The car engine hummed as I headed east on the Trans-Canada. It was late August, and the wind bashed against the car in waves. Always the wind on the prairie. And on that day, it made me feel energized, alive. On that day, I was driving back home to Regina, and I was driving back home a different person.

Earlier, I had been at the Métis Local #160 in Moose Jaw. I had sworn an oath, had my picture taken, and been registered as a Métis citizen. It was 2010, the Year of the Métis in Canada, and at 35, I had a new identity. As I rushed home in my car, I wondered what my life would be like from then on. I wondered who I was about to become. I sensed change, prickly and persistent. The highway stretched out long and far in front of me.

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A few weeks later, my identification card arrived in the mail. I placed it in my wallet so that the edge that read Métis Citizen stuck out from the pocket that held it. And for a while, I felt satisfied. I had proof. But soon, that satisfaction faded and doubt took root. Was I Métis because a plastic card said I was? I ignored the doubt at first, but it burrowed in. Got stuck. Then I learned from census statistics that the fastest-growing population in Saskatchewan is the Métis population - it doubled between 1996 and 2006. This growth has been attributed in part to people discovering their Métis heritage after a time in which it had been buried or forgotten, when racism and assimilation efforts made it shameful, and even dangerous, to self-identify.

I will never know exactly why and when my own family's Métis history was buried; I only know that it was. I grew up in the Qu'Appelle Valley, a place with a long history of Métis settlement, but I had never even heard the term Métis as a child. It wasn't until I was an adult and my mother was given a binder of historical documentation from my great-uncle that I learned my ancestors were Métis. I thought about these census statistics, about all the people like me who had just discovered their history. Then I thought about all the people who have lived their entire lives as Métis. What do they think of people like me?