

Title: When I Heard The Recent Horrific News

Dr. Fyre Jean Graveline

BlueberryBeet, BeetCarrot, BEAM@Blue, Turmeric, Coffee, Dandelion, Ash, Onion.

When i Heard. The Recent Horrific News....

i Took it. Directly. to my Heart. my heARTs.

i Grabbed. my Food Paints. my BlueberryBeet. and Made. a Pour.

on a Big Page. This. is a Big Event. Wake Up. Canada. i Pray.

Swirl and Twirl. Flow and Shake. Shake. Shake. Shake. i am Shaking. All Shook Up.

Oh. my Mind. is all in a Twirl. and Swirl. with all my Racing Thoughts.

Thoughts. Feelings. Impulses. Imaginings. What Ifs.

Thick and Stuck. BlueberryBeet Blob. finally Begins. Flowing Freely.

Mingled with my Tears. Moving. into yet Unknown Shape.

Using end of Brush to Scrape. i Attempt. to Alter Flow.

No...BlueberryBeet. a Determined Medicine. will go Where.

They Flow. They Know.

Quickly. i Change my Strategy. Now. i Struggle. for Containment.

i run BlueberryBeet. to Create. a Box. to Confine Flow.

Before we Go. off The Edge.

Oh! Look. Four Directions. Yes. that works. Some Tenuous. Balance. for Now.

Wait! Confinement? That is what Indian Residential Schooling. Was. Is. All. About.

Severing. our Connection. to Family. Community. Language. Culture. Land.

Confining. Ostracizing. Ridiculing. Evilizing. Demonizing.

Soaping. Strapping. Kneeling. Bowing. Obeying.

Stopping. Flow of Our Cultural Continuity. of Our Creativity.

Civilizing. Missionizing. Making us Western. Christian. Clones.

Denying. Eliminating. our Rights to Be. to Believe. to Belong. to Become.

i Notice. i am Holding. my Breath. I Breathe. I Breathe Again.

Now. a little more Settled. i peer at my Image. Spinning it Around. and Around.

i am a little more Contained. a little less Overwhelmed.

a little Safer within my Box.

I Allow myself. to Breathe Again. to Sense into Feelings. Stored. Embodied.

Clench of Jaw. Stabbing in Head. Twist in Gut.

Fear. First. and Foremost. Then Waves. of Grief. and OutRage.

i See. AllAtOnce. Image captures me. Clearly a Self Portrait.

When I Heard. The Recent Horrific News.

my Hair stood Up. on Back of my Neck. like Porcupine.

a Cold Fear-Filled Feeling. Edged. Up. Around. my Whole Head.
Permeated Every Cell. Fog Flooded my Brain.
In this Moment. BlueberryBeet Brain. Looks. like Dried Blood.
with Dark Chunky Parts. Shadows.
Now. my Mind is Blank. and Then. i Flood. in Fragments. as we all do.
my Traumatizing Years. at Sacred Heart Mission School. Bloody. Black and Blue.
Stories. of my Mother. at Duck Lake Convent. her Mother. at Boarding School.
Stories. of Hundreds. of Survivors. Descendants. heard at IRSS. TRC. Hearings.
Every Story.Fragment. every Mention. of Lost Ones. Spoken with Hushed Fear.
Hushed Fear. Eyes Wide. Still Afraid to Speak. once Silenced. Truths.
Indigenous Children Starved. Smothered. Overworked. Beaten.
Strapped. until Breaking into Strangled Sobs.
Sick with TB. Diseases. Accidents. No Medical Attention. Died.
I am out of Breath. Heart Racing too Fast. Metallic Bile Fear Taste. Filling Mouth.
Slow Down. Breathe. One more Breath. One More.
Some Ran away. and still Never Returned. Disappeared.
Families were Hoping. Their Babies.
would still Show up. Some Day. till The Recent Horrific News.
Infants Born. Fathered by Priests. Thrown into Furnaces.
Some Children Burnt in Fires.
Some Buried in Basements. Fields. River Banks. Out Back.
Children Buried by Children. their Relatives. their Friends.
The Survivors. Now Adults. Whispering Shameful Truths.
Wanting Forgiveness. for Their Part. for being Survivors.
Sob Catches in my Throat. Honoring our Shared Bundle.
Intergenerational. Guilt and Shame.
The Lost Ones. were Never Seen Again. Never Ever Seen Again.
Never Spoken of. Again. in The Schools.
These Secret Shameful Truths. will Continue.
to Emerge. Erupt. Bubble to The Surface.
Like Coffins in Dunbow Alberta.
We who Experienced. We who Witnessed. Knew.
Do not Disobey. Nuns or Priests. or Teachers. in any way.
Not in Any Way. or you too. will Disappear. Poof.
Cold Blue Tingle. of Old Fears Run. Up and Down. my Spine.
Hairs on Arms. on Neck. on Head. Stand. Straight up.
i Embrace Porcupine Medicine. Gentle. Kind. Self Protective.

i am Calmer now. i keep Pain.ing. Layers of Food Color. Medicine.
And. my Mind. keeps incessantly Whirring. Swirling. Wondering.
These were Clergy. Bureaucrats. They. Invented.

Paperwork. Forms. and Numbers.

Why were No Notices Sent. to Waiting. Mothers.Fathers.Grandparents?

Why were No Bodies of Children. Transported Home. for Ceremonies?

Records of Letters. to Grieving Mother say: "an unwarranted expenditure"?

An Unwarranted Expenditure! Heartless! Like Duncan Campbell Scott.

Why were there No Grave Markers? No Records Kept? No Counting?

Just Shame-filled Secret Burials. many in Mass Graves.

IRSchools. Known by Children. passing by.

as "the place where Dead Babies live".

Like Kamloops. 215 found. So far. Tip of Iceberg. Cold. Blue. Shiver.

My Mind. Swirls and Twirls. with Too Much Information. T.M.I.

Time to Take a Breath. And Another.

What about 130+ IRSchools. not yet Viewed.

through newer Tech. "Ground. Penetrating. Radar."?

Did You Know? As early as 1904. Canadian Government Actually Knew.

Dr. Peter Henderson Bryce Reported.

Inadequate Funding. was Causing. One in Four Indigenous Children. to Die.
in Indian Residential Schools.

In some Schools. Documented Death Rates. were Sixty-Five Percent.

I Just Found Out. in my Mom's School. It was 50 percent.

I am Grateful She Survived. her Battle with TB.

to Birth me. and six others.

There was a Lobby for Abolition of Residential Schools.

Catholic Church successfully Resisted.

To This Day. RCs have never Apologized. Never made Amends.

for their Very Large Part. in Saving. our Souls.

Breath. i Remind Myself. Breath Again. i am Trying. to remain Grounded.

while Allowing. Myself. to Struggle. with Deep and Dark. Shadow. Cast.

i Know. Envision Light. All around me. within me.

i grab my Turmeric Yellow. No. too Bright. Daub with Leftover Coffee.

Thin with Dandelion. Bitter. Is. Better.

i think of Beautiful. now adult Daughter. i am Grateful. i am able to Mother.

i am Grateful. for all Light filled Children. in my World. our Shared World.

i Imagine. All our Amazing. Resilient. Spirits.

Brilliance. Radiance. Innocence. Creative life force. Intact.
i Daub Light Medicine. Love and Light. All. Around
All Lost Children. All Grieving Families.
All those Directly. and Indirectly. Impacted by The Recent Horrific News.
i am Finding it Hard. to Hold Light. for Long. with this Huge Looming.
Deep and Dark. Shadow. ReSurfacing.
Of course. We Knew. Those Able to Listen. to Pay Attention.
We All. had Opportunity to Know. There were many Deaths Reported.
We Heard about Them. in Testimonies. 6,500 Testimonies.
Thousands of Stories. Fear Filled. Sorrow Drenched Retellings.
Before Unspoken Truths.
TRC Reported. Tracked 3000+ known Deaths. in 6 short years of Hearings.
Six of the 94 Calls to Action (2015). called for Mapping. Ceremonies. Markers.
Commemoration. Protection of Cemeteries. and Burial Sites.
Justice Sinclair himself. Guestimated. 6000 Deaths.
Right now. in this Moment. i can't Help. It. i Begin. to Do The Math.
Given 150,000 Indigenous Children. Imprisoned in 130+ Schools.
Even just counting. for now. Schools on TRC list. And we Know. Many More.
I Do. The Math. One in Four is more like 37,500!
Thirty Seven Thousand. Five Hundred Indigenous Children. Plus. Plus. Plus.
Indigenous Children. who Never Went Home. Back to Mother's Arms.
Dumped Unceremoniously. in Inmarked Graves.
No Right to Be. Believe. Belong. Become.
Time to Pause. to Take a Breath. to Hold my Heart. to Focus on Light.
which. of Course. Quickly gives way. to Waves. of Fear. of OutRage. of Grief.
As i Acknowledge. Terror. Horror. of this Violence. Genocide. Continuing Today.
i want to Yell: This is Not. Just. "a Sad. Chapter. in Canadian. History."!
These Realities. are All Still Alive.
Reverberating. in our Lives. Today. Every. Day.
Murdered and Missing. Indigenous Women. Girls. TwoSpirited.
Escalating Suicide Rates. Child Welfare Systems continuing Family Breakup.
Overpopulated Correctional Systems. Boil Water Advisories.
Environmental Racism. with Epic Cancer Fatalities.
Relentless Extractive Industries. Destroying. Capitalizing.
on Our Sacred Lands. Our Mother Earth.
Let's Acknowledge. Like Gender Based Violence.
Even Recorded Stats. only Track. Direct Deaths.

What Happens to Death Tolls. When we Count. Numbers that Survived.
And Ended their Lives early?

from onset of Diseases. Seeded in Childhood Malnutrition.
in Improper Care for TB. and other Diseases.

Immunization Experiments.

from Accidents. Injuries. Sustained in Schools.

from Lifetimes. of Injurious. Mental Health. Treatments.

from Self-Medicating. Self-Harming. Survival Strategies.

to Escape Pain-filled Memories.

from early Educational Trauma. making Return to School. Impossible.

Resulting in Mortality. from Poverty. Food Insecurity. Homelessness.

from Violence. once Perpetrated On us.

and now passed on Laterally. Intergenerationally.

Now our Shame. Our Blame.

What about All who Survived. to Never want. to be "Indian" again.

Who were Afraid. to Live Lives. as Indigenous Peoples?

Who Protected Children. by Not Sharing Identities.

Languages. Ceremonies. Stories?

i am Feeling. Exhausted. i Need. to ReEnergize.

i Reach to Grandfather Sun. Grandmother Moon. Star Nations. i Reach to Light.

Again. and Again Encircling. Blue and Red. Coffeed Bitter Yellow.

Bring Light to OutRage. to Grief. to Fear. to Guilt and Shame.

Returning Again and Again. to Shadow. to Light. in Endless Cycles.

Round and Round. Up and Down. Hold It All In. Let It All Go. Let. It. All. Go.

Like our Ancestors before us. When we Feel. Waves of Pain.

We Reach. for Our Ceremonies. Our Smudge. Drums. Pipes.

Songs. Dances. Our Arts. Our heARTs.

i Remember. Sacred Pain. of Sun Dance. i Offer This. All of This. to Creator.

Sacred Ash. from Spring Ceremonies. Fast Fire. Calls to Me.

i Prayerfully Encircle. Whole Edge. Black Ash. Needs Onion Tears.

Black Ash. Needs Blue. Black and Blue.

Blue Tinged Everywhere. for Icy Cold Shiver. Still With.In.

May We All. Let this Recent Horrific News In.

May We All. Let this Recent Horrific News Remind Us.

Long Shadow Cast. by "Dark Chapter of Canadian History". is still Unfolding.

Past Cannot be Past. until Trauma. is Released. and Harmony. is Restored.

As Carolyn Bennet. current Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations. Tells it:

“...once you know the truth, you cannot unknow the truth of this”

(CTV interview, May 29, 2021).

You Cannot. Unknow. The Truth. of This!

May We All. Hold Our Hearts.

And Surround All. with Love and Light.

for All Lost Ones. Safe Journey Home. to Creator.

for All Grieving Families and Communities. Healing Circles. of Comfort.

May we All. Honor Traumas. and Strengths. of All Survivors. and Descendants.

May we All. Continuously Acknowledge Truths of Genocide.

in our Past and Present.

By Offering. our Healing Arts. our heARTs.

we Invite you. Share your Response heARTs with us.

How did. The Recent Horrific News. Impact you? and your Loved Ones?

Let us CoCreate. a heARTfelt Community of Care.

Through an Evolving Installation. a Memorial Gallery.

a Public Statement of our Concern.

May We All. Work Together for Change. Engaging Actively in ReconciliActions.

Like Lobbying Canadian Government. to Resource. all Calls for Action:

TRC. Murdered and Missing Women's Inquiry

The 60s Scoop.

May We Ask The Catholic Church. to Apologize. and Finally. make Amends.

May We Educate. All Canadians. to Wake up.

Wake Up Canada. Embrace our Shadow.

Become Light.er. Together.

https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/we-do-not-want-this-to-be-hidden-remains-of-215-children-discovered-on-site-of-former-residential-school-1.5446837?fbclid=IwAR1Sh4vb0VRJebWjJHQFP3IYtZbTZVT2OfdPqhS3_c8KwNV0tJgEaplifw

https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/newly-discovered-b-c-graves-a-grim-reminder-of-the-heartbreaking-death-toll-of-residential-schools?fbclid=IwAR0k1Q0QCTGHTDDXZQtX8RmPHOPypn0k5eegGiQ9v6SIjfyORQknaL2_h6c

<https://nctr.ca/concerted-national-action-overdue-for-all-the-children-who-never-came-home-from-residential->

[schools/?fbclid=IwAR02YlqE00vsNkXQQOGwpKaTnd0jWLCp0K7g80-EHqRIPWInPVAtSuXA2eg](https://www.facebook.com/schools/?fbclid=IwAR02YlqE00vsNkXQQOGwpKaTnd0jWLCp0K7g80-EHqRIPWInPVAtSuXA2eg)

https://nctr.ca/215-innocent-children/?fbclid=IwAR33IYRL7acBJS07kx57pfhMZS7w2z_p4PVvloSXBxgmlA0Q8XF8mpY8wM

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bz6-TIRBWRY>