

Kate Wolf

"Eyes Of A Painer"

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Gray-haired and flint-eyed
His sunburned face lined
Grandpa was a man of few words
He had a way of not wanting to say
Any more than he thought could be heard.

The long years of living
And day-to-day giving
Had carved a map on his face
With little to lose,
He'd learned how to choose
And his choices were easy to trace.

He had the eyes of a painter
The heart of a maker of songs
And his words fell like rain
On the dry desert plain.
Precious and so quickly gone.

From a long line of teachers
And white Baptist preachers
Her was born with an Indian will.
His quiet dark eyes, reading the light
As he rode in the low Osage hills.

His school was the prairie, the sage, the wild berry
The quail, the wide open sky
The cottonwood thicket by the slow rolling river
The Redbud and the hot cattle drive.

He had the eyes of a painter
The heart of a maker of songs
And his words fell like rain
On the dry desert plain.
Precious and so quickly gone.

There were days filled with thinking,
Nights with the drinking
For a lost love that raged like a storm
But how his eyes smiled, when he'd talk to a child,
The rough hands so gentle and warm.

His strong arms were brown,
Where the long sleeves rolled down,
On his faded blue cotton shirt.
When times got hard, he' go out in the yard,
And cuss away some of his hurt.

He had the eyes of a painter
The heart of a maker of songs
And his words fell like rain
On the dry desert plain.
Precious and so quickly gone.

Now the garden's grown dusty,
The hand axe lies rusty,
The door's banking hard in the wind.
Grandpa's store is closed down,
Likes most of the town,
And it won't be open again.

And the big white car sits out in the yard
Of the house he built solid and true.
But I see his eyes, burning tonight,
Like the stars in the sky he once knew.

He had the eyes of a painter
The heart of a maker of songs
And his words fell like rain
On the dry desert plain.
Precious and so quickly gone.

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