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MCMURPHY. Saw you get up and figgered maybe you come out here to scrape off some a that thousand-year gum. (*Offering a stick of gum; apologetically.*) They took away my canteen privileges so this is all I got.

CHIEF BROMDEN. (*Taking it - then he speaks in a hoarse voice.*) Thank you.

MCMURPHY. That's okay.

(*He starts off, comes to a startled halt.*)

Hey -!

(*Coming back.*) Try it again - you're a little rusty.

CHIEF BROMDEN. (*Clears his throat; more clearly.*) Thank you.

(*MCMURPHY starts to laugh, trying to keep the sound down. CHIEF BROMDEN goes toward the dormitory, his feelings hurt.*)

MCMURPHY. (*Stopping him.*) 'Scuse me, Chief. What I was laughin' at, I just caught wise to what you been doin' all these years. Bidin' your time till you could tell 'em off?

CHIEF BROMDEN. No...no, I'd be afraid.

MCMURPHY. How's that?

CHIEF BROMDEN. I'm not big enough.

MCMURPHY. Hoo boy, you *are crazy*, aren't you. I been on a few reservations in my life, but you are the *biggest* damn Injun I have ever seen!

CHIEF BROMDEN. My papa was bigger.

MCMURPHY. Yeah?

CHIEF BROMDEN. He was a full chief and his name was Tee Ah Millatoona. That means The Pine That Stands Tallest on the Mountain. But my mother got twice his size.

MCMURPHY. You must have had a real moose of an old lady!

CHIEF BROMDEN. Oh, she wasn't big *that* way. She wasn't Indian, neither. She was a town woman. Her name was Bromden.

MCMURPHY. Yeah, I think I see what you're getting at... when a town woman marries an Indian that's marryin' beneath her, ain't it? And your papa had to take her name?

CHIEF BROMDEN. She said she wouldn't be married to no man with a name like Tee Ah Millatoona. But it wasn't only her that made him little. Everybody worked on him. The way they're workin' on you.

MCMURPHY. They who?

CHIEF BROMDEN. The Combine. It wanted us to go live someplace else. It wanted to take away our waterfall. In town they beat up Papa in the alleys and cut off his hair. Oh, the Combine's big...big. He fought it a long time till my mother made him too little to fight anymore. Then he signed the papers.

MCMURPHY. What papers, Chief?

CHIEF BROMDEN. The ones that gave everything to the government. The village. The falls...

MCMURPHY. I remember...but I heard the tribe got paid some huge amount.

CHIEF BROMDEN. That's what the government guy said, here's a whole big pot of money. And Papa said, what can you pay for the way a man lives? What can you pay for his right to be an Indian? He didn't understand. Neither did the tribe. They stood in front of our door, holdin' those checks, askin' what should we do now? And Papa couldn't tell them 'cause he was too little... and too drunk.

MCMURPHY. What happened to him?

CHIEF BROMDEN. He kept drinkin' till he died. They found him in a alley and threw dirt in his eyes.

(Fiercely.) The Combine whipped him. It beats everybody.

MCMURPHY. Now, wait a minute -

CHIEF BROMDEN. Yes, yes, it does! Oh, they don't bust you outright. They work on you, ways you can't even see. They get hold of you and they *install* things!

MCMURPHY. Take 'er easy, buddy.

CHIEF BROMDEN. And if you *fight* they lock you up some place and make you stop, and -!

MCMURPHY. (*Closing the CHIEF's mouth with his hand.*)
Woops, cool it.

(*He takes the CHIEF in his arms gently, soothingly.*)

CHIEF BROMDEN. (*In a moment, ashamed.*) I been talkin' crazy.

MCMURPHY. Well...yeah.

CHIEF BROMDEN. It don't make sense.

MCMURPHY. Well, as to *that* -

CHIEF BROMDEN. Sh-h!

(*He raises his head, moves toward the windows, listening.*)

Hear 'em?

(*MCMURPHY listens. From the sky the wild, gobbling cry again.*)

MCMURPHY. Canada honkers flyin' south. Gonna be an early winter, chief. Look, there they go. Right across the moon!

CHIEF BROMDEN. (*Gazing skyward, chanting softly.*) Wire, brier, limber lock...

MCMURPHY. Huh?

CHIEF BROMDEN. It's an old children's rhyme. My grandmomma taught it to me...

MCMURPHY. Oh, lord, yes, I remember! You play it with your fingers. Hold out your hand, Chief.

(*Ticking off fingers, chanting.*) Wire, brier, limber lock -

CHIEF BROMDEN. Three geese in a flock.

MCMURPHY. One flew east -

CHIEF BROMDEN. One flew west -

MCMURPHY. An' one flew over the cuckoo's nest!

CHIEF BROMDEN. O-U-T spells out -

END