"Evolution" - by Sherman Alexie (POW #4)

Buffalo Bill opens a pawn shop on the reservation right across the border from the liquor store and he stays open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and the Indians come running in with jewelry television sets, a VCR, a full-length beaded buckskin outfit it took Inez Muse 12 years to finish. Buffalo Bill takes everything the Indians have to offer, keeps it all catalogued and filed in a storage room. The Indians pawn their hands, saving the thumbs for last, they pawn their skeletons, falling endlessly from the skin and when the last Indian has pawned everything but his heart, Buffalo Bill takes that for twenty bucks closes up the pawn shop, paints a new sign over the old calls his venture THE MUSEUM OF NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURES charges the Indians five bucks a head to enter.

Sherman Alexie, Jr., is a Spokane/Coeur d’Alene Indian who grew up on the Spokane Indian Reservation in Wellpinit, WA. He is the author of 22 books, including two collections of poetry, I Would Steal Horses and The Business of Fancydancing, in which the poem “Evolution” appears, and the novels The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven, Ten Little Indians, and the The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian, which won the 2007 National Book Award for Young People’s Literature. He lives with his family in Seattle, WA.