



### ***What's an Indian Woman to Do? Marcie Rendon (Anishinaabe)***

*Marcie Rendon (1952- ) Anishinaabe is a poet, playwright, community activist, and member of the White Earth Nation. She has written two novels, including Girl Gone Missing (2019), and well as a variety of children's books. She is also producer and creative direct at the Raving Native Theater in Minnesota.*

what's an indian women to do  
when the white girls act more indian  
than the indian women do?

my tongue trips over takonsala  
mumbles around the word mitakuye oyasin  
my ojibwe's been corrected  
by a blond U of M undergraduate

what's an indian woman to do?

much to my ex-husband's dismay  
i never learned the humble,  
Spiritual,  
Native woman stance  
legs tight, arms close, head bowed  
three paces behind

my mother worked and fought with men  
strode across fields  
100-pound potato sacks on shoulders broad as any man  
the most traditional thing  
my grandfather taught me  
was to put jeebik on the cue stick  
to win a game of pool

so I never the learned the finer  
indian arts  
so many white women have become adept at  
sometimes I go to pow-wows  
see them selling wares  
somehow the little crystals  
tied on leather pouches  
never pull my indian heart

huh, what's an indian woman to do?



i remember Kathy She Who Sees the Spirit Lights  
when she was still  
Katrina Olson from Mankato, Minnesota  
and Raven Woman?  
damn, I swear I knew her  
when she was a jewish girl  
over in st. paul

as my hair grays  
theirs gets darker  
month by month  
their reservation accents  
thicker  
year by year

used to be  
reincarnation happened  
only to the dead

hmmm?!?!?

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when the white girls act more indian  
than the indians do?