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Dying Warriors

The only factor more defining of the assimilated genocide of Native Americans than the historical remembrance of Chief Joseph by his white name, are his final, surrendering words ending the Nez Perce war. Chief Joseph's simple description of the "dead" and of "death" effectively symbolize the downfall of Native American culture as a whole. Chief Joseph even declares this loss to all other Native peoples shouting, "Hear me, my Chiefs!" Sickened and weak by the treacherous conditions of the escape attempt, forced onto unfamiliar and unwelcomed land, and expected to live according to Christian values including names, Chief Joseph sees no other option than to "fight no more." His surrendering words depict a beaten and broken leader, defeated in war and in existence, handing the future of the tribe over to unsure youth and White domination. The act of a dying warrior and a culture lost to forced assimilation.