Avonlea School

DOI

https://doi.org/10.32393/jlmms/2023.0001

Published on

Fri, 05/19/2023 - 16:14

Down the valley, she is whitewashed and low.

Earnest eaves stick out, like tongues waving welcomes and warnings; hold onto those leather straps! Keep the books dry!

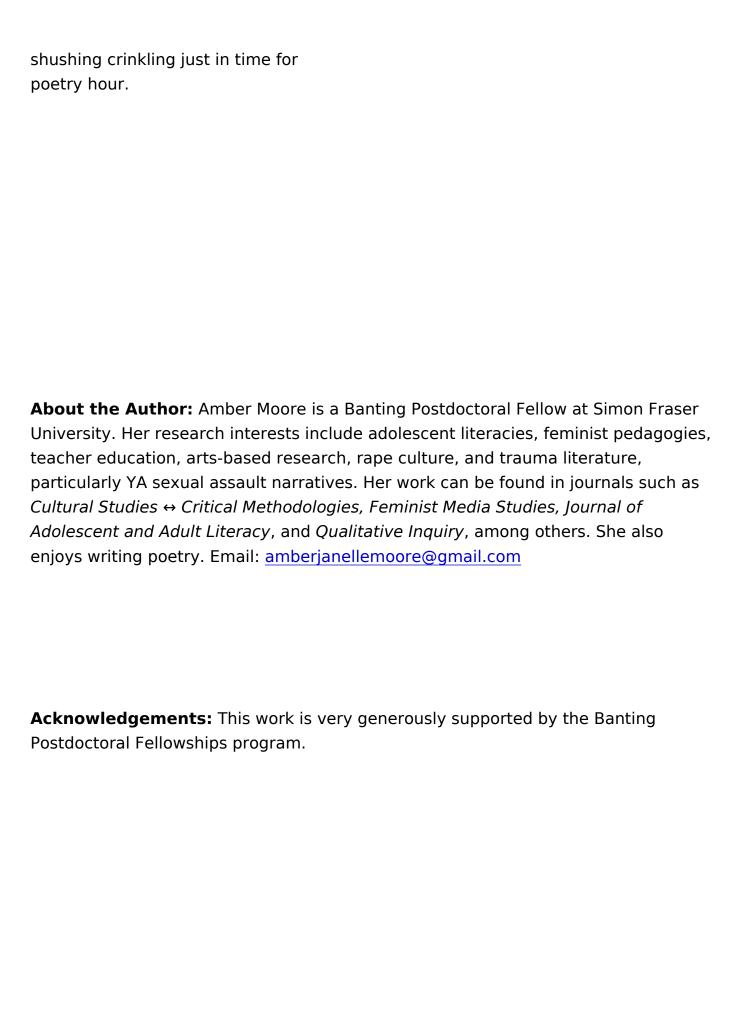
Windows invite tapping, allow for sneaking looks, peekings in at mouthy desks carved with dull love letters, edged with dust.

Pink crumbs from raspberry tarts shared scatter among girls who w o /a n d e r then cluster the stoop, whispering about slate slams.

She sits comfortably,
nestled in
among
fussy fir branches that shake at those who
scamper past,
late again from imagining ghosts.

The brook sticks close to her—
a natural ally.
She too hums knowingly and
also stays down,
her attention remaining on cooling milk
and
hot hands with
easy babbling.

Together, both quietly hold autumn close, capturing leaves in the doorway or washing them downstream,



Geographical Information: This poem was written on the ancestral, traditional, and unceded territories of the Squamish, Musqueam, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations, where the author lives and works as uninvited guest and settler. These lands are also known as Vancouver, in British Columbia, Canada.
Banner Image: Book cover for <i>Anne of Avonlea</i> , 1991. kindredspaces.ca, 117B-AA-SCHOLASTIC.
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