

## ***Lost Lake Cherokee***

*A long, long time ago when I was just a boy,  
my old gray-haired grandfather told me of a people who lost their joy.  
He said they were a gentle folk, lived on the banks of the Tennessee,  
and they went by the name of "Lost Lake Cherokee."*

*And I remember every word he said under that blue summer sky,  
cause that little country boy didn't know grandpa could cry.  
But as he held me on his knee and the story began to unfold,  
a tear rolled down his weathered face and disappeared into the dust below.*

*Then he said to me in the strangest voice that made me want to cry,  
legend has it son that the soldiers came one day, and told them to march or die,  
to a land far, far away.*

*Some of the soldiers tried to comfort them as they herded them all in,  
and told them "don't worry they'd never need toil nor work again."  
They said the great white father would provide their meat and bread,  
but what they soldiers didn't know son is when you take a Cherokee from his land  
he's already dead.*

*They marched them from hear to Oklahoma, and the one's that didn't die on the way,  
said all they were living for was to cry another day.*

*The fires burned bright and late in lost lake camp that last night,  
the elders met in secret council to decide to march or fight.  
And when each brave had spoke his peace, the night was nearly gone,  
that's when the old chief broke out in an eerie song.*

*Great Spirit of the lake he cried, don't hide your face this night,  
for your children will be no more if you let them fight.  
They say the soldiers never heard or saw a thing,  
just a bunch of wailing injuns all gathered in a ring.*

*But the Spirit heard the mournful cries of that tired and aged old man,  
and rose up from the depths to lend a helping hand.  
The Spirit said my children, you truly are my joy, and I've always kept you well,  
but the evil that these men do to you even I cannot quell.  
But give me a tear each of you in this mussel shell, and when you die,  
your spirit will fly, back to lost lake for evermore.  
A peaceful sigh escaped grandpa's lips when the story was finally told,  
he looked at me with sad old eyes, his brow was slightly creased,  
as if to search his aching heart, until his words were finally pieced.  
Never forsake this land child, from these banks don't stray to far,  
always hold your head up, never be ashamed of who you are.  
For if you ever leave Lost Lake he said, then your tears will fall,  
no other land will speak to you, just listen to her call.  
Never leave Lost Lake son, I don't want you to know their pains,  
because Lost Lake Cherokee blood, flows in your tiny veins.*

*Steven Stone*

*1996*