

## POEM

# An Indian Prayer

Oh Father, Whose voice I  
hear in the winds

And whose breath gives life  
to all the world, hear me.

I am a man before you, one  
of your man children.

I am small and weak — I  
need your strength and  
wisdom.

Let me walk in beauty and  
make my eyes behold

The red and purple sunset—

Make my hands respect the  
things you have made;

My ears sharp to hear your  
voice.

Make me wise so that I may  
know the things you have

taught my people—

The lessons you have hidden  
in every leaf and rock.

I seek strength, Father —  
not to be superior to my  
brothers

But to be able to fight my  
greatest enemy—myself.

Make me ever ready to come to  
You with clean hands —

And straight eye so that  
when life

Fades as the fading  
sunset—

My spirit may come to you  
without shame.

—Tom Whitecloud

—From The American Indian