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Poetry not yet

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RADICAL TEACHER

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

Poetry
not yet

by Veronica Hotton

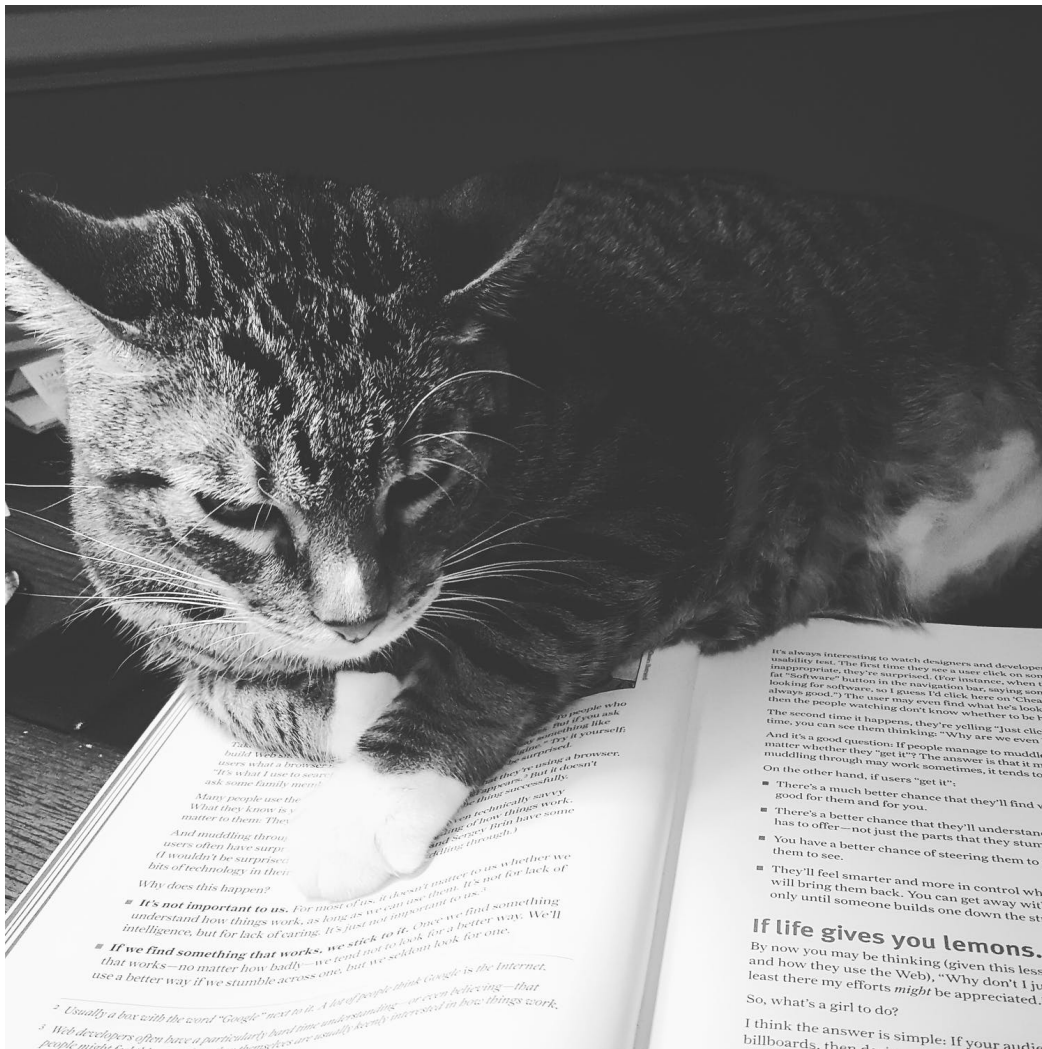


IMAGE BY HEATHER MCKEEN

not yet

I have not graded your paper yet
not yet

piles grow
they get moved around the room
moved to different rooms
carried in backpacks or bags
dragged in and out of cars
moved to folder
to binder
to desk
to table
to lap, then back to folder

I have not graded your paper yet
because it is time to create the next assignment, yes, already time
I have not graded your paper yet
because that assignment was forgotten, yes, forgotten

the piles need to be alphabetized first ✓
the late papers need to be rounded up ✓
the piles need to be complete ✓
the papers need to be re/stapled ✓✓

were we like this before or after the grading rut?
I am sad
they overcharge you
they underpay us
or a messy combination
more facts to internalize

because I am tired
of grading
you
I have not graded those papers yet

I wish I had shiny-star-stickers ★
for you
would the piles dwindle,
if I could gift you something
for your quality and quantity?
could that help me dive into those piles?

I have not graded your paper yet
because I would rather have you read it, today

to me, to us, so we all hear it, together
we can listen to what works, what
needs fixin', and what can be
 re/moved
 re/added
we can celebrate
 you

I have not graded your paper yet
because my cats are sitting on the piles
 the folder
 the binder
 the table, the desk, my lap
feline cheek drool has marked your paper
their stapling claws and fangs have punctured your paper
at least they were not recently in the little box
 at least the lease only allows cats

I have not graded those papers yet
because they are at the bottom of
another pile I have not graded
 no
not yet



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