

## Jónína Kirton

Jónína Kirton, a Métis Icelandic poet, graduated from the Simon Fraser University Writer's Studio in 2007 and is currently an Adjunct Professor with the UBC Creative Writing Program. She was sixty-one when she received the 2016 Vancouver's Mayor's Arts Award for an Emerging Artist in the Literary Arts category. Her second collection of poetry, *An Honest Woman* (Talonbooks, 2017), was a finalist in the 2018 Dorothy Livesay Poetry Prize. Her third book, *Standing in a River of Time* (Talonbooks, 2022), merges poetry and lyrical memoir to expose the intergenerational effects of colonization on a Métis family.

### to remembering

today I remembered the alchemy within  
that breast bone belief in self  
the secret yearning to walk that line  
where danger thrilled cells hum  
to the sound of voice shrill screaming  
atop the roller coaster of wanting  
the forbidden believing it necessary  
to ignore red lights flashing caution to the wind  
the downward spiral rails clacking  
head back neck open hands holding tight  
it takes a strong body to face danger in this way  
so when my niece asked me to go on that ride  
I said yes knowing it would later hurt  
I just wanted to share one last ride with her  
to pretend I can still do it but only with her  
I just wanted her to know that part of me

that we are so alike

risk reward not just a formula but rather  
a calculation of desire against vulnerability  
once so much easier to do with a strong body  
a neck that does not ache now peril around every corner  
that Coney Island ride downsized to accommodate need for safety  
the length shorter less time for gravity to take hold  
than Catherine the Great had in mind  
pulled up that wooden hill again and again  
at the top we take a breath leave everything to chance  
I just wanted my niece to know I was once fearless

that we are so alike

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