

Fred Bear, The Legend *By Billy Ellis*

When purple shades of morning draw the curtains of my dreams,
and memory floods my wakeful mind with panoramic scenes.

Overhead the Eagles
on golden pinions soar,
above cascading water falls
with frothy, foaming roar.

Immersed in shadows of the vale
a huge Wapiti screams
a challenge to the spirit world
of Indian prophet's dreams.

High up the mountain's rocky face
a trophy Stone ram stands
on full alert for danger
while guarding his small band.

A tall and agile bowman
stalks in from heaven knows where
his hands are gnarled and massive
as paws upon a bear.

He typifies the "ancient ones"
who hunted here before
who strung their bows with honor
but then returned no more.

With just a hint of movement
high up the rocky crest,
with ghostly blur his arrow
wings out to meet the test.

The trophy ram explodes in flight
far down the mountain side,
then noses in and kicks no more
upon the black shale slide.

I see him then so sinew tough
climb down to claim his prize,
the azure blue of glaciers
is cast into his eyes.

Upon his head, the totem hat
of beaver fur so fine
handmade by Borsaliño
its fame endures with time.

In his right hand he clutched his bow
he moved with silent tread,
Down to the new world record ram
that fell to his broadhead.

His high-laced leather hunting boots
with seven leagues their stride,
left tracks wherever trophy game
and hearty souls abide.

He dined in princely palaces
so opulent and fine,
or siwashed in a trapper's shack
when Arctic blizzards whined.

Fred Bear the man, the legend,
still stands as seasons roll,
his name calls up the wilderness
that lives within our soul.

I long to see him once again
within the camp fire light
and hear his shoulder shaking laugh
that echoed in the night.

To be transfixed by earthy tales
of hunters that he knew
and feel the greatness of the man
whose soul was pure and true.

Though many try to emulate
and be the next Fred Bear,
life's high rough trail soon turns them back,
they end up in despair.

Those deep blue eyes still twinkle
within my deepest soul,
when bull moose roar a mating call
and icy rivers roll.

The golden eagle's thrilling cry
still floats on mountain air,
all nature echos joyously,
he is our own, **FRED BEAR!**