

RADICAL TEACHER

A SOCIALIST, FEMINIST, AND ANTI-RACIST JOURNAL ON THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF TEACHING

Poetry **Two Poems**

by Lucy Arnold



PHOTO BY TOA HEFTIBA

Peace

i like being up early
before my family stirs
me and the gentle snorts of the coffee machine
and armed men on the street corners

on receiving an email from a white
woman explaining that she is worried for
her safety following protests on campus

i too am a white woman
and i get it
our safety—yours and mine—is paramount
historically
also contemporarily
also—
never mind

the email you sent to me
your white female professor
at a university
rocked today by protests
following the shooting—
another shooting—
of a black man by police

this email
somehow managed to boil this whole
thing down to one thing:
your safety
also: why you cannot attend class this evening
which is cool
i get it
and i think you thought
i'd get it
which is why you sent it
and i do—
i get it

your safety matters to me
but
let's face it
your safety has mattered for a long time
your safety has often been valued
beyond your freedom, your mind, your sexuality, your education

ironically

(appropriately?)

enough

so while i do get it

i guess what would have been nice

would have been

even the tiniest

the most minute

intimation

that someone else's safety

also matters

that today there is civil unrest

there are fires

there are students lying on the steps of the student union

because black men and women are

not safe

and that they are not safe—

at least partially

and certainly not always by your will

for the sake of your

fucking safety

anyway, yeah i get it

homework's still due

be safe,

your professor



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