Molly Gaudry

Why did our mothers lead us to believe that we would fall in love one day, that we would stand in open French doors in nothing but our underwear—clean white perfect cotton cloth—our back exposed in soft gray early morning light, bare breasts against our lover's chest, their fingers grazing our raised thigh? Do we even know what love is—any more than they did? Here is another question:

Is to love an imperative infinitive? It is non-finite; it is a verbal; its other lexical category is nouns; it represents none of the verb's arguments; it does not inflect to agree, to any degree; it can, however, serve as the only verb of a declarative, which must be what our mothers had in mind when they said, "You're not getting any younger." Yet, to love is tenseless, without aspect, mood, or voice. It needs no auxiliary; it helps itself.

Molly Gaudry is the founder of Lit Pub and the author of the verse novel *We Take Me Apart*, which was a finalist for the Asian American Literary Award and shortlisted for the PEN/Osterweil. She is an assistant professor at Stony Brook University and core faculty at the Yale Writers' Workshop.

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