of a great deal of trouble in the world. This is the world we are living in now; we occupy the landscape and culture described in the quote above. Every ill around us is in some way an extension of this cannibalistic drive.

Forbes describes how hard it is to fight the spreading of the wétiko. He even describes how resisting the psychosis actually causes it to spread. The problem isn't one person acting out of psychosis either, or even large herds of individuals with the psychosis; there are people who support the cannibal, though they may not have the cannibal mentality they still support those who do. This psychosis is now deeply embedded in the cultural fabric of our society and it succeeds because the support networks allow it to succeed.

Forbes's approach to addressing this is straightforward and well thought out. He has a three-part approach to curing this illness. First he examines the problem from a Native American perspective. Second he does so from "a perspective as free as possible from assumptions created by the very disease being studied" (XVII-XVIII). Lastly he looks "at these evils, not simply as 'bad' choices that men make, but as a genuine, very real epidemic sickness" (XVIII). Forbes continues his description of our problem with this observation: "*Imperialists, rapists, and exploiters are not just people who have strayed down a wrong path. They are insane (unclean) in the true sense of that word. They are mentally ill and, tragically, the form of soul-sickness that they carry is catching*" (XVIII). Forbes describes this sickness, its side effects, the cultural effects, and the ugly cannibal societies that form from the sickness.

Forbes shows readers a path out of the darkness of the psychosis and toward the light of healthy living. This path does not involve violence, rather, it uses what Forbes calls *religion*. With Forbes's religion it is possible to cure the wétiko sickness and get on with life. By *religion* he simply means a spiritual solution. You need this spiritual solution because it is a spiritual problem. Forbes states that "Tecumseh's movement possessed a 'spiritual' base. The Native teachers recognized that men have to be 'cured' of their spiritual sickness *before* they can build a just society" (172). Forbes intends for readers to be able to find a spiritual solution and cure the illness of society. Tecumseh's movement began with his brother's religious/spiritual revival; The Prophet was trying to restore wellness to wounded warriors, trying to stop alcoholism and the self-doubt that arguably arose from what Forbes would call the wétiko psychosis. The wounded warriors needed healing and the Prophet's ideals of clean and pure living helped these lost warriors find their way.

A large problem I observe around me is not so much the giving-in to of the psychosis but the allowance of that psychosis to be planted, fertilized, watered and grown to its fullest absurdity. Adjusting to the wétiko will not bring us closer to a just society. "Adjustment and self-acceptance is not what is needed. To adjust to a wétiko society is to become insane" (Forbes 173). We benefit nothing when we do nothing. By going with the flow of insanity we are ourselves insane, otherwise we would not fit in so well. Forbes states that "we *have* the power to change and that no matter how oppressed or abused we have been we, at some point, have to assume responsibility for our own acts" (173). I agree with this statement but this requires everyone to take responsibility for their own actions and time is not on our side. This has been going on for a long time now and it shows no solid signs of letting up. The threat for us, as it was for Tecumseh, is not only *others* or pale-faced destroyers; the major threat for us is also us. Yet, if we individually perform the non-hatred route then perhaps Forbes was on to something. At the very least we will be removing one more wétiko from the equation, at the very most we will be rewarded with the society we deserve and not the insane society in need of curing that we are a part of. We have had enough of the wétiko society already, why not give something else a try?

To move on as a Country, to move forward together, we are going to need to understand each other on a level we have not experienced. We have a shared identity as Canadians and this is our strength. But that identity cannot be built on a lie. Not being honest about the history and the present situation of this relationship would be tantamount to living a lie. This does not mean we should view our relationship through only a negative lens, focusing only on the hardships and pain we have caused one another, because that also would not be honest. John Ralston Saul, in his book *The Comeback*, analyzes the relationship between Canada and its aboriginal population.

Saul observes that "[o]n broader social issues, we tend to focus on any sign of suffering. We are troubled by suffering, by the suffering of others" (4). Saul warns that we should not focus solely on the negative aspects of our history, the problem with treating Aboriginal groups simply as suffering peoples is that this "kind of sympathy may simply reinforce the old narrative in which 'Indians' are a problem and unsuited to survival in 'modern' society" (4). What begins as a healthy and normal human response to pain and suffering can transform back into the type of thinking that caused that pain

and suffering in the first place, and the transformation is subtle and without notice. Aboriginals in Canada are more than just victims.

Saul states that “[f]or the last hundred years, Aboriginal peoples have been making a comeback – remarkable comeback from a terrifyingly low point. A low point of population, of legal respect, of civilizational stability. A comeback to what? To a position of power, influence and civilizational creativity in the territory we call Canada” (5). He continues by pointing out that “[m]ost Canadians still don’t understand this because we are focused on the suffering of many indigenous people, the problems, the failures” (5). By focusing on those negative aspects we are not acknowledging the rise of the comeback. We continue to do this at our own peril. “The situation is simple. Aboriginals have made and will continue to make a remarkable comeback. They cannot be stopped. Non-Aboriginals have a choice to make. We can continue to stand in the way so that the comeback is slowed and surrounded by bitterness. Or we can be supportive and part of a new narrative” (6). This new narrative is the healthiest approach for aboriginals and non-aboriginals alike. The new narrative will need to encompass both groups’ experiences as well as the shared experience.

“If you focus on our governments you may become depressed about what is happening. I prefer to focus on the growing power of the indigenous peoples and the existing power that all of us have as citizens” (164). This is not a mere mind trick where we can focus on the positive and things will get better. There are, as Saul describes throughout his book, advancements happening which were not possible for aboriginals a few decades ago. It was not until March 31st, 1960 that we were finally allowed to vote in federal elections. This is no small feat. The treaty processes continue, even though some past agreements have been ignored, and aboriginal groups get to decide if they want to opt into a treaty process or pursue the matter in courts. We have aboriginal doctors, lawyers, teachers, school systems, politicians, and businesses. We are becoming players on the stage of this contemporary world.

Yet, I have to wonder *at what cost?* Could it be that we are now talented at playing in the game of this wétiko society? Or is there some greater good that will come from the hard work and effort of generations of aboriginals and non-aboriginals alike? The optimist in me sees the light but the pessimist sees darkness that has had centuries to settle in. Moving forward together will involve a relationship we have not yet shared.

Members of the government can no longer argue for a recognition of 'the good' that came from the Indian Residential School program; RCMP and other police forces can no longer ignore the cases of missing and murdered indigenous women; the judicial system cannot replace social programs and a proper education system; townships can no longer go without clean drinking water. We have come a long way in the four hundred years that we have been living alongside each other. But, we have a long way to go to live with each other.

As Adrienne Clarkson states in the Forward to *Our Story*, "[w]hen we read a work of literary art, it should never be a purely didactic exercise, a moralizing lesson. It is something that pleases us and helps us to understand what we haven't experienced, what we might not have known that we didn't know" (9). I would like my play to be a small contribution to this new narrative, a contribution which helps introduce people to things they did not know they did not know. The topic is important for the future of Canada and I believe the lessons we can learn from Tecumseh and the War of 1812 will help us move forward together.

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Here We Shall Remain

At the 1812 monument there is one rock with a plaque on it for the aboriginals.

Tecumseh's name is not mentioned.

Note: as the audience members enter, speakers can play a recording of a traditional welcome song from a local aboriginal group. It would be ideal to have band members agree to participate in the play and provide the live experience, but recordings can stand in when live participation is not available. As everyone is seated the lights go out.

Note: During this scene change a voice recording is heard, the audience listens in the dark. All voice recordings are listened to in the dark. It is a fragment from a speech TECUMSEH gave while recruiting tribes to his movement. The actor's voice can be heard reading this, as it is a moment of TECUMSEH giving one of his famous and animated speeches, for which he is remembered, the voice is to be dramatic and not understated, he is speaking vehemently to many people, trying to rouse them into action.

lights off

TECUMSEH RECORDING 1:

(120bpm drums)

The Great Spirit made all things. He gave the white people a home beyond the great waters. He supplied these grounds with game, and gave them to his red children; and he gave them strength and courage to defend them.

(pause)

lights up

PROLOGUE

SETTING: *Wash basin at centre stage. The brothers are shirtless, they are rinsing themselves off in preparation for the evening. Behind each brother is an animal skin shirt with feathers. The tone begins conversationally. Throughout the scene a drum beats slowly, rhythmically, as though in a dream, it is barely audible and around 60bpm.*

GESTURES: *For this section the gestures should be as follows: THE STAGE is the earth and the land, and blood references. THE AUDIENCE are the pale-faces. BEHIND THE AUDIENCE is the land over the ocean where the pale-faces originated. OFFSTAGE BEHIND ACTORS is where to point when referring to ancestors and their blood.*

PROPHET: You know brother, we have drenched our land in blood. And when it dries up she will be stained. What if the stain stays? What we have done cannot be undone.
(putting on shirt) Have you considered this during your campaign? *(hangs head)*
Because it has plagued me since the burning of Prophetstown.

TECUMSEH: Brother. This earth, our earth, was already stained with the blood of our people. The blood *(pause)* of our brothers. The blood *(pause)* of our mothers *(pause)* and fathers. *(moving across stage to PROPHET)* The very blood of our ancestors, in protest, has come through the ground we walk. To get our attention, to help us see that this land is our land. *(PROPHET turns away)* The land does not belong to the pale-faces who have stolen it. They have their land across the water. *(pauses while looking at audience members)* We do not go there. Why have they come here? They can return from wherever *(splashes water from basin toward audience)* the great waves brought them. Brother *(PROPHET looks at him now)*, the blood of the pale-faces is cleansing the land. We *(pauses)* are cleaning her off. And when we finish, she will thank us for what we have done, she will thank us with abundant growth and beauty, never before seen.

PROPHET: *(accusatory, hurt, guilty about Prophetstown)* But what about you? How often have you been covered in blood? How many times have I seen you with that thick shine?

TECUMSEH: *(curious)* What of me?

PROPHET: *(looking down, as though at blood)* All this blood. It hasn't been only the blood of the pale-faces you've had on you, *(disgust)* or that I've had on me.

TECUMSEH: *(trying to get THE PROPHET to look at him, calmly speaking as he walks toward him)* Do you think I don't consider this? You think I find it easy to face the families and friends of those who don't return?

PROPHET: No. *(frustrated, defeated)* I never said that.

TECUMSEH: When I have to clean their blood off my body, my hands, that is all that I think of. These things cannot be forgotten.

PROPHET: *(hands up beside him, not meaning to offend)* Excuse me. *(trying to turn away)* I'll leave it alone now.

TECUMSEH: No, look at me brother. Look at me.

PROPHET: And?

TECUMSEH: *(arms outstretched)* What do you see? *(drops arms)* Before you now, what do you see?

PROPHET: I see nothing.

TECUMSEH: *(Holding his hands out, turning them palm up, then palm down twice, looks from THE PROPHET to his own hands as he does so)* I have the cleanest hands in all the land. I have *(pause)* the purest hands. *(Holds one to THE PROPHET's face)* Look at them. *(THE PROPHET does not want to)* Closely. *(THE PROPHET looks at the hand in front of him, TECUMSEH shows his other hand)* They aren't stained. Is my body stained from the blood of the pale-faces? From the blood of our cousins?

PROPHET: *(turning away)* No.

TECUMSEH: *(Running his hands through his hair and stretching it out)* Is my hair?

PROPHET: *(Annoyed now)* No.

TECUMSEH: *(Moving so THE PROPHET has to look at him)* Was I not soaked recently?

PROPHET: Yes.

TECUMSEH: Were *(pointing to THE PROPHET)* you not soaked?

PROPHET: Yes.

TECUMSEH: I am not stained. And neither are you.

PROPHET: Ok, I...I understand.

TECUMSEH: Neither are our cousins. *(walking toward THE PROPHET until he is beside him, close enough to embrace)* And you know what?

PROPHET: What?

TECUMSEH: Neither, *(wraps arm around THE PROPHET)* brother, will the land be. *(walks offstage with his arm around THE PROPHET, who appears satisfied).*

lights out

TECUMSEH RECORDING 2:

(a drum beats at 120bpm)

Brothers, -We are friends; we must assist each other to bear our burdens. The blood of many of our fathers and brothers has run like water on the ground, to satisfy the avarice of the white men. We, ourselves, are threatened with a great evil; nothing will pacify them but the destruction of all the red men.

(pause)

lights up

SETTING: TECUMSEH is on one side of the stage, watching his wife MAMATE as she prepares some food, she is making quite the mess with flour, she is enjoying herself, and TECUMSEH is enjoying watching.

TECUMSEH: *(moving toward her)* I heard you died on me, giving birth to our son.

MAMATE: I heard that somewhere too (*looking offstage, flirtatiously avoiding eye contact*). (*looks to TECUMSEH*) I still can't believe I did that (*looks away*).

TECUMSEH: Think, (*pause, looks up, then back at her*) all the time with (*both hands gesture to his chest*) me you will miss. (*shakes head*) Terrible.

MAMATE: (*walking toward him*) That was my first concern when I heard I died. (*holding his shirt at chest level, looking up at him, smiling*) How (*pause*) did (*pause*) you know?

TECUMSEH: We are meant for each other (*trying to embrace her*).

MAMATE: (*letting go of his shirt, smiling at the hand prints left from the flour, turning her back, begins to walk away*) You weren't meant for (*looks back over her shoulder*) your other wife? Or (*pauses, points over the audience*) any of these other women who adore you?

TECUMSEH: (*somewhat serious now, slightly offended*) She did not care for our son. (*looks offstage*) I did what had to be done (*looking back at her*). I'm lucky my sister could take care of him.

MAMATE: (*smiling sneakily*) Good thing I love our boy then. (*mock serious*) Or I might face the wrath of TECUMSEH, (*mock fear*) fiercest (*stands proud, upright*) Shawnee. (*flirting*) Or so I hear, (*waving this sentence away*) probably from the same people who told me I died (*turns away*).

TECUMSEH: (*standing tall, mocking pride*) If you behaved as my other wife behaved (*pause*) you too would receive (*raises hand above his head, showing a level*) worse than my wrath. (*dramatically turning away in jest, mimicking her*) You would receive (*pause*) my silence.

MAMATE: (*flirting*) A crushing silence. (*shivers*)

TECUMSEH: (*curious*) Are you cold?

MAMATE: (*smiling*) No.

TECUMSEH: *(pushing head toward her)* Would you pretend to be?

MAMATE: *(looking away and up)* Why would I do that?

TECUMSEH: *(opening arms for an embrace, showing off his chest)* So you would need to be close to me.

MAMATE: *(brushing off his attempt)* There's a fire over there *(waves offstage)*, but you could always ask me to stay, persuade me. There's no harm in trying.

TECUMSEH: *(walking toward her)* I don't ask, *(pause)* woman, *(pause)* I take. *(grabs her and turns her)*

MAMATE: *(surprise)* Oh. *(regains her composure)* Well *(pause)*, I guess it is a *(pause)* bit chilly out now that you mention it *(pats hands and flour onto his chest)*.

TECUMSEH: *(bringing her close)* And I am fire.

MAMATE: *(pushing head up for a kiss, passionately)* Burn me.

TECUMSEH: *(standing up straight, mocking serious)* Our clothes, they might catch fire.

MAMATE: *(grabs the bottom of his shirt and begins lifting it)* Then we better take them off.

TECUMSEH: *(shirtless now, she puts hand prints on his chest)* I knew you were waiting around here to take advantage of me when *(waves hand over audience and stage)* no one is looking.

MAMATE: *(grabs the bottom of her shirt, lets go of shirt to shrug her shoulders)* I don't care. *(begins lifting shirt, stops part way up)* Are you suddenly a little boy, *(drops shirt again)* hiding from *(pointing to herself innocently)* me?

TECUMSEH: *(reaching for her shirt)* I don't know what that is.

MAMATE: I think *(waving hand toward audience)* the palefaces call it *(pause)* shame.

TECUMSEH: It sounds *(moves mouth around, as though rinsing something)* distasteful. *(she laughs, he looks serious now)* If I looked *(brushing hand toward audience)* like them I'd keep my clothes on all the time too.

MAMATE: *(turning her back to TECUMSEH, leaning back so he can embrace her)* Good thing you don't.

TECUMSEH: *(turns her around, face to face now)* I've never done this with a spirit before.

MAMATE: *(beginning to lift her shirt up)* And I've never wanted to be burned so badly before.

lights out

lights up

SETTING: *CHILDREN are gathered around two men, STORYTELLER and an older child YOUTH. CHILDREN are seated in arcs on either side of the men, allowing the audience to complete the circle. STORYTELLER and YOUTH are standing, arguing somewhat seriously.*

STORYTELLER: *(pointing accusingly)* What would you know? *(waves hand away)* You weren't there for it.

YOUTH: *(lifts one hand up, palm upward)* But I heard it differently. *(lifts other hand up)* That's all I'm trying to say.

STORYTELLER: *(points finger)* You heard it wrong then. *(points to his own chest)* I was there.

YOUTH: I know. *(waves hand)* You've said it enough times. But the person who told me their story the other day also said he was there.

STORYTELLER: Who told you? That's impossible.

YOUTH: *(crossing arms)* I'm not telling you.

STORYTELLER: *(touching YOUTH's shoulder with one arm)* I could tell you if he was there or not.

CHILDREN: *(laugh)*

YOUTH: You could confront him and call him a liar for ruining your *(pointing)* story. *(holding arms out)* Besides, we've all heard this.

STORYTELLER: *(waving hand toward CHILDREN)* And they want to hear it again. *(looking at CHILDREN now)* Don't they?

CHILDREN: *(nod their heads in agreement, excitedly)*

STORYTELLER: See. *(crossing arms)* You can leave if you don't want to hear it.

YOUTH: I do. *(laughing)* This is one of my favourite stories. *(shrugs)* I was just saying that there is a different version *(waving over the audience)* out there.

STORYTELLER: *(touches the back of his hand to YOUTH's shoulder gently)* Is it as good as mine?

YOUTH: *(crosses arms)* No.

STORYTELLER: *(laughing)* Because mine is the true one *(pulls hand away and smacks his shoulder with it)*. *(motions to the CHILDREN)* Sit down and be quiet. *(placing one hand on his own chest, head held high)* And don't forget to cheer for me at the end of course.

CHILDREN: *(laugh)*

STORYTELLER: Gather around children. Closer. Come closer. *(CHILDREN move closer together)* I will tell you of the time *(motioning offstage)* the great TECUMSEH let the American general know where he stood. It was a nice day. *(looking up)* Much like today actually. *(both arms arcing downward from above his head)* The sun was out. The birds *(holding each hand out, fingers touching thumb, opening and closing them)* were chirping back and forth, spreading their gossip in the wind, much like the children do *(looks around the room slyly)*. The smell of the white man was scaring off the animals *(waves hand in front of nose as if getting rid of a bad smell)* You know the one.

(CHILDREN agree and make faces of disgust looking at one another, including the audience as other CHILDREN). And there we were, many of us, so many *(pause, searching over audience)* I could not see the horizon. *(pointing past audience)* And there stood the white men, each dressed like the other. All scared *(shakes knees)*. They reached for their weapons as we approached. Such fear. *(points to CHILDREN and audience)* If all of you combined were afraid all at once, it still could not equal the fear of just one of those men. *(nodding head)* I know, hard to believe. But the animals who give themselves to us have less fear in their eyes than these men. We went to talk, and they have to hold their weapons to feel safe. *(arms open)* Such a strange manner of talking, children. *(one finger in the air)* You would never see that in our camps. The only man on the American side was their leader. *(pointing offstage)* TECUMSEH has great respect for him, *(pointing over audience)* and he feels the same of TECUMSEH. *(both hands are palm up, one pointed above the audience and the other offstage)* They are unlucky, children, for they could be such great friends *(waving hand towards the stage and then the gap before the audience)* if boundaries and lines were not created. *(waving his finger back and forth)* Never speak ill of this man, *(one finger pointed up again)* especially in TECUMSEH's presence. *(gesturing from his chest to all the CHILDREN)* I warn you. *(one hand to his ear)* Listen carefully to that warning *(pause)*. *(waving hand back and forth)* There are not a lot of men around who are to be given a great amount of respect. HARRISON is one of them. *(pointing over the audience)* Every other man from that side is not. TECUMSEH called him brother, children, and do you know why?

CHILDREN: *(blurting out answers at same time)* To be nice. Because they were related. Because he was making fun of him.

STORYTELLER: Because he believed it. *(standing up straight, proud, almost in defiance)* TECUMSEH stood there, immovable, like a great spirit among men, and he said:

lights out

lights up

SETTING: *TECUMSEH is alone on stage. He is addressing the audience as though they are WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON.*

TECUMSEH: How my brother can you *(points to himself)* blame me for placing little confidence in the *(gesturing over the audience)* promises of our fathers, *(pointing further than the gesture indicated)* the Americans? *(points at the audience)* You have endeavored *(points to the edge of the stage)* to make distinctions. *(points)* You have taken tribes aside. *(points)* You wish to prevent Indians from uniting and from considering *(points to stage and then to audience)* their land the common property of the whole. *(standing up straight)* I do not see how we can remain at peace with you if *(pointing accusingly)* you continue to do so *(pause)*. *(gesturing one hand toward audience, palm up)* Brother, this land that was sold, and the goods that were given for it, they were done *(pointing offstage)* only by the few If *(pointing to audience)* you continue to purchase land from *(pointing offstage)* those who have no right to do so, *(small gesture with arms up, almost a shrug)* I do not know what will be the consequence. I now wish you to listen to me, brother. I tell you so, *(standing up straight again)* because I am authorized by all the tribes to do so. *(points to chest)* I am at the head of them all. *(slightly hits his chest with a clenched fist)* I am a warrior, and all the warriors will meet in two or three moons from this. *(points to his chest)* Then I will call those chiefs who have sold the land to *(points to audience)* you, and shall know what to do with *(points offstage)* them. For brother, we want to save *(gestures over stage)* this land. We do not wish *(points to audience)* you to take it, and *(points a little more firmly at audience)* if you take it, *(points very firmly at audience, arm straight now)* you shall be the cause of the trouble *(waves hands between them)* between us.

lights out

lights up

SETTING: *TECUMSEH and THE PROPHET are standing together at center stage. They are holding their tomahawks and sharpening stones. Behind them rifles are standing against the wall. They do not look at the rifles throughout the scene. They are focused on the rhythmic movements sharpening the blades. The tomahawks are remarkably shiny considering their use over the years. As each speaker pauses they also pause the sharpening so they remain silent in movement and speech for the pauses.*

PROPHET: If it is true, *(pause)* what *(head gestures offstage)* they say, about what they do to the bodies *(pause, looking out over audience)* then I hope to die *(pointing with tomahawk above audience)* far away from here, *(brining tomahawk down, gesturing towards audience)* where they cannot touch me. *(looks at tomahawk, turns it over, says mostly to himself)* I don't want to know what these white scavengers will do with my body when I'm gone *(continues sharpening after a pause)*.

TECUMSEH: But *(pause, watching PROPHET sharpening the tomahawk)* you will be gone? *(looks back at his own tomahawk)*

PROPHET: *(sharpens once hard, then stops)* So?

TECUMSEH: *(gestures toward PROPHET with the tomahawk, casually)* So why worry?

PROPHET: *(sharpens quickly, offended)* Its still *(touches tomahawk to his chest)* my body.

TECUMSEH: *(looking at PROPHET)* Brother, *(eventually bringing his gaze back to the tomahawk)* as long as we die honorably it doesn't matter what they do to us.

PROPHET: *(gesturing a give-up motion with hands)* I'll be sure I behave myself about dying then. *(pausing while staring at TECUMSEH)* Should I sing my death song while it happens? *(pointing tomahawk offstage)* Like ROUNDHEAD's brother did? *(pointing tomahawk again for emphasis, this time the name Leatherlips tastes disgusting)* Leatherlips?

TECUMSEH: *(offended, points tomahawk in same direction as PROPHET)* He may have died singing his death song, for what he believed in. *(pause, sternly)* But he did not live honorably. *(pause while beginning to sharpen the tomahawk)* We do. *(pause, then looks at PROPHET)* And that is why they cannot take our spirit. *(continues sharpening)* It is not just the dying moment that decides our fate, brother. It is not so simple as earlier days.

PROPHET: *(curious now, less accusatory)* So the mutilation doesn't matter to you?

TECUMSEH: Look, brother, I don't want that. *(stops sharpening, places tomahawk on his lap)* But that won't stop them. *(waves hands over audience)* These serpents will do what it is that serpents do. All the wishes for change won't stop their nature. *(casually*

now, picks up tomahawk and checks the weight while holding the handle) Besides, *(flips the tomahawk, catches it, smiles, satisfied with the feel of it)* if you live long enough, you won't be able to *(pretends to lob a rock casually at audience here)* throw a stone without hitting a paleface.

PROPHET: *(mock serious now, proud)* Especially me.

TECUMSEH: *(curious, observing PROPHET)* Especially you?

PROPHET: *(gestures even more casually than TECUMSEH, barely any effort)* I throw far.

TECUMSEH: *(laughing)* Then let us pray that you throw hard.

PROPHET: *(both are checking over their tomahawks, inspecting them. 3 seconds of silence) (gestures toward the audience with his tomahawk)* That thought alone makes me sick, brother. *(places tomahawk on the stage in front of him, stands up, waves hand over audience as he paces)* I don't want to see them *(pause, opens other arm in opposite direction)* everywhere I go. *(grabs his belly)* I grab my belly, brother, hoping *(clenching tighter)* to keep it from *(gestures as though intestines are coming out of his stomach, beginning with fingers point inward and then arcing up and toward the audience)* coming out of me. *(TECUMSEH smiles but remains serious as he listens, TECUMSEH puts his tomahawk down) (PROPHET gestures across the audience)* These whites leave a taste in my mouth that I can't get used to *(spits)*. *(points at TECUMSEH)* Even when you speak with them, *(points offstage)* the redcoats or *(points to audience)* the monsters under HARRISON, that taste gets worse *(brushes off tongue dramatically)*. If that's even possible. *(laughs, sits down)*

TECUMSEH: *(shakes his head, laughs)* Sick. This much is true. *(gesturing with his head toward the audience)* The palefaces spread like an infection. *(pointing to stage area)* Earth is sick with *(pointing to audience)* them. Earth is sick from *(pointing to audience)* them. *(finger and thumb together quickly bouncing from audience member to another)* Tiny pebbles of destruction, with *(gesturing to include the entire audience)* numbers enough, and stupidity, to devour all that is beautiful. *(stands up)* Brother, there will be no beauty in this world with *(points to audience)* them around. Their infectious nature, their plague, guarantees that. *(walking toward PROPHET)* Our beautiful people will not be

beautiful (*pointing to audience*) if they get what they want. So sing your death song, die the hero, let them do what they want to our beautiful bodies because it will be far worse if we don't do this. (*wrapping arm around PROPHET*) I agree with you brother, but you have to see that this is our best chance.

PROPHET: (*pauses, allowing TECUMSEH to hold him, looks up at TECUMSEH, unable to readily accept the tales of mutilation*) But, these things they do the bodies. (*looking to his own stomach*) Strips of flesh? (*touching TECUMSEH's hair then back*) Scalps and strips? (*gestures over both their bodies*) This is the cost we have to pay to stop (*points to audience*) this infection?

TECUMSEH: (*holding PROPHET still with one arm*) The idea does nothing but (*clasps other hand to chest*) fuel my rage. (*removes arm and takes a couple steps away. Points to his own chest*) And if they wish to use my skin to sharpen their razors (*pause*) they'll never have dull razors (*PROPHET laughs immediately, TECUMSEH pauses feeling it set in, then laughs deeply*). They will only need one strip. Forever. (*looking at PROPHET again*) They are soft, (*lifts his shirt*) I am not. (*sits down, thumbs the blade of his tomahawk to check its sharpness, casual now*) Besides, (*holds his bleeding thumb to show PROPHET*) they probably don't have a blade good enough to take that strip, (*looks at the blood, sucks it off his thumb*) so I'm not worried. (*gesturing to the audience*) All those long swords are just for looks.

PROPHET: (*smiles, satisfied*) One strip. (*laughs*) Forever. I like that (*thumbs his tomahawk*).

TECUMSEH: (*flips tomahawk again, passes it from one hand to the next, places it on the stage, looks to THE PROPHET and points to the audience*) I hope I fetch a good price at the trading post. That would be a reward (*smiles*).

PROPHET: (*sharpens tomahawk again, not satisfied that his thumb isn't bleeding*) I can see them now (*looking at audience*), standing around yelling about how they have your rare flesh. (*touches the tomahawk to his shoulder and brushes it down along his arm*) They'll talk about the magical qualities of the great TECUMSEH's skin.

TECUMSEH: *(looking at his arms)* I bet some *(gesturing toward audience)* of them will be confused, won't know what the others are yelling about. *(pause)* Won't know who I am *(sits back casually)*.

PROPHET: *(pointing tomahawk toward TECUMSEH)* I think, by now, *(points to audience)* they know your name. *(pause, looks confusedly at TECUMSEH)* And if they don't, I wonder where exactly they've been these past many years *(thumbs the blade again, slices thumb, smiles as he watches the blood slowly form a droplet)*.

TECUMSEH: *(pointing to the audience first, then to himself as he speaks)* I bet they think I'm the plague. Fools.

PROPHET: *(wipes the blood onto his blade)* I hope that they do, brother. *(places tomahawk on the stage, stands)* I hope that *(points to TECUMSEH)* your name is whispered fearfully from *(pointing from one audience member to the next)* one intruder to the next. I hope it *(creeps toward TECUMSEH)* creeps and echoes through the hills *(pointing above the audience now)* when they are trying quietly to forget you. *(stands next to TECUMSEH who is smiling, part entertained and part proud)* You're the monster *(points to audience)* they warn their children about. *(faces audience, mocking fear)* Don't go out at night, the panther will get you. *(laughs, suddenly turns to TECUMSEH)* Remember those stories?

TECUMSEH: *(smiles fondly at the memories)* And we thought there were actual panthers *(one hand in a bouncing gesture directed above the audience)* jumping from one mountain to the other and the other. *(casually waves between himself and PROPHET)* That they'd be interested in getting us because we went out after nightfall *(laughs)*.

PROPHET: And every child knew to stay inside *(enjoying the memory and laughing more)*.

TECUMSEH: *(a hint of seriousness now)* And now we know better, don't we. *(hangs head, then looks at audience)* Now we know that the palefaces are the demons *(gesturing across audience)* lurking in the dark. *(looks to PROPHET)* They surprised us, didn't they? *(looking across the audience members)* If only their skin had been at least a

few shades darker (*looking back to PROPHET*) we might have been suspicious enough (*picks the tomahawk back up*).

PROPHET: (*pointing to TECUMSEH now*) And you are their panther. (*gestures across audience*) Whites everywhere keep their children inside and away from the real panther in the sky.

TECUMSEH: (*2 second pause while he considers this, shakes his head as he stands and passes the tomahawk from one hand to the next*) Poor palefaces.

PROPHET: (*places his tomahawk into its holster on his hip, confused*) Poor?

TECUMSEH: (*brushes the blade along his forearm, scratching it but not drawing blood*) They're going to be confused when my skin goes for sale at the trading posts (*holds scraped arm up*) and it isn't black.

lights out

TECUMSEH RECORDING 3

(a drum beats at 120bpm here)

Brothers,—The white men want more than our hunting grounds; they wish to kill our warriors; they would even kill our old men, women and little ones.

(*pause*)

lights up

SETTING: *TECUMSEH and PROPHET are facing INDIAN AGENT having a conversation. Behind them, along the wall, are some war clubs, some tomahawks, and rifles. In the middle of the stage at the back is TECUMSEH's ceremonial war chief headdress. To the side is a table with a large map on it. The body language shows the conversation is relaxed. ROUNDHEAD enters the stage and looks at the INDIAN AGENT.*

ROUNDHEAD: We need to talk about what to do with these palefaces.

TECUMSEH: I thought we were doing it.

ROUNDHEAD: There are still too many left.

AGENT: (*challenging*) What number would satisfy you?

ROUNDHEAD: (*not backing down*) Zero.

AGENT: What about those who have helped you? Like me?

ROUNDHEAD: (*still looking AGENT in the eyes*) A day will come when we aren't white enough for you too. Admit it.

AGENT: That's not true -

ROUNDHEAD: That is true and you know it -

AGENT: - and I won't admit to it.

ROUNDHEAD: (*looks to TECUMSEH and PROPHET*) Then whatever we are by then I won't want to be. (*laughs*)

AGENT: I don't see the humour here.

ROUNDHEAD: You wouldn't.

AGENT: We try to help. Not all of us are bad.

ROUNDHEAD: All of you are bad. All of you don't belong here. All of you should go home.

TECUMSEH: This man has done no harm to us, cousin, we can hear him out.

AGENT: What have we done to you? What have the Canadians done that is so wrong they deserve to die?

ROUNDHEAD: Northern palefaces, Southern palefaces, across-the-water palefaces. You only need us right now. Soon you won't need us. And then what? Do you think I believe that your palefaces will accept us? If we were accepted by either side we would not be here. I don't need you slaughtering us like tired animals when we're done defending your line in the dirt. Your line in *our* dirt.

AGENT: But...

ROUNDHEAD: Do you think they consider us equal around here?

AGENT: I don't know about ...

ROUNDHEAD: You don't know? I do. I'm done speaking with you. I came to speak with my cousins. You are not my cousin.

AGENT: Should I leave right now, should I come back later to talk?

TECUMSEH: It seems that way.

AGENT leaves stage

ROUNDHEAD: They are all the same. Some hide it, some don't. He tries to hide it. It does not work. What an insult that thing is. Believing I can be tricked?

TECUMSEH: I don't know if he thinks he can trick you.

ROUNDHEAD: Have you grown soft? Are you now friends with these creatures? These beasts?

TECUMSEH: We have met some kind ones. BROCK was a good man. Even if he was white. *(laughs)*

ROUNDHEAD: He still thought we were savages. He used that to scare people.

TECUMSEH: To scare enemies. And we benefited from that.

ROUNDHEAD: *(laughs, relieving tension)* He was right to do that.

PROPHET: He was?

ROUNDHEAD: I am a savage. I am prone to savage ways, cousins.

TECUMSEH: I can tell you this: that man *(pointing after AGENT)* would have no trouble believing you.

ROUNDHEAD: *(laughs)* I eat palefaces and, cousins, I am feeling hungry.

(TECUMSEH laughs, shakes his head)

PROPHET: Maybe it is the fry bread you smell that makes you hungry.

ROUNDHEAD: *(perking up dramatically)* Oh, yes, that will do just fine. *(smacks PROPHET's shoulder, all three head off stage)*

lights out

lights up

SETTING: *There is fresh bannock on a table. MAMATE is wiping her hands and laughing at TECUMSEH who has flour across his chest and back.*

MAMATE: *(sniffs above the bread)* I'm afraid I've burned the bread. *(flirtatiously looking at TECUMSEH)* You're not going to get rid of me, are you? *(gestures offstage)* Send our child to your sister.

TECUMSEH: *(walking toward table, avoiding eye contact)* Let me taste it before I answer.

MAMATE: *(crouching into his view)* If it is bad, its really your fault anyway. *(stands up once he finally looks at her)* You only have yourself to blame.

TECUMSEH: I think we remember this moment differently.

MAMATE: Well *(sitting in a chair)* I believe it started when you were telling me how lucky you are.

TECUMSEH: *(confused)* I was, was I? *(sits down)* That's right. *(leans toward her)* I was telling you how lucky I was to have allowed someone like you to love me *(smirks)*.

MAMATE: Oh, I am lucky?

TECUMSEH: *(ignoring the question)* You're welcome *(reaches for bread)*.

MAMATE: *(astonished)* Lucky that you picked me?

TECUMSEH: Of all the women out there, I did ok *(burns fingers on bread, drops it)*.

MAMATE: *(satisfied by the burnt fingers)* All those others, lined up, where are they now?
(looks across audience) Waiting for you somewhere?

TECUMSEH: *(alternately sucking and blowing on fingertips)* I doubt it.

MAMATE: Funny, so do I.

TECUMSEH: I chose you long ago, *(gestures across audience)* there are so many of them they've probably suffocated each other by now, fighting to get in line.

MAMATE: Well, luckily for the survivors, some of the men still have more than one wife.

TECUMSEH: *(holding up his burnt fingers)* I can barely handle you! *(waving the idea off)*
Why would I punish myself with more of the same?

MAMATE: *(astonished, leans in)* The same? *(closer now)* Really?

TECUMSEH: *(trying to look away, stumbling over his words)* Maybe the bread has cooled off now. *(hesitates to touch one again)* You want me to say it don't you?

MAMATE: *(looking away)* Every woman wants their man to say it.

TECUMSEH: *(sighs, stands, then kneels, takes her hand and gives in)* I am the luckiest man in *(gestures around the theatre)* the whole world.

MAMATE: *(smiles, looks into his face)* You certainly are.

TECUMSEH: And you are the luckiest woman *(lets go of her hand, takes a piece of bread and bites it).*

MAMATE: *(brushing crumbs off TECUMSEH while he makes a funny face at the burned bread)* Look at you, you're such a mess.

TECUMSEH: *(inspecting his chest and arms)* Oh, these *(pointing to different floury smeared handprints)* must be my hands leaving flour all over the place.

MAMATE: *(looks around the room, notices how much flour is everywhere for the first time)* I was wrong about something.

TECUMSEH: *(standing, looking around the room)* What's that?

MAMATE: I told the other women that you didn't need a second mother. *(looks offstage)*
I told them I was lucky to have a man who took care of himself. *(looks at TECUMSEH)*
Look at you, you're not even ready for this evening. *(waving, as if shoos him offstage)*
You should go clean yourself up.

TECUMSEH: *(mock offended)* I just did.

MAMATE: If you look like this, and those swooning women come around, they may stop lining up to be your wife and start lining up to be your mother. How would you like that?

TECUMSEH: *(looks over the stage, then over his body, takes a piece of bread, bites it, smiles even though it doesn't taste good and heads off stage).*

MAMATE: *(laughs quietly, watches until TECUMSEH is offstage, throws the bread offstage and pulls fresh, properly cooked bread from offstage, places it on the table, straightens her clothes, closes her eyes and smiles)*

lights out

TECUMSEH RECORDING 4

(a drum beats at 120bpm)

Brothers, when the white men first set foot on our grounds, they were hungry; they had no place on which to spread their blankets, or to kindle their fires. They were feeble; they could do nothing for themselves.

(pause)

lights up

SETTING: *CHILDREN are gathered around STORYTELLER for a story. The audience completes the circle.*

STORYTELLER: *(playfully teasing the children)* Children, you may not understand what he did. It may not make sense to you yet. But one day you will appreciate it, when you are older.

CHILDREN: *(eager for more stories, one speaks up)* Tell us what he did. Explain it. *(all children nod yes)*

STORYTELLER: He united us. Before him, *(waves hands across audience)* we were scattered. We were many. We did not all get along. *(waving behind him)* Many moons before there was great violence between us. The paleface destroyers arrived, trying to eat as much land as possible, they were hungry and that was their diet you know, and then TECUMSEH spoke up. *(2 second pause)* Someone had to.

CHILD: How many of us were there?

ANOTHER CHILD: Don't interrupt him! He'll stop.

STORYTELLER: *(laughing)* Children, it is ok to ask questions. I won't stop.

CHILD: So how many?

STORYTELLER: Too many to count. *(leaning in)* How high can you count?

CHILD: To one hundred!

STORYTELLER: Hmmm, not high enough. *(looking other children and audience)*
Anyone else?

ANOTHER CHILD: Two hundred!

STORYTELLER: *(mock suspicion)* Really? Prove it.

ANOTHER CHILD: *(pause between each number)* 1,2,3,4,5...

STORYTELLER: Ok, ok, I believe you *(waving hands down to make CHILDREN stop)*. But the numbers I'm talking about were so big *(proudly pointing to himself)* I could not count them.

CHILDREN: Ahhhhh.

STORYTELLER: So TECUMSEH spoke to some of those many and this is what he said to them:

lights out

lights up

SETTING: *TECUMSEH alone on stage, addressing the audience as his people.*

TECUMSEH: "Listen, my people, The past speaks for itself. (*arms open, looking to stage left*) Where today are the Pequots? (*arms still open, looking to stage right*) (*looking centre stage*) Where are the Narragansett the Powhatan, the Pokomoke, and many other once powerful tribes of our race? (*pointing over audience, from one end to the other*) Look abroad over this once beautiful country, and what do you see? Nothing but the ravages of the pale face destroyers. And so it will be with you-- (*pointing to audience left, centre then right*) Creeks, Chickasaws and Choctaws. The annihilation of our race is at hand, (*arms open to all*) unless we are united in one common cause against the common foe (*pointing over the audience*)."

lights out

lights up

SETTING: *TECUMSEH is sitting at centre stage, PROPHET is sitting to his right. They are each holding a bowl in one hand and a rod in the other, they are crushing ochre in the bowls, making it into a paste just right for face and body paint.*

PROPHET: (*inspects the bowl, continues slowly stirring*) I think this is almost ready. (*Looks to TECUMSEH's bowl*) I think I use the least amount of this.

TECUMSEH: ROUNDHEAD uses the most. That face scares me every time. I shiver.

PROPHET: (*laughs*) I wonder how the palefaces feel.

TECUMSEH: (*pauses, laughs, inspects his bowl*) I imagine they regret showing up. (*looks at PROPHET*) I would.

PROPHET: I'm glad he's on our side.

TECUMSEH: Yes, (*dips his finger into the bowl and tests the consistency of the ochre*). We are lucky for that.

PROPHET: Look, here he comes now. What do you think he's been doing?

TECUMSEH: I have learned not to ask.

(They look at each other for a second, then laugh)

ROUNDHEAD: *(Carrying his own bowl, making his own paint)* Cousins, how are you?

TECUMSEH: Well, you?

ROUNDHEAD: Very well.

PROPHET: What have you been doing?

ROUNDHEAD: *(sits down)* I see we had the same idea. *(Looks into their bowls, then at PROPHET)* Do you really want to know? *(Smiles)*

PROPHET: *(Looks to TECUMSEH who looks away laughing, looks back at ROUNDHEAD)* Maybe not.

(They all laugh loudly)

ROUNDHEAD: Your bowls are almost empty.

(TECUMSEH and PROPHET look at each other, TECUMSEH shrugs his shoulders, they look at ROUNDHEAD)

PROPHET: Was that a question?

ROUNDHEAD: It was an observation.

PROPHET: I don't know how you do it every time.

ROUNDHEAD: Do what?

PROPHET: Cover yourself with so much paint.

ROUNDHEAD: Its easy. I make a lot. Like this *(holds bowl out)*. Then, *(puts his hand into bowl and smears some paint on his face)* I put it on like this. I continue that until I'm done. Then I'm done. Its that easy.

(TECUMSEH laughs to himself while PROPHET shakes his head)

PROPHET: How do you breathe?

ROUNDHEAD: *(to TECUMSEH)* I worry about this one, cousin. He asks strange questions. This is also easy, I breath in, like this *(inhales deeply)*, and then I breath out, like this *(exhales deeply)*. This, also, is easy. I can take that white man's paper, the paper he likes to write about us on every day, and I can put down directions for you.

PROPHET: I shouldn't have said anything.

ROUNDHEAD: I'm surprised cousin.

PROPHET: At what?

ROUNDHEAD: How you've managed to survive this far without breathing.

PROPHET: I have you here to help.

ROUNDHEAD: You flatter me.

PROPHET: I should stop.

ROUNDHEAD: No, cousin, keep going. I'm enjoying this.

PROPHET: I couldn't tell.

(all three mix their paste for a few seconds, ROUNDHEAD leans back, looks around, proud of himself and lost in thought)

TECUMSEH: *(to ROUNDHEAD)* What are you thinking cousin?

ROUNDHEAD: Do you know what my favourite part is?

PROPHET: The killing.

ROUNDHEAD: Its more than that.

PROPHET: What more could there be?

ROUNDHEAD: I haunt them.

PROPHET: Haunt them?

ROUNDHEAD: I make sure they don't die right away. That way I can look into their eyes. I can hold their heads, gently, like this, in my hands. I get close. Close enough. Then I make sure that as I watch the life go out of their eyes the last thing they see is my face.

TECUMSEH: *(laughs, leans over to ROUNDHEAD and looks into his eyes)* You have nice eyes cousin, I'm sure they're happy about that.

ROUNDHEAD: *(big smile on his face)* That's not all cousins. Remember what they used to say? About making noise at night, to make sure the spirits go away?

PROPHET: Yes.

ROUNDHEAD: I make sure all of my men and women are quiet. All of the Wyandot are as silent as possible. The spirits can stay, do you know why?

PROPHET: No.

ROUNDHEAD: So that I may haunt them in their afterlife! *(laughs, followed by TECUMSEH's laugh)*. Talk to your white dog, I'll be back shortly. *(heads toward side of stage)*

TECUMSEH: White dog?

(AGENT enters as ROUNDHEAD leaves stage, they look at each other, ROUNDHEAD sniffs AGENT. AGENT smiles uncomfortably, sniffs back.)

ROUNDHEAD: I told you he was a dog. *(leaves stage)*

AGENT: *(confused, to TECUMSEH and PROPHET)* He sniffed first.

(all laugh)

PROPHET: I don't know about him sometimes.

TECUMSEH: I don't know either. I do know I'm happy he's on our side. He was listening when I said war on the dead, wasn't he?

AGENT: What were you talking about.

TECUMSEH: You don't want to know.

AGENT: The same as always then? (*sitting down*)

PROPHET: Yes. As always. (*to TECUMSEH*) He was listening brother. He is living it. (*pause, looks at AGENT, hesitates then continues*) He wants to kill all the palefaces we come across. The only thing stopping him is not having your permission.

TECUMSEH: I'm thinking I might just give it to him.

AGENT: (*nervously*) You'll let me know first, right?

PROPHET: (looking very serious) White man from across the water, we just gave him the permission he was asking for.

TECUMSEH: (stays silent, looks at AGENT, then continues mixing his paste)

AGENT: (clears throat) I guess I should go.

PROPHET: No no paleface, stay right there.

TECUMSEH: He already sniffed you, remember, he will find you anywhere you go now.

PROPHET: (laughs) He doesn't have our permission.

AGENT: (relieved) Oh good because -

PROPHET: Yet.

AGENT: (looks to TECUMSEH for reassurance, TECUMSEH checks his paste, looks at AGENT and smiles, AGENT laughs loudly)

lights out

TECUMSEH RECORDING 5

(drum beats at 120bpm)

Brothers, the white men despise and cheat the Indians; they abuse and insult them; they do not think the red men sufficiently good to live. The red men have borne many and great injuries; they ought to suffer them no longer.

(pause)

lights up

SETTING: *TECUMSEH and PROPHET are sitting beside each other, holding their bowls of paste. AGENT is sitting across from them, visibly upset. ROUNDHEAD is sitting down to the side, holding his bowl of paste but more interested and entertained by the conversation.*

AGENT: I told you, we are not leaving. I don't know where you heard this. It bothers me.

PROPHET: You're leaving. You're cowards. Cowards run.

AGENT: Why would we run? Why would we abandon you?

TECUMSEH: What my brother is trying to explain is that PROCTOR is a coward. You can smell it on him. He wreaks of it -

AGENT: That is uncalled for!

TECUMSEH: - Do not interrupt me.

(silence 2 seconds)

AGENT: You can have your say, and then I will have mine.

TECUMSEH: That is fair.

AGENT: Continue then.

TECUMSEH: PROCTOR does not look like a man ready for war. He does not look like a man ready to fight in the morning. He looks like a man ready to run. There is no need to have everything packed and ready to go when the fight is that way.

AGENT: We have not abandoned you before. We have not run away. We are still here. With you.

TECUMSEH: For how long?

AGENT: Until this war is over.

TECUMSEH: PROCTOR's war is for his border. We have been at war much longer than you. He shows little desire to defend our lands and great desire to defend his own.

AGENT: Where does this animosity come from?

TECUMSEH: Our backs are against the wall here. A wall which PROCTOR cares nothing for. BROCK understood what we wanted, understood why. If BROCK were here now this conversation would not be happening. This conversation would not be necessary.

AGENT: BROCK is dead.

TECUMSEH: To our sadness.

AGENT: We have shared our weapons. We have shared our men. We have followed you into your territories to defend your borders. We have shown no sign of letting up. Give us until tomorrow to show you this. Give us until tomorrow to prove ourselves.

TECUMSEH: I am hoping you don't run. I am hoping you don't plan to do this.

AGENT: We have let you lead us when strategy was needed. And you have done well for your cause and ours. Our causes are united, what don't you understand?

TECUMSEH: Our causes are united along your border. PROCTOR doesn't want to be here.

AGENT: Neither did BROCK.

TECUMSEH: He did his job. He led his men. He attacked when he should have attacked. He did not retreat.

AGENT: PROCTOR has only replaced BROCK. The goals have always been the same. You put too much into one man and don't give another man his due. That is what is happening here.

TECUMSEH: I don't trust PROCTOR.

AGENT: Why not?

TECUMSEH: Why should I?

AGENT: Why should he trust you?

TECUMSEH: (*pointing on emphasized words, holding back rage*) I have joined *your* cause. I have led *my* brothers, and *my* cousins into battle for *your* flags and *your* country. We have bled for you. Bled for your land and your borders. I want *my* land. There is no guarantee PROCTOR will give this to me. There is no sign he cares.

AGENT: You have not done this alone.

TECUMSEH: Of course not. But I gave these people my word of what I was fighting for. And then I joined with you. I should have left when BROCK died. And *I* have brought this onto my people. *I* have led them into this mess *your* PROCTOR is causing. *You* don't live with his mistakes.

PROPHET: Actually, brother, he does. It is us who do not.

AGENT: I can see I'm outnumbered.

TECUMSEH: Numbers have nothing to do with the truth.

AGENT: I don't know what to say that will make you happy.

TECUMSEH: There is nothing you can say that will make me happy.

AGENT: I see.

TECUMSEH: Why are you still here then? Why am I still looking at you?

AGENT: I'll go. (*begins walking offstage*)

TECUMSEH: And we are welcome for it.

AGENT: *(turns, puts his arms out, gives up, hangs his head and walks offstage)*

ROUNDHEAD: I'm impressed cousin. I was certain you would take his life for a moment.

TECUMSEH: That impresses you?

ROUNDHEAD: I was not so sure you had it in you still. *(looking offstage distractedly, turning back)* No offence.

TECUMSEH: *(laughs)* What would you do if I took his life there?

ROUNDHEAD: Ask for his head.

PROPHET: What would you do with head?

ROUNDHEAD: It would make a nice decoration. Would it not?

TECUMSEH: I was ready to kill him. I don't appreciate being lied to.

ROUNDHEAD: What stopped you?

TECUMSEH: I don't know if he's a liar or an idiot.

ROUNDHEAD: When will you know?

TECUMSEH: Time will tell.

PROPHET: And what will you do when they announce their plan for retreat?

TECUMSEH: Act surprised.

PROPHET: *(surprised)* What?

TECUMSEH: Give them the chance to feel honorable. So they can also feel generous leaving us their weapons while we do what they are too cowardly to do.

lights out

TECUMSEH RECORDING 6

(a drum beats at 120bpm here)

Brothers - My people wish for peace; the red men all wish for peace; but where the white people are, there is no peace for them, except it be the bosom of our mother.

(pause)

lights up

***SETTING: ROUNDHEAD and PROPHET are sitting across from each other.
PROPHET is annoyed and ROUNDHEAD seems to be enjoying himself.***

PROPHET: My brother is asking me to do something I cannot do.

ROUNDHEAD: What is that?

PROPHET: He is asking me to make sure I live through tomorrow, no matter what happens.

ROUNDHEAD: *(looks offstage, surprised)* He asked you this?

PROPHET: He ordered this.

ROUNDHEAD: When?

PROPHET: Earlier today.

ROUNDHEAD: Interesting.

PROPHET: I am no coward.

ROUNDHEAD: Cousin, I never said you were.

PROPHET: I am no coward.

ROUNDHEAD: You know cousin, I'm sure he had his reasons. He has them, right?

PROPHET: Of course he does. He does not ask me to leave lightly.

ROUNDHEAD: Well.

PROPHET: Well what?

ROUNDHEAD: Are you going to share those reasons?

PROPHET: I want to. I feel like I should.

ROUNDHEAD: If you don't this will be awkward. Both of us sitting here, looking at each other with bowls of red paint in our hands.

PROPHET: I am no coward.

ROUNDHEAD: Cousin, I do not say this enough. In fact, I do not say this at all. You are the reason I am here. Remember?

PROPHET: (*brushing the compliment off, partially in disbelief*) Yes I remember.

ROUNDHEAD: I don't think you do. I joined your movement cousin. Not his. This is still your movement, you both share it now. He would not be here if it weren't for you. Cousin, none of us would. Do you think we have forgotten this?

PROPHET: I had another vision.

ROUNDHEAD: It does not seem to bring good news.

PROPHET: It doesn't.

ROUNDHEAD: Cousin, I want you to remember this. Whatever happens tomorrow, whatever I have said to you recently, I owe you my life. You and your brother.

PROPHET: You don't have to say these things to me.

ROUNDHEAD: I know I don't. The things I did, the things I do, the things I will do, I do them because of you. Your prophecy woke me up. I wasn't alive until I heard you speak. And do you know what?

PROPHET: What?

ROUNDHEAD: I had no idea the evils my brother was up to. That creature LEATHERLIPS sold us to the white man. He said he was helping us.

PROPHET: *(relaxes, laughs)*

ROUNDHEAD: He was helping himself. I am not for sale.

PROPHET: He learned that, didn't he?

ROUNDHEAD: Did he ever cousin. At least he left this life like a warrior. But that does not make up for what he did while he was alive.

PROPHET: No, it doesn't.

ROUNDHEAD: Do you understand?

PROPHET: I think so.

ROUNDHEAD: Cousin, if your brother wants you to run then you must run. I don't fear death. He does not fear death. Neither of us thinks you do.

PROPHET: I don't. I fear being called a coward.

ROUNDHEAD: If someone calls you a coward they have not met you, they certainly have not met this AGENT and his PROCTOR. *(laughs)* Would a coward create this movement? Would a coward help lead us into battle? I'm insulted cousin.

PROPHET: *(laughs)* Insulted?

ROUNDHEAD: You think I could be inspired by a coward. I may have to teach you a lesson.

PROPHET: Thank you, cousin.

ROUNDHEAD: For what?

PROPHET: Thank you.

ROUNDHEAD: Now stop being such a coward and run.

PROPHET: *(laughs)* I do feel better now.

ROUNDHEAD: Better? Good enough to outrun those bullets I hope.

PROPHET: Maybe I'll just sneak away.

ROUNDHEAD: Whatever it takes cousin.

PROPHET: Can you try not to tell my brother that I have told you this?

ROUNDHEAD: Only if you tell me what you saw?

PROPHET: I should have known. Nothing is easy with you is it cousin?

ROUNDHEAD: Never. *(both laugh)*

lights out

TECUMSEH RECORDING 7

(a drum beats at 120bpm here)

Brothers,—The white people are like poisonous serpents: when chilled, they are feeble and harmless; but invigorate them with warmth, and they sting their benefactors to death.

(pause)

lights up

SETTING: *MAMATE is moving fresh bannock offstage. She has left the burned bannock on the table, anticipating TECUMSEH's attempts to eat some.*

TECUMSEH enters. MAMATE looks up briefly, smiles, and continues preparing more flour to cook. TECUMSEH forces a smile and turns around, looking offstage, lost in thought.

MAMATE: That's a serious face.

TECUMSEH: You can't even see my face

MAMATE: *(lightly)* I felt you give it.

TECUMSEH: *(giving up, moving toward her)* I'm growing tired of this fighting. We are busy enough, we don't need this.

MAMATE: What fighting?

TECUMSEH: (*trying to hold her from behind now*) You're not even paying attention to me.

MAMATE: (*looking back*) Yes I am. I can do more than one thing at a time. I'm a woman, (*shakes her hips*) remember.

TECUMSEH: I remember.

MAMATE: I thought you liked fighting.

TECUMSEH: I don't.

MAMATE: You're really good at it for someone who doesn't like it. Are you sure?

TECUMSEH: (*casually, but upset*) You should know more than anyone that I never wanted this.

MAMATE: But you did want this. You've always been angry.

TECUMSEH: I do want this. (*grabs a piece of bannock*)

MAMATE: (*swats his hand away*)

TECUMSEH: (*tries again, growls mockingly*)

MAMATE: There's that anger I was telling you about.

TECUMSEH: (*stepping back*) I've always had reason for anger though. But this is something else.

MAMATE: We all have our reasons.

TECUMSEH: I was forced to act on it. Forced into this situation. Just because I'm angry doesn't mean I want all of this.

MAMATE: All of what?

TECUMSEH: Brothers turning on brothers. This one trying to intimidate that one. That one spreading dissent and pretending its a joke. The other ones wanting to kill our friends and brothers because they are white. This is what we were trying to stop when we started this.

MAMATE: *(looking at him trying not to smile)*

TECUMSEH: What?

MAMATE: *(smirking)* Tell me how you really feel.

TECUMSEH: I also didn't come here for this *(gesturing between them)*

MAMATE: *(looking down confused)* The floor? I wouldn't say I love it but I wouldn't go that far.

TECUMSEH: *(laughing)* The fight. I didn't want the fight.

MAMATE: Oh, is that what you think this is? A fight?

TECUMSEH: It feels like one.

MAMATE: *(flirting, hand on his forehead)* Are you feeling ok?

TECUMSEH: *(confused)* Yes. Why?

MAMATE: You're acting strange. If you think this is a fight *(punches his chest)* then I have to ask myself what you've been doing all these years? Have I been worried for nothing?

TECUMSEH: *(laughing)* What is it you think we do?

MAMATE: Is that what's been going on? You and your brother running around the wilderness, playing between the trees, wearing your animal hides and your make-up *(touches paint)* which is still wet -

TECUMSEH: *(quickly rubs his face against hers leaving some paint behind)* I didn't know. How about now?

MAMATE: (*smiling*) You run around with each other and banter back and forth? Is that what fighting is to you?

TECUMSEH: (*walking past her to the table*) Sometimes we banter at other people too.

MAMATE: Do you rub faces too?

TECUMSEH: (*taking a piece of bannock, smelling it*) Only with the cute ones.

MAMATE: (*taking the bannock and holding it away*) What's his name?

TECUMSEH: (*staring at the bannock, thinking*)

MAMATE: (*puts the bannock against his chest*) There aren't any cute white ones. I'm not worried.

TECUMSEH: (*quickly takes a bite in case she takes it away from him*) I thought you said you liked BROCK?

MAMATE: (*brushing crumbs off his chest*) We all liked him. He was a man. He wasn't cute. (*walking away*) There is a difference you know.

TECUMSEH: Oh.

MAMATE: I know what you're thinking, don't worry, I think you're cute (*shrugs shoulders*)

TECUMSEH: I'm cute?

MAMATE: Yeah, I'd rub my face on yours in the woods.

TECUMSEH: (*pointing with bannock in hand toward the table*) Don't forget about here from earlier.

MAMATE: That was before I found out you spend your time playing in the woods bickering with your brother and your friends.

TECUMSEH: (*stepping towards her*) We bicker like men. (*looks away, mock pride, turns back imploringly*) That must count for something.

MAMATE: How do men bicker?

TECUMSEH: *(grabs her arms quickly, dropping bannock in process)* Dangerously. *(pulls her close)* People get hurt when cute men like me bicker.

MAMATE: *(gives him a quick kiss)* I'd like to see that some day. *(remembers something, leaves quickly offstage)*

TECUMSEH: *(looking at the bannock on the floor, picks it back up, blows it off, gets ready to bite it, looks toward where she exited. Solemnly now)* No. No you don't. *(takes a bite)*

MAMATE *(offstage)* And pick that up, you can't throw my fry bread around like that.

TECUMSEH: *(looks at the piece in hand, laughs, shakes his head and walks to the table. Looks around slyly, takes a few pieces off the table and bites each one once, putting them back. Quickly walks offstage with his first piece in hand)*

lights out

TECUMSEH RECORDING 8

(a drum beats at 120bpm here)

The white people came among us feeble; and now that we have made them strong, they wish to kill us, or drive us back, as they would wolves and panthers.

(pause)

lights up

SETTING: *ROUNDHEAD is standing next to STORYTELLER on the left side of a table. The table is at centre stage. Behind them are rifles. On the table are tomahawks. On the other side of the table are war clubs piled on the ground. TECUMSEH is looking at the pile while INDIAN AGENT is taking them off the pile one at a time and lining them against the wall. As the lights come up ROUNDHEAD has his arm raised, ready to point.*

ROUNDHEAD: *(points at AGENT while looking at TECUMSEH. He is angry but controlled.)* And you would what? Accommodate them? *(points toward audience)* Respect their boundaries? Their cages? *(arms open)* Welcome their world? *(points at table)* At the cost of ours?

TECUMSEH: *(calmly)* I would never accommodate them. And he isn't one of them.

ROUNDHEAD: It does not seem that way, brother.

AGENT: What have I done to you?

ROUNDHEAD: You represent them. You. You stay here to monitor us. You report back about us. You aren't here with us.

AGENT: I report back about what we're doing so they can plan better. My reports are open for everyone to see. Do you want to read them before I send them next time? -

ROUNDHEAD: I don't trust you

AGENT: - Will that make you happy? Will that get you to leave me alone?

ROUNDHEAD: You can only do one thing to make me happy.

AGENT: What's that?

ROUNDHEAD: You don't want to know.

AGENT: Yes I do. I'm trying to help.

ROUNDHEAD: Die.

(silence)

AGENT: *(looks to TECUMSEH, across to STORYTELLER)* Do you all feel that way? What am I doing here?

ROUNDHEAD: That's my question.

TECUMSEH: Cousin, think about what you're saying.

ROUNDHEAD: *(staring at AGENT)* I think about it all the time.

AGENT: *(staring back, not intimidated)* Well, I was wrong.

ROUNDHEAD: *(puzzled, surprised)* What?

AGENT: I didn't want to know.

ROUNDHEAD: *(confused)* Know what?

AGENT: What I could do to help you.

(they stare at each other in silence for a couple seconds, then both laugh. All laugh.)

STORYTELLER: Are we done here?

ROUNDHEAD: I'm not done.

TECUMSEH: You never are.

ROUNDHEAD: You like that about me.

TECUMSEH: I do.

AGENT: If you're going to let him say the same things he always says I'm going to go check on the food. I'm sorry but I try to limit the number of times a day I hear about people wanting to torture and kill me and everyone I know.

ROUNDHEAD: I can talk about that all day.

AGENT: No surprise.

ROUNDHEAD: Go write your letters white man. Tell them I'm causing trouble.

AGENT: *(as he walks away)* They don't care about you.

(AGENT exits)

ROUNDHEAD: *(looking at each person with a smirk on his face)* They should.

TECUMSEH: *(trying not to laugh)* I agree with you there.

Lights out

TECUMSEH RECORDING 9

(drum beats at 120bpm)

Brothers, The white people send runners amongst us; they wish to make us enemies, that they may sweep over and desolate our hunting grounds, like devastating winds, or rushing waters.

(pause)

Lights up

SETTING: This happens right after the INDIAN AGENT leaves in the previous scene. STORYTELLER, TECUMSEH and ROUNDHEAD are present.

STORYTELLER: Why do you do that to him everytime? That man must be living in terror here. *(laughs)*.

ROUNDHEAD: I don't do that *everytime*.

TECUMSEH: *(laughing where the periods are)* Yes. Yes you do. Every time. *(moves to the pile of war clubs, begins looking them over one at a time and sorting them against the wall)*

ROUNDHEAD: I'm good at it. Every man is an artist of something right?

STORYTELLER: Who said that? Did you just quote me?

ROUNDHEAD: My art is terrorizing little white men.

TECUMSEH: I don't think he's afraid of you.

STORYTELLER: I do. *(looks at rifles, picks one up and inspects it)* Who wouldn't be?

TECUMSEH: You know that every time you do that I have to answer for it. I have to tell him he is safe. I have to reassure him. Not you.

ROUNDHEAD: *(smacks STORYTELLER's arm)* We were right, he's afraid of me.

STORYTELLER: I don't think that's what he wanted you to get out of that. (*puts one rifle back against the wall, away from the others, picks up another one, holds it out and looks down the barrel, inspects the sides of it*).

ROUNDHEAD: That's what I heard.

TECUMSEH: I think you stress him out. He handles it well.

ROUNDHEAD: (*shrugs it off*) I wouldn't hurt him.

TECUMSEH: So long as I'm alive.

ROUNDHEAD: (*thinks about this for a moment*) Probably.

STORYTELLER: If you're done maybe you can help them cook. (*smirks*)

ROUNDHEAD: I'm done with that pale-face.

STORYTELLER: Done playing with him?

ROUNDHEAD: I enjoy myself.

STORYTELLER: Nobody doubts that.

ROUNDHEAD: (*curious*) Does it offend you when I use the word pale-face?

STORYTELLER: (*pauses, looks over the rifles*) I never thought about it until now.

ROUNDHEAD: You're one of them, after all.

STORYTELLER: (*controlled anger, staring at ROUNDHEAD*) Am I?

ROUNDHEAD: You look like one.

TECUMSEH: That's enough cousin. He is my brother. You know that.

ROUNDHEAD: Maybe.

STORYTELLER: (*pointing offstage*) I don't have that man's patience. And I don't stand around playing with words.

ROUNDHEAD: All you have is words.

STORYTELLER: Go find someone else to terrorize. I'm not afraid of you.

TECUMSEH: (*holding a club out, pointing it at them*) What are you two even fighting about? We are running out of time.

ROUNDHEAD: I think I'm just in the mood to fight.

STORYTELLER: When aren't you?

TECUMSEH: That isn't helping.

ROUNDHEAD: I still don't think we should accommodate these whites anymore.

TECUMSEH: Is that how this seems to you?

ROUNDHEAD: I see us and I see them. And skin colour has nothing to do with it.

TECUMSEH: We all look the same to you now, is that it?

ROUNDHEAD: I cannot tell the accommodationists from the pale-faces. There is no difference.

TECUMSEH: What about the pale-faces who fight with us?

ROUNDHEAD: The Canadians?

TECUMSEH: The ones we have raised as Shawnee.

STORYTELLER: I'm right here you two.

ROUNDHEAD: I still don't trust them. (*pointing at TECUMSEH*) You do.

STORYTELLER: What is wrong with the Canadians?

ROUNDHEAD: They are all the same.

TECUMSEH: They have proven themselves.

ROUNDHEAD: I think you're accommodating them. Our purpose here is to get rid of them all.

TECUMSEH: Our purpose here is to protect our lands. And if that means we work with some of them to get rid of the others then it is an easy choice. You said before you understood this. What changed?

ROUNDHEAD: We are sitting here, pretending like they won't abandon us tomorrow. We should do something.

TECUMSEH: I thought we accepted they will run. So what is there to do now?

ROUNDHEAD: Let me handle this.

TECUMSEH: What? Let you kill them all?

ROUNDHEAD: Yes.

TECUMSEH: What would I tell everyone when they hear and see us killing our allies?

ROUNDHEAD: I will kill them in their sleep. Nobody will hear anything.

TECUMSEH: And then what do we do?

ROUNDHEAD: Retreat to a safe position. Defend from there.

TECUMSEH: And what do we tell the palefaces from our safe position?

ROUNDHEAD: Blame it on the Americans. They have done savage things already. It is no stretch of the imagination. We set up a little bit further away, for an ambush, and we heard screams in the night and saw the massacre. We moved to a different ambush position. That's all there is to it.

TECUMSEH: *(thinking about this plan for a second)* No cousin, we can't do this.

ROUNDHEAD: You can't do this. I can.

TECUMSEH: I do not want you to do this.

ROUNDHEAD: This plan will work. Our only other option is to let those cowards abandon us and leave us with two choices: cowardly run off or die.

TECUMSEH: Those are our options then.

ROUNDHEAD: Fine.

TECUMSEH: Fine you agree? Or: fine I'm going to kill everyone anyway?

ROUNDHEAD: Fine I agree. But the offer is still on the table.

TECUMSEH: And it will stay there.

(characters look back and forth at each other, ROUNDHEAD is the only relaxed person on stage)

lights out

TECUMSEH RECORDING 10

(a drum beats at 120bpm here)

Brothers we all belong to one family; we are all children of the Great Spirit; we walk in the same path; slake our thirst at the same spring; and now affairs of the greatest concern lead us to smoke the pipe around the same council fire!

(pause)

lights up

SETTING: STORYTELLER is standing at centre stage. CHILDREN sit around him in a circle, the audience completes the circle.

STORYTELLER: CHILDREN, have I told you the story of the time TECUMSEH -

CHILDREN: Tell us about the earth, tell us about him shaking the world.

STORYTELLER: Oh my children, haven't you heard that one before.

CHILD: No.

STORYTELLER: Are you sure?

CHILD: Yeah.

STORYTELLER: Then how do you know he shook the earth?

CHILD: We heard he shook it. We don't know how

STORYTELLER: (*silence for a couple seconds*) I guess I can tell you that one then.

CHILDREN: (*cheer*)

lights out

lights up

SETTING: *TECUMSEH is standing at centre stage. He is alone. He is dressed in his warrior clothes with his headdress on.*

TECUMSEH: In defiance of the white warriors of Ohio and Kentucky, I have traveled through their settlements, once *our* favorite hunting grounds. No war-whoop was sounded, but there is blood on our knives. The Pale-faces felt the blow, but knew not whence it came. Accursed be the race that has seized on our country and made women of our warriors. Our fathers, from their tombs, reproach us as slaves and cowards. I hear them now in the wailing winds. The Muscogee was once a mighty people. The Georgians trembled at your war-whoop, and the maidens of my tribe, on the distant lakes, sung the prowess of your warriors and sighed for their embraces. Now your very blood is white; your tomahawks have no edge; your bows and arrows were buried with your fathers. Oh! Muscogees, brethren of my mother, brush from your eyelids the sleep of slavery; once more strike for vengeance; once more for your country. The spirits of the mighty dead complain. Their tears drop from the weeping skies. Let the white race perish. They seize your land; they corrupt your women; they trample on the ashes of your dead! Back, whence they came, upon a trail of blood, they must be driven. Back! back, ay, into the great water whose accursed waves brought them to our shores! Burn their dwellings! Destroy their stock! Slay their wives and children! The Red Man owns the country, and the Pale-faces must never enjoy it. War now! War forever! War upon the living! War upon the dead! Dig their very corpses from the grave. Our country must give

no rest to a white man's bones. This is the will of the Great Spirit, revealed to my brother, his familiar, the Prophet of the Lakes. He sends me to you. All the tribes of the north are dancing the war-dance. Two mighty warriors across the seas will send us arms. Tecumseh will soon return to his country. My prophets shall tarry with you. They will stand between you and the bullets of your enemies. When the white men approach you the yawning earth shall swallow them up. Soon shall you see my arm of fire stretched athwart the sky. I will stamp my foot at Tippecanoe, and the very earth shall shake.

lights out

lights up

SETTING: *STORYTELLER is at centre stage, CHILDREN are in a circle, the audience completes the circle.*

STORYTELLER: And you all know what happened when he arrived at Tippecanoe right?

CHILDREN: The earth began to shake.

STORYTELLER: It did CHILDREN. And did it ever shake.

lights out

TECUMSEH RECORDING 11

(a drum beats at 120bpm here)

Brothers,—The white men are not friends to the Indians: at first, they only asked for land sufficient for a wigwam; now, nothing will satisfy them but the whole of our hunting grounds, from the rising to the setting sun.

(pause)

lights up

SETTING: *TECUMSEH and PROPHET are standing facing each other. They are each holding their bowls of paint. They are only about one foot apart. The*

ceremonial headdress is behind them to one side of the stage, in the corner.
Directly behind them are their war clubs, tomahawks and two rifles.

TECUMSEH: *(holds his bowl out with one hand, thoughtfully)* If Brock were here we would not be so concerned with tomorrow.

PROPHET: *(takes TECUMSEH's bowl and hands TECUMSEH his bowl)* The agent tells me this PROCTOR is some sort of career soldier. What does that even mean?

TECUMSEH: It means he has been doing this almost as long as us. *(laughs)*

PROPHET: *(laughs, then places his fingers into TECUMSEH's bowl of paint and mixes it around)* They always want to sound important. These pale faces. They try to sound better than they are. What's wrong with being what you are?

TECUMSEH: They all seem so, I don't know what the word is I'm looking for.

PROPHET: *(raises fingers toward TECUMSEH's face)* Uncertain.

TECUMSEH: That's the word!

PROPHET: Don't move like that, brother, unless you want us all to laugh when we see you.

TECUMSEH: Maybe the Americans will learn what it is to laugh. And they'll stop all of this.

PROPHET: They don't seem happy. *(puts two fingers on TECUMSEH's hairline and draws them down toward his eyebrow)* I don't see happy people acting the way they act.

TECUMSEH: *(turns his head slightly for PROPHET)* There are too many of them. Do you think the English will fight at the beginning or run as soon as it starts?

PROPHET: *(uses the palm of his hand to adjust TECUMSEH's chin)* I doubt they'll show up.

TECUMSEH: They will show up so they can look good.

PROPHET: Too bad they have grown scared. We did well before. *(makes a line with paint from below the eye down his cheek and to his chin)*

TECUMSEH: We can still do well.

PROPHET: Well enough?

TECUMSEH: Tomorrow.

PROPHET: Tomorrow what? *(reapplies the first line he drew on the forehead)*

TECUMSEH: We will find out how well we do. I'm not worried.

PROPHET: *(reapplies the second line on TECUMSEH's face, remains silent)*

TECUMSEH: Have you thought about sharing your dream?

PROPHET: I have.

TECUMSEH: And?

PROPHET: I can't.

TECUMSEH: Can't or won't?

PROPHET: What good will it do?

TECUMSEH: *(taking the bowl from PROPHET's hands and placing it on the ground)*

PROPHET: What good will it do?

TECUMSEH: *(adjusting PROPHET's face so he can draw lines across it with the paint)*
They should know what you have to say.

PROPHET: Look at what has come from my first prophecy.

TECUMSEH: Look at all the good that has come from it.

PROPHET: *(turning to face TECUMSEH)* This is heavy, I have been feeling like it is too heavy for me.

TECUMSEH: *(turning PROPHET's face back to the position he had it in before, he dips his fingers into the paint and draws a line from PROPHET's forehead to his missing eye)*
It is not too heavy for you. *(gently rubs the paint along his scar on his eyebrow)*

PROPHET: It aches when the cold weather comes.

TECUMSEH: *(draws another line parallel to the first)* So does my leg. I know the cold is coming because it aches before the weather changes.

PROPHET: At least yours isn't self inflicted. *(laughs)*

TECUMSEH: *(laughs)* Don't make me laugh, you may end up looking like ROUNDHEAD.

PROPHET: Are you planning on spilling it, brother?

TECUMSEH: I plan on hiding my mistake by dumping it on your head.

PROPHET: Then we should stand very still. I don't think I could handle all that paint.

TECUMSEH: My leg has ached for a long time now. This winter is long. It came early.

PROPHET: My eye has only been hurting the past couple weeks.

TECUMSEH: *(gently rubs the paint beside the scar)* Imagine where we would be if you had not had your first vision. If you had not shared it.

PROPHET: I understand. But we have come so far. And with the Canadians running it feels like it doesn't matter if I share it.

TECUMSEH: But it might.

PROPHET: Do you want to know the real reason I won't share it?

TECUMSEH: *(rubs paint from under his scar to the bottom of his chin)* I do.

PROPHET: What if they are prophecies of what will come?

TECUMSEH: How do you mean?

PROPHET: What if we cannot change them?

lights out

TECUMSEH RECORDING 12

(drum beats at 120bpm)

Brothers - My people wish for peace; the red men all wish for peace; but where the white people are, there is no peace for them, except it be the bosom of our mother.

(pause)

lights up

SETTING: PROPHET is on his back, at centre stage. He is on a table. The stage is darker than any other scene in the play. There is some mist from a fog machine floating about the stage. The PROPHET speaks slowly, hauntingly, the scene takes on the tone of the nightmare he has awoken from. A drum beats slowly, at 50bpm, and it feels like time is slowing down.

PROPHET: I died, and was carried in a dream by the Master of Life down into the spirit world, until we came to a parting of the ways. To the right lay the road to paradise open only to the virtuous few. To the left, I saw an army of forsaken souls stumbling on towards three dark houses – fearful dwellings of punishment and pain. I saw unrepentant drunkards forced to swallow molten lead. And when they drank it their bowels were seized with an exquisite burning. At the last house their torment was inexpressible. I heard their screams, crying pitifully – roaring like the falls of a great river.

(pause, silence for three seconds as lights dim, a distant recording of groans can be heard, after a few seconds the distant sound of screams and crying can be heard with the sound of groans, the noises blend together until they sound like a powerful river, the sound of a river flowing grows louder until the lights go down)

lights up

SETTING: MAMATE and TECUMSEH are standing at the table. The ceremonial headdress is on the table. The scene starts with them on either side of the table

looking at the headdress. They both move together behind the table and size up the feather arrangement.

MAMATE: People are nervous. (*looks at TECUMSEH now*) They're wondering what has come over you. They told me that. That they're worried.

TECUMSEH: People should not worry so much.

MAMATE: (*smiling, proud*) Who told you that?

TECUMSEH: (*flirting*) I don't remember. Someone said it once. They couldn't have mattered much if I can't remember their name.

MAMATE: (*ignoring the flirt*) But they still worry. (*points offstage*) And them, they are worried right now.

TECUMSEH: (*pointing to headdress*) Are you going to help with this or not?

MAMATE: Are you ignoring me?

TECUMSEH: (*reaches for head dress, begins to adjust feathers.*)

MAMATE: (*moves to headdress, holds one side and starts adjusting feathers*) Want to know what they're saying?

TECUMSEH: I don't care what they're saying.

MAMATE: That's not true.

TECUMSEH: I do care. But I already know what it is.

MAMATE: (*looking over the headdress*) They think you want to run away.

TECUMSEH: I don't want to run.

MAMATE: But you know how they are. One person says something. They pass it along. Before we know it someone across the water is talking about your personal business.

TECUMSEH: What have you been saying?

MAMATE: Oh, I just listen.

TECUMSEH: I'm sure you do.

MAMATE: Occasionally I tell them things.

TECUMSEH: What kind of things?

MAMATE: You know. Things like how cute you are when you're talking about running around the woods with your friends.

TECUMSEH: Do you tell them how we have a new weapon for fighting the Americans?

MAMATE: No.

TECUMSEH: Why not?

MAMATE: I don't know what it is.

TECUMSEH: Sure you do. You created it.

MAMATE: *(helps turn the headdress around without messing up the feathers they have already adjusted)* What did I do?

TECUMSEH: You made those unbreakable fry breads. We plan on throwing them at the white men until they are beaten in to submission.

MAMATE: *(looking at him slyly, somewhat embarrassed)* You -

TECUMSEH: We don't think it will take long. The war will be over soon. You're our new hero.

MAMATE: - That's enough out of you.

TECUMSEH: Our new hope. MAMATE the genius of warfare wins freedom for all red men.

MAMATE: And women.

TECUMSEH: Them too.

MAMATE: I guess I have to do something don't I?

TECUMSEH: What do you have to do?

MAMATE: If you run away, as planned, then someone has to stay and throw those deadly breads at the white men.

TECUMSEH: *(laughs, causing MAMATE to laugh as well)* I have wasted so much time.

MAMATE: Fixing your headdress?

TECUMSEH: Preparing the weapons. Checking the clubs for cracks, sharpening the tomahawks, cleaning and adjusting the rifles. All we needed was your fry bread.

MAMATE: I remember being distracted by something. That may have caused the bread to burn. It is best for everyone if I don't do that again.

TECUMSEH: Not for me.

MAMATE: This isn't about just you. Where did I hear that?

TECUMSEH: Help me put this on.

(MAMATE helps TECUMSEH fit the headdress on his head, after a few minor adjustments she kisses his face)

TECUMSEH: How do I look?

MAMATE: Like the great TECUMSEH.

TECUMSEH: That's good enough then. *(stares down at his feet for a second, looks offstage)*

MAMATE: What are you thinking?

TECUMSEH: Nothing.

MAMATE: I thought maybe it was what you're going to say.

TECUMSEH: I know what I'm going to say.

MAMATE: Then stop looking like that.

TECUMSEH: How about this? (*looks into her eyes, raises a hand to her cheek*)

MAMATE: (*pulls away*) I like that.

TECUMSEH: (*laughs, begins walking away*) I'm going to tell them the truth. (*holding headdress up*) This is too heavy for me to run.

lights out

lights up

SETTING: *STORYTELLER is standing at centre stage. CHILDREN are seated in a circle. The audience completes the circle.*

STORYTELLER: I am getting tired my CHILDREN, I think that is enough for today.

CHILDREN: One more story. Just one more! Please.

STORYTELLER: If I give you one more story will you ask for another one more after that?

CHILDREN: (some answer yes and others answer no)

STORYTELLER: It is getting late, you must be in bed soon. So one more story. Ok?

CHILDREN: Ok.

STORYTELLER: This is the time my brother told the coward PROCTOR off while he was preparing to run away. He was very good at running CHILDREN, let me tell you. Who here is good at running?

CHILD: I am! I'm the fastest.

ANOTHER CHILD: I'm the fastest.

STORYTELLER: This can't be possible. I'm the fastest.

CHILD: How fast?

STORYTELLER: Almost as fast as the white man when a battle is coming!

CHILDREN: *(laugh)*

STORYTELLER: No matter how good you are at running this man PROCTOR is better than you. Now, my brother knew they would leave. But that did not concern him too much. Everyone suspected it, children, everyone talked about it. That also did not bother my brother. He pretended to be surprised though, he was very strategic, he said -

lights out

lights up

SETTING: *PROCTOR is trying to get off stage while TECUMSEH stares through him. The WARRIORS are standing, spread on either side of TECUMSEH. PROCTOR is standing to one side of the stage, as though abandoning the audience with TECUMSEH, not heading toward the audience.*

PROCTOR: *(speaking offstage to his soldiers)* It is time to go. *(begins exiting)*

ALL WARRIORS: *(some surprised, others not, looking to TECUMSEH for guidance)*

TECUMSEH: *(Angry, commanding, demanding to be heard, the drum beats around 160bpm now)* Listen, *(pause)* father, *(pause)* we are much astonished to see *(points at PROCTOR's chest)* you tying up and preparing to run *(point over audience)* the other way. *(points back to PROCTOR)* You always told us to remain *(points to stage)* here, and take care of our lands, and it made *(both hands to his chest)* our hearts glad to hear that was *(points to PROCTOR)* your wish. *(points to ground beneath him)* But now, *(points to PROCTOR)* we see you *(points over audience)* drawing back, *(waving this off)* like a *(“fat animal” is spit with disgust)* fat animal running off with its *(waving hand back and forth and away from himself)* tail between its legs. Listen, *(pause, the drum is beating at 180bpm and is getting louder)* father, *(pause)* the Americans have not yet defeated us by land. *(Open arms to include his warriors on stage)* We, therefore, wish to remain and *(hard and short)* face our enemy. *(pause)* Should they make their appearance, you have an idea of going away, *(pointing over audience)* leave us the guns and ammunition and you may go, and welcome for us. Our lives are in the hands of the Great Spirit. We are determined to defend our land, and if it is his will, *(hands to*

chest) we shall leave our bones upon them (*drops hands to stage, determinately, not like giving up*).

lights out

(silence)

lights up

SETTING: *TECUMSEH is at centre stage. ROUNDHEAD is to his right, PROPHET to his left.*

TECUMSEH: We are all here.

PROPHET: Yes.

TECUMSEH: The other warriors too?

ROUNDHEAD: They are never far off.

PROPHET: Good.

ROUNDHEAD: It is agreed then?

TECUMSEH: Yes.

PROPHET: Of course.

ROUNDHEAD: I will tell them.

TECUMSEH: Thank you cousin.

PROPHET: Thank you cousin.

ROUNDHEAD: (*saying this to get used to the idea*) Today we die.

TECUMSEH: Today is as good as any other. The stars are out.

ROUNDHEAD: Take them in cousins. Today we join them. (*pauses, looks at TECUMSEH*) I guess you will be going home (*smiles*).

(pause while they look up smiling, PROPHET is the first to stop looking up, he looks over the audience, concerned)

PROPHET: *(to TECUMSEH)* What will you tell the others?

TECUMSEH: The same thing I always do, brother.

PROPHET: Yes?

TECUMSEH: *(puts his hand on ROUNDHEAD's shoulder and one on PROPHET's shoulder)* Whatever I think of when I get there.

PROPHET: I guess this is a good time for laughter.

TECUMSEH: There is no better time, brother.

ROUNDHEAD: These are dark days, cousins. Laughter helps some of us through them.

PROPHET: And the others?

ROUNDHEAD: Blood.

(TECUMSEH and PROPHET nod heads in agreement)

ROUNDHEAD: Well, cousins, it is already looking like a good day to die.

TECUMSEH: It is.

PROPHET: *(hesitates)* Yes.

(they embrace)

(ROUNDHEAD begins to exit stage left, TECUMSEH stage right, ROUNDHEAD looks back at PROPHET with concern, TECUMSEH does the same, their eyes meet briefly and they continue offstage. PROPHET stands alone)

lights out

lights up

SETTING: *TECUMSEH is standing at centre stage, prepared to give a speech. He is wearing his headdress, his face is painted with the red stripe across it. A tomahawk is attached to his belt. His war club is in front of him on the ground. To TECUMSEH's right are PROPHET and ROUNDHEAD. PROPHET is holding a rifle, his tomahawk is on his belt. ROUNDHEAD is holding his war club in his left hand, it is pointing toward the ground almost like a cane, ROUNDHEAD is casual and familiar with the weapons. ROUNDHEAD's shining tomahawk in his right hand. To TECUMSEH's left is AGENT and then PROCTOR. PROCTOR is decorated and dressed like a soldier, he is standing proud, as the speech progresses though PROCTOR is more shy and almost shrinks. The AGENT is dressed in his wool suit, he looks like he has seen more action than PROCTOR but is still unfamiliar with the levels of violence everyone else has been exposed to.*

TECUMSEH: Brothers (*right arm raised to the side of audience*). Sisters (*left arm raised to the side of audience*). Cousins (*lifts both arms up*). We have come a long way, faced great troubles. I'm sure you all know what I'm talking about. (*TECUMSEH smiles, laughter heard*) We have faced bad omens. Bad weather. Bad men with bad intentions. And, cousins, we are still here. We have not yet been conquered. We have come a long way, survived the stench of the paleface destroyers. They can barely survive it themselves. (*laughter*). These cannibal creatures. They could consume the world and still hunger. My brother, who some of you knew, said once that when you kill one paleface another steps into his place, when you kill one of us it leaves a sorrow in our hearts. (*pause*) We have felt this sorrow cousins. Many times. Too many times we have felt this sorrow! We have lived this sorrow. Each and every one of us. But, what my brother would be delighted to know is that the palefaces are running out of bodies. Look at them. (*ROUNDHEAD looks toward AGENT and PROCTOR*). They look scared. Afraid. Frail. They are starving. Starving like animals who are not yet ready to provide for themselves. I know some of you may take pity on them, take pity on their pathetic appearances, but do not feed those creatures, cousins. Let them starve. They should not have left home! (*cheers and laughter heard*) They should have stayed in their nests. It would have been better if they had not hatched at all! (*laughter*) They are running out of replacements, and we, we have not yet been conquered. (*cheers*) I have burned over the mountains, through valleys, I have burned many white men. Forged my trails in fire, left smoke and ash where white men once stood. And you have blazed behind me

cousins! You have helped destroy this disease. Helped cleanse this earth with the blood of the invaders. But our work is not done. There is much to do. But together it is possible (*pause*) Not everyone who started this with us is here. (*moment of silence*) But we have made them proud. In the afterlife they are watching, smiling, they like what we do. At night you can hear their voices as they chant our names. I will not ask you to listen now, you are a rowdy bunch. Not inclined for silence. (*roars from crowd*) Before, I have said: I hear their voices in the aged pines, will no son of the brave men strike at these pale faces, and quiet these complaining ghosts? The ghosts are happy now, happy that the brave people beside you have joined together to strike at those palefaces! They complain no more. The aged pines are alive. They cheer. You should be proud of yourselves. (*pause*) We are not yet conquered. Burning this sickness is not easy. Some have said it cannot be done. The old war horses have retired to their pastures to graze, pastures they have signed over to the wicked white men. They have gone there to die in peace while the rest of us suffer. They have sold our lands so they can graze into their restful oblivion. I do not accept this. Do you? (*cheers and shouts of 'No'*) They have said to us: we tried and it cannot be done. I ask you: have they really tried? (*shouts of No*) The white man says he wants peace. But my peace and your peace are very different from the white man's peace. Our peace involves us being alive! Their peace relies on our death. I do not stand for this. Do you? (*shouts of No*) We offered to live together with the palefaces, and what did they say? (*shouts of No*) We offered to bend our knee to their great Chief in return for our own land, and what did they say? (*shouts of No*) These greedy things are never happy are they? (*shouts of No*) And they want to spread that to you. They want their unhappiness to infect you. Like the disease they are. But we won't let that happen. They have sent many troubles and hardships for us to face. And we are still here. We are not yet conquered. We keep facing these evils. Evil...is tired...of facing us, cousins, tired of our resistance. Evil can keep on being tired! We don't know the meaning of the word. (*pause*) The drums are beating cousins. Your drums are beating. Together our drums are louder than they've ever been. Our drums cannot be stopped. (*cheers. pause*) I love you cousins. I feel I am loved in return. (*shouts of Yes*) There is nothing I would not do for those I love. I hope I have proven this. (*pause...cheers from crowd, TECUMSEH motions for quiet*). If you do love me in return, then out of the love you have for me I ask only one thing more: (*pause*) although we are not yet conquered, out of the love you have for me I ask that you go home. (*gasps from crowd, whispers and talking heard in the background. ROUNDHEAD tries to move toward TECUMSEH*)

but PROPHET touches his arm gently, ROUNDHEAD looks at PROPHET in disbelief, ROUNDHEAD's anger fades and, prompted by PROPHET, stands up straight alongside TECUMSEH as he was before) I will lay my bones upon our earth, cousins, and I do not want for you to do the same.

lights out

FINAL TECUMSEH RECORDING

(no drum beats here)

Brothers, we must be united

(pause)

lights up

SETTING: TECUMSEH is at center stage. His warriors are spread beside him in semicircles. The audience completes the gathering circle and are included as warriors in the next line.

TECUMSEH: *(the drum beats around 40bpm, TECUMSEH is calmly speaking, looking over his warriors and the audience as he speaks)* These lands are ours. No one has a right to remove us. The Master of Life has appointed *(pointing to the space in front of the first row of audience members, offstage)* this place for us to light our fires. And here we shall remain.

(pause as TECUMSEH stares at the audience for 3 seconds.)

lights out

lights up

SETTING: STORYTELLER is standing in front of the children. They are in a circle, the audience completes the circle. STORYTELLER is trying to hush the children. They settle.

STORYTELLER: There are people, my children, nonbelievers. They doubt some things my brother and friend TECUMSEH said, but I do not make these up. These are not my words. I wish I spoke as well as him. *(CHILDREN nod their heads in agreement)* I wish

my name carried the greatness his carries. I am only a messenger, his messenger. And I can think of no greater honor. My children, he was a very wise man. (*TECUMSEH enters stage, stands beside STORYTELLER. TECUMSEH is dressed in his relaxed clothes, he has the single red stripe painted across his face. He smiles at the children and around the audience*) Much too wise for his age. (*laughs, TECUMSEH looks at him surprised, the CHILDREN laugh*). He was full of fire, and his speeches showed this. He was more than this, children, he was more than fire. I remember one time he said -

TECUMSEH: (*speaking to the CHILDREN, STORYTELLER watches the speech*) So live your life that the fear of death can never enter your heart. Trouble no one about their religion; respect others in their views, and demand that they respect yours. Love your life, perfect your life, beautify all things in your life. Seek to make your life long and its purpose in the service of your people. Prepare a noble death song for the day when you go over the great divide. Always give a word or a sign of salute when meeting or passing a friend, even a stranger, when in a lonely place. Show respect to all people and grovel to none. When you arise in the morning give thanks for the food and for the joy of living. If you see no reason for giving thanks, the fault lies only in yourself. Abuse no one and no thing, for abuse turns the wise ones to fools and robs the spirit of its vision. When it comes your time to die, be not like those whose hearts are filled with the fear of death, so that when their time comes they weep and pray for a little more time to live their lives over again in a different way. Sing your death song and die like a hero going home.

STORYTELLER: Remember these words my children. Live by them. One day die by them.

[Curtain]