

# BUFFALO NICKEL

*by Sugar le Fae*

Half-dissolved, he spills  
from a roll of nickels,  
spitting into my till:  
a white man's caricature,  
Native of no tribe, generic  
chieftain stereotype,  
feathers, leather, braids,  
82-years-old, decades  
of sweat and slot machines,  
a lozenge on the tongue  
of good, Christian charity,  
too thin to stand up.  
I buy him for five cents  
from the change cup.  
On the back, a buffalo  
mourns his horns and tail,  
worn away clink by clink  
on trolleys, sidewalks,  
dulled like sea glass  
passed between hands.  
His worth certainly hasn't  
worn off the auction block.  
Nor his owner's slogan:  
'One of many' stacked on  
his back like a joke.  
Flip to know your fate:  
life inside a sniper scope,  
your head on a plate.

