

*Whispered*

because.  
 if you know about female circumcision  
 (the four ways)  
 you might relate your knowledge, spewing  
 the distinctions between a nerve-filled flap  
 and a miniature penis.  
 if you know all of this  
 perhaps you can speak of cleanliness  
 and eat it up in gobs of trickling water  
 because.  
 just because you know  
 you might report your knowledge, shouting  
 a curator of marginal pieces  
 a mouth detached from storytelling  
 list the cut- and sewn-up facts  
 the pencil-tip hole, the inner scrape  
 and the 15 minutes of life it takes  
 to emit the typical human waste  
 because.  
 if you know about female mutilation  
 (all the ways)  
 you might sit up, erect  
 close off that pain  
 explain  
 perhaps you will understand the scalpel  
 the shape of female plasticity  
 manipulated skin  
 because.  
 just because  
 you know.

Amanda Fields is a second year graduate student in Creative Writing from Dahinda, Illinois.