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THE SONGS FROM LONG ROAD

by Byron W Scott

Forward

And editor once asked me about the title of this book. “The Songs part is self evident,” she said, “but what exactly is meant by ‘Long Road?’”

The American Indians had a term for this existence of ours. They called it the Road of Life. I find it to be an apt analogy, for along that road we find unimpeded straight-aways, twists and turns, bumps, detours, and dead-ends. The term applies not only to the life of the individual, but to generation after generation. From the dawn of human history, it has indeed been a Long Road.

Of course, there is more to it than that.

Mesoamerica stretches from northern Honduras and El Salvador up through Guatemala, Belize and Mexico and into the four corners area of the United States. Each Indian tribe will insist that it has developed its own unique culture, but there are certain myths, legends and beliefs that seemed to span the entire region. One of those myths is the pre-Columbian belief that a bearded white man once lived with the Indians and then left them and headed for the East. According to the legend, he would one day return to reunite the two great peoples; the red man and the white. The Maya called this man Kukulcan; the Aztecs and Toltecs called him Quetzalcoatl, the “feathered serpent.” The prophesied date for his return in the Aztec calendar was Ce Acatl, which corresponds to the Christian year 1519, the year that Hernan Cortes appeared off the coast of Mexico. The Spaniards destroyed nearly everything during the Conquest, and so very little remains of those legends from the “high cultures”. But thanks to Frank Waters, who wrote The Book of the Hopi, we have a compelling and comprehensive version of their legend—the Hopi Pahana.

The prophesied date of Pahana’s return was the same as Quetzalcoatl’s. According to the myth, if he did not return on that date, it would be hundreds of years before his arrival.

And that makes a very long road to walk.

The Songs from Long Road is an attempt to incorporate this legend into the historical perspective.

Prologue

If you happen to meet a mahu along your Road, you should stop and visit for a while.

There's no telling what you might learn.

Part 1

Hey guys,

It's been a long time coming, but I've finally finished the Songs from Long Road. I've divided the text into three parts because there are three CD's. There are also three main categories to the songs: history, American Indian mythology, and personal subjectivity. There's probably a little bit too much of the latter category, but I'll let you decide about that.

The best place to start in any book about history is in the present. Why? Because that's where the readers are, of course.

I hope you enjoy the lyrics.

Something Good

I've been leafing through some books of history

There have been some sad events in our history

Recall the Trail of Tears of the Cherokee

Or down in Selma, Alabama before Martin Luther King

There have been some sad, sad moments in our history

Too many broken treaties, too many lies

Too much aggression to rationalize

Too many broken treaties, too many lies

Too much racism to ever justify

But hey!

Got something good to say about the USA

Hey! There's plenty good to say about the USA

I've got the freedom to learn

Got the freedom to turn my own page

I've got the freedom to fall in love and raise a family

Or to follow my heart, wherever that may lead

And hey! That's always good to say about the USA

Hey! There's plenty good to say about the USA

I've got the freedom to roam

Got the freedom to be my own man

I've got the freedom to launch myself upon this journey

It's a varied landscape filled with mysteries

The people are friendly if you follow their laws

And take their attitudes with a grain of salt

You'll find many good people who are going your way

There might be clouds in the sky, but it's a sunny day

And hey! That's mighty good to say about the USA

U S A

Western expansion played a major role in the early history of the United States. Circa 1865, Horace Greeley advised “Go West, young man!” And that statement reverberated throughout this country for almost a hundred and fifty years. Gold had already been discovered in California, and also in the Black Hills of North Dakota. For westward expansion, there would be no holding back. No gold would ever be discovered in the Ozark Mountains, but who knew at the time.

Buffalo River 1886

Ozark Mountains called to me

I heard it in the wind back in Tennessee

I found a job in the mines here in 1880

Knew there'd be a pot of gold waiting on me

Ozark Mountains, haunting me

It's been years since they chased out the Cherokee

Now I've got a home in the glade and a family

And that pot of gold is still waiting on me

And I'm going up to Boxley when the dogwoods bloom

The river will be rising, going to float my canoe

Some folks think me loco, some think me brave

Past Ponca and Pruitt, going to ride those white waves

Buffalo River calls to me

Got a date in the morning with my family

Take my boy for a swim at the mouth of Rush Creek

Explore the limestone bluffs with the cedar trees

Buffalo River, haunting me

From deep in the mines I hear it call to me

The only pot of gold I'll ever see

Is my love for these hills and my family

And I'm going up to Boxley when the dogwoods bloom

The river will be raging, going to float my canoe

Past Hemmed-In-Hollow and Indian Creek

Floating that whitewater is a challenge to me

Going up to Boxley when the dogwoods bloom

The river will be dancing, going to float my canoe

Past Big Bear Cave, through Longbottom Hole

I'll be rounding Toney Bend, down Clabber Creek shoal

Going up to Boxley when the dogwoods bloom

The river will be rising, going to float my canoe

Past Cow House Eddy, past Leatherwood Creek

Floating that clear water is a pleasure to me

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