

## **Genocide**

Once I dreamt that crosses  
were carved diagonally across  
my chest and down my torso.  
I thought of the many crosses  
my ancestors left.

Today

I am seeing the numerous crosses  
of the children's graves.  
Kamloops, Cowessess,  
Williams Lake.  
This is just the beginning.

A storm screams.  
Wet wind lifts snow,  
slams it against the walls.  
A ground fire raced  
through generations  
across the country.  
They crippled hundreds,  
disguised in reading,  
writing and arithmetic.

Breathing souls,  
still buried within  
those institutional hallways,  
touch in the dark night  
as if reading braille  
to lead us from this abyss.  
Instead,  
we are repeatedly slammed  
against the red bricks.

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Parliamentary Poet Laureate**