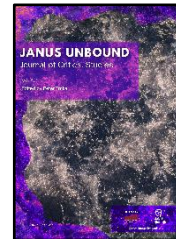


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Maybe next I'll try talking to men

Maybe next I'll try talking to men
only after
they've quit their violences.
I mourn
for long audiences with deep shadows
to get lost in,
an emergency exit at the back, an
empty alleyway beyond that where all you hear are
clacking heels.

My warning thoughts intrude anyway, offering
flashbacks of nervous intimacies, a sense of how
girls' principles can be
misdirected.
I see them all day, grappling with these times, these cycles
of Kavanaghs, Turners, your neighbors, the quiet ones;
we are struck by new cruelties that pop up like
rank moles in dust and under a
hot sun.

But don't fixate on the past;
it is across all time, every place.
Because of this,
when I feel against hope, I stay in touch through
fluorescent post-it notes, stuck everywhere carrying
all-caps messages of screaming fonts to
protect my lungs.
We find our ways to respite.

And yet, we still wait for a trauma trade publication,
a Swiss army knife,
a kit,
an explainer video - something to help us move against
these intensities, the burning that follows,
the smoke, the scattering critters and
the dry silences.

Maybe next I'll try talking to men

Let's wait for new fauna and fresh air.
In the meantime, sit to watch youth on the river,
floating on cheerful plastic and wonderfully
elastic politics.
Agency is everywhere,
refreshing everyone.
Wait it out until the shadows are long
again.

Biography

Amber Moore is an Assistant Professor of Teaching with the Department of Language and Literacy Education at The University of British Columbia. Her research interests include: adolescent literacies; arts-based research; English education; feminist pedagogies; teacher and teacher librarian education; rape culture; and representations of youth in popular culture and YA literature, particularly sexual assault narratives.