

Tukté unmá yakáħniġa he?

ALEXANDER PECK

Five hundred years ago,
columbus discovered America,
like I discover my shoe's untied.
he leaned over,
and he tied it,
and tied us together.
But he was clumsy,
tripped,
fell,
and made an earthquake
so big
that every Indian soul
lept right from the earth,
into the sky,
to never be heard from again.

what do you mean
never be heard from again?
you're standing
right
here.

yeah
but what i wrote sounds more poetic.
*

did your grandmama
tell you the story
of the lakota ghost?

she didn't talk much
about sioux stories.
her stories.
I never asked.

the lakota ghost,
he repeats
false stories,
fades away,
floats into the sky,
white and all.

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also, columbus didn't discover america.

but they don't like the word invaded.
i don't wanna feel the awkward
that genocide creates.

your pride in not saying it
turns you into a ghost.
where's the lakota pride?

you know.
your chosen pride
massacred those people.

thwe lakota one,
he didn't leap from the earth,
from lakota country.
the earth opened its arms,
and took him in,
and cradled him,
in a mass grave.

when you look around
what do you see?

you know, that earthquake,
it's rumbled for hundreds of years.
hell, i'm still trying to find my footing.
but those souls that jumped
far into the sky,
they were ghosts.

no.
either you stand up straight,
or bend your knees to jump.

you get someone to help.
do you want help?

buried,
somewhere near wounded knee.

that's true.
although,
my great
great
great
grandfather
might have died there proud.
but maybe the white one too.

am i looking down at the grave,
or up at the gravediggers?

i see the ground at my feet
and the sky up above

can you stand
and be a ghost
at the same time?

and how do you straighten out your knees?

Save
one soul
from Sioux Skies