

by Aimée Cree Dunn

# Ghost Dancing

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Walking through the woods that morning, seeing her breath come in small white puffs as it mixed with the cold air, Jasmine heard geese in the sky and stopped to wave at them as they flew over in a squiggly V-shape. It wasn't a very large flock. Each year, the numbers flying together were smaller and now even the largest ones were a mere trickle to what they used to be. She didn't know why this was, it just was. Maybe they were like the frogs and songbirds.

The whine of a chainsaw grated against her ear, not as far away as she would have liked, and she slowly sank down to the ground, peering through the trees for the tell-tale sign of the loggers. She probably knew some of them. One of them may have even been her old boyfriend from high school or maybe her brother-in-law. She hadn't wanted to find out. Just knowing these woods she'd loved ever since she could remember were being cut was more than enough. She didn't want to know that people she knew were cutting them down. Shining through the trees, caught by the sun, was the skidder, its motor droning as it pulled downed trees, their life blood still leaking out of them, to the piles lining the logging road. A chainsaw whined. A squirrel made short bursts through the leaves, pausing every few feet or so to look warily about, its cheeks packed with nuts.

Closing her eyes for just a moment, Jasmine leaned her head back against the beech tree behind her, its bark darkly scarred from the claws of bears as they'd worked to get at the beech nuts.

The sound of a gunshot sent her eyelids flying open. She sat up heart pounding, breathing short, and looked around.

The squirrel was gone.

So was the skidder.

That was fast, she thought.

Then she noticed a subtle shift in the woods. They weren't the same. For one thing, the only downed trees were moss-covered. And huge. For another, she was leaning against a white pine, and the light filtering from the sky was dusky, like evening or perhaps morning. Maples towered nearby, taller, rounder than any she'd seen before except in the inner depths of the deepest forests or those that lined residential areas of affluent city streets. Instead of the buzz of machinery, there was birdsong.

Then she heard human voices, near at hand, speaking in soft, nearly inaudible tones. There was a sense of urgency, quiet, subtle. Jasmine couldn't understand what they were saying, but it seemed as if one word was being repeated over and over. They drew nearer, gathering around an old oak, its branches sketching a unique shape against the sky. An older woman was there with long silver braids. A man, black hair just past his shoulders, carried what looked to be a toddler. They were dressed different, yet familiar. Jasmine sunk to the ground, hoping to escape their notice.

But she hadn't.

A little girl, Jasmine would have guessed she was around ten, found her. Her long black hair was mussed, and she seemed pale, huge dark green eyes sad. Not knowing what to do, Jasmine took the girl's hand when it was offered. Their hands met, but only for an instant, then the girl was gone. Not only gone, but vanished. A deep sense of grief lingered in the air the way mist from the morning dew rises in the sun.

It took Jasmine a few moments to realize the birds had stopped singing, the squirrel was back, and the roar of the chainsaws had returned. The small family had disappeared along with the strange girl.

Jasmine blinked again. Rubbing her eyes, she felt sweat on her face and drew her hand away in surprise. As she hurriedly made to push herself up from the ground, she felt something cold and metallic under the dead leaves and picked it up.

It was a bullet casing and it was cold. “.30 c,” was all she could read on it at first. Then, brushing the dirt away, she made out a few letters, half obliterated, “Wi c st r.” It meant next to nothing to Jasmine. She half-laughed to herself, feeling shaken all the same, and tossed it back into the leaves.

Daydreams weren’t unusual for her, but this one had been more than out of the ordinary.

“I’m working back of your place,” Dave said to Jasmine at dinner that evening, forking the pile of mashed potatoes on his plate. Marie looked at him, then turned apologetic eyes to Jasmine who gently placed her fork aside and looked silently at her plate.

“I’m sorry, sis,” Marie said. “I didn’t want him to take the job either, but we needed the money.” She shrugged. “The taxes are due next month and we’re already behind.”

“I know,” Jasmine said quietly, still watching her plate.

Marie ran the ladle absently through the beans she’d baked that afternoon.

“I know,” Jasmine repeated more emphatically and picked up her fork.

“Dinner’s delicious, Marie.” Dave winked at his wife. Marie smiled back. It was a sad smile, but the sadness wasn’t for him.

No one said anything for a while. Dave took a second helping of potatoes, Marie drank her water, and Jasmine managed to eat a forkful of corn.

“What’s got you ladies so clammed up?” Dave asked, interrupting the silence and pushing his plate away. “Norm’lly I can’t think for hearing your chatter....er, I mean, interesting and deep conversation.”

“Yeah, well...” Marie offered and said nothing.

Dave looked from one sister to the other, noting how alike they were with their dark hair and dark eyes. Marie’s hair was short, otherwise a stranger could have almost taken them for twins. Tonight, they even both had the same sad expression in their eyes. Dave pursed his lips, leaned his chair back and studied them for a moment.

“I know,” he said with the air of one who’s about to impart a rare and insightful observation. “You two are upset about this logging business, eh?”

“You could say that.” Marie rose and began clearing the table. Dave looked thoughtful.

“Well, I can understand and all,” he said, taking his own plate into the kitchen and getting the dishes ready to wash. Over the roar of the running faucet he added, “After all, it used to be your land.”

“Grandpa sold it before mom was even born,” Marie called to him from the table. “It’s not about who owns it.”

“I didn’t mean that.” Dave turned the faucet off. “I meant, it was yours for a long time, your people’s.”

Marie put the dishes down next to the sink and looked at him questioningly.

“You know what I mean.” Dave flushed and started washing a glass. Walking over, Jasmine stood next to him to rinse the dishes, placing them carefully in the drying rack, its

plastic coating peeling in places showing the wire frame underneath. "Your grandma was Indian, wasn't she?" he said.

"A little," Marie replied stiffly at the same time as Jasmine said, "Ojibwe."

"Well, then," he said, "there you go. I'd be upset about our logging, too."

"But she wasn't from here," Marie retorted. "She was French Canadian."

"Metís," Jasmine corrected.

Marie didn't say anything.

They finished the dishes, and as Marie put the last of them away, Jasmine slipped into her coat and stepped out onto the porch.

The moon shone down on the garden Marie tended. Pumpkins sat in their vines and there were a few squash. Everything else had been picked and eaten or canned. Even most of the apples on the trees in the small orchard had already been put away for the winter, wrapped in newspaper or canned as apple cobbler. Jasmine knew her sister had their winter supplies well stocked this year and soon Dave would be out bow-hunting for the venison they would need as well. He poached sometimes, she knew, but he never over-hunted. And, like any good bow hunter, he was always mindful of having the deer suffer as little as possible. Marie had told her that; it was one of the reason her sister had fallen in love with him. He'd been a logger then, too, but he'd seemed to care more about the woods when he was younger. In those days, he wouldn't cut den trees or trees with nests in, even if the forester had marked them and even if they were excellent for timber. And he had always made sure to leave as much of the forest community intact as possible. Over the years, that had changed and now he was just another logger doing his job, making what he could, more concerned with how much board feet he was

bringing in than with what kind of forest he was leaving behind.

The door opened behind her.

"You forgot your hat." Marie handed the woolen cap to her sister. "I'm so sorry. I know you love those trees." She came out onto the porch to give Jasmine a tight hug. "Heck, I love those trees." She looked past the garden and out to the woods at the edge of the yard. "So, you going to start a protest march or something? Make some signs?"

Jasmine snorted. "What's the use?"

Silence hung heavy between them, uneasy.

"Sure you don't want me to walk you home, Jas?"

"No, thanks, I'm fine."

"It's two and a half miles and there's bears in the woods, you know."

Jasmine laughed a little shakily, but it wasn't from fear of the area's ursine inhabitants. "I'm not afraid of bears. Their tummies should be nicely full this time of year anyhow."

"Yeah, well, just be careful."

"I will. Don't worry." She gave Marie a kiss on the cheek. "Thanks for the dinner."

"Maybe you can stop it. The logging, I mean."

"Yeah. In my dreams." Jasmine smiled. "But thanks for the thought."

Walking home, she again avoided the area being cut, only this time she had to circle farther out of her way. Tall trees thrust darkly upwards, withdrawn giants keeping their secrets close. Jasmine crept among them on feet bare and roughened by similar excursions before the forest had invaded. Branches softly cracked. Dead leaves carpeting the ground rustled faintly.

The large gap in the forest canopy let the moon in. It cast the fallen slash in an eerie light, branches at awkward

angles, dead wood gathered in indiscriminate lumps like the mass graves of a genocide. These were the shapes that were the shambles of war. That morning she had woken from dreaming of animals killed by traffic, their dead and bloodied bodies lining the roadsides, to the sound of the first chainsaw. She'd known it was coming, ever since she'd found the ribbons one evening in July. In a neat line, spaced every hundred feet or so, and knotted in a girdle around the small trees, they bobbed in their bright pinkness as a drizzle of rain eked out of the featureless sky. They'd been the harbingers of the logging road to come.

If only there was something she could do to stop it. But there didn't seem to be anything. She could hand out flyers on the importance of the woods, but not enough people would listen to take action. She could storm the Forest Service building with her demands, but she'd only end up arrested. She could even do a tree sit, but who would care? The logging was already started. The best Jasmine could do was figure out a way to resign herself.

"It's not giving up." She ducked beneath the laciness of a hemlock branch, mentally responding to the guilt that flared in her heart. "It's being realistic."

The stars were thick white clusters in the sky, the tree branches faint etches in the moonlight as she turned down the path to her home. Jasmine drew her jacket tighter to her, smelling the wood smoke still lingering on her clothes from the small fire she'd built on the shores of the forest creek, a ceremonial apology for what was being done to the land. Turning the knob of her cabin door, she heard the wind pick up and rattle through the dead leaves on the trees. A chill gust rushed in with her, and, as she shut the door, a slight movement through the trees caught her eye. When she looked closer,

however, the moonlight revealed nothing. More than likely it was a deer.

After setting a pot of tea to boil, she hung up her coat and stared out the window at the swaying figures of the maple and oak around her home, drumming her fingers on the counter waiting for the kettle's whistle to blow, listening to the howl of the gale as it blew round the corners of her snug cabin, built by her grandfather's hands.

She knew what he would think of the devastation being wrought on what should have been protected lands. For a moment, she felt guilt again. Who was she to give up the fight? After all, she'd been raised on the family stories of relatives, long passed on to the spirit world, who'd stood their ground, determined to fight whatever threatened their homeland. Her grandfather himself had held out against tempting offers of good money designed to remove him, an "isolated settler," because he was violating the new zoning codes laid on the rural northland in the 1930s and 40s. At the urging of the government, he finally had sold most of his land to the feds but only on the condition that it would be protected in perpetuity. It became part of the National Forest system, that supposed wellspring of wilderness retreat. Or so he'd thought. So had Jasmine, until very recently.

What she had seen today changed everything. And there was nothing she could do about it. Nothing, that is, that would have a realistic impact. "Sometimes you just have to accept reality." Isn't that what someone had told her once? It seemed true in this case. But it didn't mean she had to like it.

That night, Jasmine's dreams were so intense that when she woke in the dark hours before the dawn, it took her several moments to separate into her own reality. The little girl had

been in one. Jasmine remembered she was dressed in calico and wore beaded moccasins.

She stretched, rubbing the back of her left shoulder to ease the knot there; she must have slept on it wrong. As the soft ticking of the clock wore on through the dark wee hours, Jasmine stared out the window, sleepless. From her position, all she could see were tree branches, partially bare, against the star drop sky. The wind shifted slightly outside and the full moonlight grew faintly but perceptibly brighter than it should.

Easing her way out of bed and to the floor, she slunk across her room to the window, tentatively craning her neck to look out without being seen. What Jasmine expected to see, she didn't know, but wrapped in the star-dust of dreams, investigating seemed the only sensible thing to do when moonlight turns unnaturally bright.

At first, other than the dark forms of trees and the scurrying of leaves, she saw nothing. Her small yard, unmowed and scattered with small lumps of growing juneberry bushes and young cherry trees, was as bright as if more than one moon hung in the sky. It hurt her eyes, nearly blinding her to all but silhouettes. There were no multiple moons, however, only the one. She studied it, as usual tracing the Indian-in-the-moon apparent in the craters of its fullness. A movement on the woods edge caught her attention.

Lowering herself, eyes nearly level with the windowsill, she glued her gaze to the trees that bordered her yard. A small shape, two-legged, was winding its way along the periphery. It worked its way nearer the cabin. A breeze picked up. Cloud wisps scurried into the previously clear sky, gathering substance as they neared the moon, darkening the moonlit night. Jasmine sank lower until only one eye peered onto the tableau outdoors.

A dense cloud swallowed the moon, and within moments, three other shapes appeared. In the middle of a breath, with only a gasp at the chill that came over her to mark it, Jasmine was suddenly in the woods near them.

The forest was familiar, yet it had become strange. Something Jasmine felt at home with, but different.

For one thing, the trees, even girdled as they were with a morning's mists, were tall. Very tall. And massive. There were pines with girths so large it would take several people to span them with their arms.

And time had sizzled forward to early morning where more birds called than she could recognize, which was unusual for her.

The air was also different. There was a clarity, a fresh sweetness she'd never noticed before.

The sound of human voices gradually blended with the general forest cacophony. There was a younger one, a little girl, her voice high, piping like a hermit thrush. A man was with them. He spoke in low tones, reassuring ones. The little one was obviously excited about something.

Even as they neared, mist obscured their forms so they were like shadow-wraiths slipping through the woods. And there were more of them than just the man and the little girl. A bent-over figure kept up with them, even though the pace was a quick one. The girl bounced along beside this one – an old woman? That seemed right.

The mists parted for a moment, and Jasmine could see the man wore a red flannel with pants that looked like deerskin. She shook her head. A pouch beaded with woodland flowers hung from his back. He was carrying a rifle.

The little girl had stopped to look at something on the forest floor.

“*Maajaadaa*,” the man said, peering into the woods behind them. “*Maajaadaa*,” he repeated, more imperatively, and shifted the rifle to his other shoulder.

The old woman hadn’t paused. She was already ahead of them on the trail.

Jasmine crept closer, nearly floating over the pine needles and the green bracken that were only beginning to unfold.

The girl rose, a lily-of-the-valley in her hand. With a suddenness that went unnoticed by the man, the girl loomed large in front of Jasmine. The fringe on her deerskin dress, beaded slightly in the same pattern as the man’s pouch, rustled as the girl handed her the flower. “Remember me, Jasmine,” she said, eyes big and dark green, then shrank back to normal proportions, turning to follow her father.

When Jasmine came to, she found herself curled on the braided rug that lay in front of the living room’s fireplace, pine needles in her hair. And her sister was there, lighting a candle on the table, a homey glow of light in the night. Jasmine watched the wick catch the flame.

Marie caught her eye. “I was coming home from work and saw your door open. What happened?”

“Could I have a glass of water?” Jasmine croaked.

“I really don’t know where it came from.”

She and Marie were sitting at Jasmine’s kitchen table sharing a box of Little Debbie Swiss Rolls. Outside swiftly moving clouds cast shifting intensities of moonlight across the yard, accentuating the looming trunks of the bare-limbed trees.

“I guess I’ve been having all sorts of weird dreams of late. Strange ones. You remember that story about the little girl Bernadette that Mom used to tell us?”

“The one whose dad was an outlaw?”

“Well, yeah. I guess you could call him that. I thought of him more as a revolutionary, fighting alongside Riel and all. He was one of our great-great-something-or-other grandpas, you know.”

“Hm.” Marie wasn’t exactly waxing amazed wonder as Jasmine would like her to do.

“She was killed, you know. Bernadette. Right around this area. The guys who were after her dad found them and got her.”

“What guys?”

“The ones who were hunting down any Metís who had fought in the rebellions.” Jasmine studied her sister. “Didn’t you listen to any of the stories Mom told us growing up?”

Marie cleared her throat. “Sure I did. You just got a better memory, that’s all.”

“Well, anyway, I dreamed about Bernadette. But not only dreamed, it was like I actually saw her. Right here. Out in the front yard.”

Jasmine paused to take a breath just as the kitchen kettle began a soft whistle. “A boat whistle,” she whispered. “Whoa-ah! Incoming! Another dream...I’m remembering it. Bits and pieces. This is weird.” She shut her eyes, hoping to focus the images. “People, a crowd of them. Danger. Waves. A lake, a big, big lake.”

Marie calmly dipped tea bags in the mugs of hot water, waiting. After several minutes of silence even she grew impatient. “Go on,” she said finally.

“I don’t know.” Jasmine kept her eyes shut. “In this one, this is the first time I remember this one, I’m with this huge crowd of people. I’m wearing jeans and there’s this guy with red hair, kind of curly, next to me, telling jokes and making me laugh. I know we’re in some city cuz a big flock of pigeons fly over and settle into the building across the street.”

Jasmine paused to take a sip of tea. "I'm holding a sign and so's everyone else. I think . . . I think we were protesting something." She smiled.

"I bet it was a logging job," her sister said knowingly.

"No, actually it wasn't." The smile disappeared from Jasmine's face. "It was a dam. In fact, my sign said, and I remember this clearly, 'Hydro Dams Out of Indian Lands.' What do you think of that?"

"Interesting," Marie mumbled into her mug. "I heard that's a big issue in Canada. This is what terrified you?"

"No. Not that part, but the next."

"Go on, then."

Jasmine drew a deep breath. "Then all of those pigeons across the road in that building suddenly take off in this huge flurry and suddenly I notice that that red-headed guy has been shot and is lying dead on the ground." She took a quick sip of tea, frowning. "It was like seeing someone I know die. I had the saddest feeling when I woke up."

"Hm," Marie sniffed. "At least you don't know any red-headed guys. The dream's weird but not too bad."

Jasmine looked at her. "That's not the end of it. I end up running away, with this other person, and someone's following us, the same someone who shot the red-headed guy. It's like I know they're after us to kill us and all we can do is run along this stinking road that's bounded on one side by a chain link fence and on the other by a four-lane highway and the thing I want more than anything is to get into the woods. When we're finally in the trees, we keep running and running. I remember falling once and then there's a gunshot, but neither of us is hit. We run until we suddenly stumble out into the open on a big lake, maybe Lake Superior, I don't know, but it's big. Is Lake Winnipeg big? That'd be in Canada. And there's an island in it. I can see the red and white pines leaning out,

almost beckoning to us, so I dive in and start swimming for it." Taking another sip of tea, Jasmine stopped.

"And?" Marie prodded.

"That's it."

Sipping her tea slowly, Marie studied her sister's face. "Do you think this is one of them, what do they call them, preliminary dreams?"

"Premonitory? No. In the dream I had light brown hair. Mine may be brown now, but it's pretty dark. And besides, I think I was younger than I am. If that makes sense."

"But the jeans..."

"It might have been the seventies."

Marie grunted. "Maybe it was a flashback dream or whatever they're called."

Jasmine looked at her. "What is that?"

"One of them times your previous lives make themselves known."

"Oh, yeah, right. My previous lives. Last I checked my life began in 1977. I should have been crawling around in diapers." Jasmine smirked.

"You never know. I mean, think about it. You said you felt as if you lived these lives, as if you knew these lives before you dreamed them. Maybe that life was your most recently lived life. Aside from the one you're living now, that is."

"You mean, I might have died in the 1970s and been born again in the same decade?" She couldn't wipe the smirk from her face. "Marie, get real."

But Marie just shrugged. "You never know."

"You really think – " Jasmine looked at Marie uncertainly.

"I don't think, I just wonder. Decide for yourself."

Jasmine unwrapped another Swiss Roll. Multiple lives?



Taking her mug to get more hot water for tea, Marie glanced out the window. "Oh, Jasmine, quick come look!"

Warily, not entirely certain she wanted to see what was lurking in her yard again, Jasmine made her way over.

The panes of the old glass distorted the night, but nothing could obscure the lively sky. In the north, pulses of light ran from the horizon to the zenith only to race down again.

Marie's eyes sparkled.

"Wow," Jasmine breathed. The waves of light were strong and regular. "Remember what Grams used to say?"

The look Marie gave her was long. "The spirits are dancing, she'd say."

"Yeah," Jasmine whispered. Her pulse began to beat with a stronger rhythm. "And she also told us it was the spirits coming back, to live again."

"Ghost dancing."

"To protect the earth." A small chill began to creep up Jasmine's spine.

She looked at Marie. Marie was staring right back.

"You thinking what I'm thinking?"

Marie grinned. "At least probably something awfully similar."

The daylight had barely made itself felt when they drove up to the hardware store. It didn't open for another twenty minutes, so they busied themselves drawing and re-drawing plans. When the clerk unlocked the door, they went in and picked out galvanized ten penny nails, scrap lumber as close to two by six and two by four as they could get along with a couple of large tarps.

"Building a deer blind?" the clerk asked.

"Kind of." Jasmine grinned as her sister quirked an eyebrow.

"Throw this in, too." Marie tossed a jumbo roll of duct tape onto the counter.

Back in Jasmine's Festiva, its hatchback left open to accommodate the lumber, which provided a strange but not thoroughly uncommon sight for the few passers-by out at this early hour, Jasmine drove on chatting about trivialities. The cost of tomatoes lately. The newest country song. Marie nodded but said little.

They drove past Jasmine's house, turning onto the new logging road, Jasmine shifting to second so the Festiva wouldn't stall. On one side of the road, downed trees, waiting for the skidder, lay on the forest floor. Deeper in the woods, morning sunlight flashed on metal shapes, the light only beginning to grow strong enough to reveal their full forms.

Marie hadn't been to the logging job yet. "Is this Grandpa's old trail to the sugar bush?"

"Probably. It'd be easier to use this than cut a completely new road."

"Huh."

"So, I was thinking about what you said. The previous lives and all." Jasmine shot a glance at Marie but her sister was looking out the window. "And what you said about the inner voice. I think I know what it's saying." A large pothole loomed and Jasmine skirted the Festiva around its edge. Yet another advantage to small cars – they could get you round the potholes in life without forcing you off your intended trail. The hatchback bobbed with the rough terrain. "You know what all those dreams had in common?"

"Uh – you were part Indian."

"Yeah. And?"

"You were outside in all of them."

“Yep. And?”

“You were killed.”

“Ah, no. I wasn’t killed. At least not in all of them.”

For the first time since their new plan, Jasmine felt a chill.

“Was I?”

Marie only shrugged.

Jasmine cleared her throat, glancing out the window to see how near she was getting to the actual logging operations.

“Well, anyways, maybe the dreams are past lives, I don’t know. And maybe some people accept what they see as reality. But, reality can also be what we make it, at least somewhat. And I for one believe we’ve found what it is we should be doing.”

“Now that’s my old sister talking. I was wondering where you hid her these last few weeks!” She grabbed the dashboard as Jasmine swerved for another pothole.

“Think we can build it without them stopping us?”

“Dave wouldn’t let them touch us.” Marie was confident. “He’ll probably even secretly wish he could join us.”

“Maybe he actually will. Once we’re up there.”

“Doubtful.”

Jasmine stopped the car. None of the loggers had made it to the job yet. It wouldn’t be long, though. She and Marie had to move fast, getting a good start on the tree stand before any of them showed up. She unloaded the lumber. Marie organized the tools.

That night, from the high perch of her new platform, the tarp crackling with the slight breeze, Jasmine was elated. Marie had left with Dave but would be returning soon with some extra flashlights and a huge thermos of hot chocolate, after she had called the local media, of course. Jasmine had

known that when it came to actually walking the line, her sister would always be there to walk it with her.

Earlier, Dave had noticed she and Marie almost as soon as he’d pulled in and stepped out of his truck, but he’d pretended to ignore them. Still, they’d caught him more than once glancing their way, and when they’d finished and were resting from their labors, bared feet kicking in the breeze that rustled through the limbs of the white pine, one of his big, charming smiles had peeped out only to be swallowed immediately when he caught them looking at him.

She and Marie might not be able to stop any of the logging, but they weren’t going to let it go down without a fight. However that turned out, though, still there she was, legs dangling over the edge, watching the stars, reveling in the absence of chainsaws silent for a few blessed hours while the nightlife, too, found respite. Her nearest neighbor, a squirrel in the next tree, had finally curled in its nest after scolding her into the late hours of the twilight.

Maybe it was the inspiring closeness of the woods, or the rush that comes from actually doing what you’ve been avoiding or were afraid to do. Whatever the cause, Jasmine had developed a little slogan that day, hammering the boards together, a little cleverness she was more than somewhat proud of. Once alone, to test it out, she’d said it aloud, and couldn’t stop repeating it at rather regular intervals. “It’s better to have fought and lost,” she proclaimed to the throng she imagined before her, “than never to have fought at all.”

Life was good.

But best of all, in the deep dark among the starry worlds spinning above her, the northern lights shone in a grand array of brilliant green and pink. Watching them, Jasmine heard, like ripples across time, the faint notes of fiddles, the pulsing of the drum, and the rhythmic melodies of voyageur songs

drifting over the rivers and waves of the north's vast inland lakes. Ghost dancers painting the sky. Ghost dancers keeping the heartbeat alive.