

Election

by [Jeanne Murray Walker](#) in the [November 8, 2017](#) issue

Votes piled up like wrecked  
cars until I realized no path would open  
last night and I said: *He's not my President,*  
as if I were a country unto myself.  
I crave peace, I say, as I begin to hate.

Fear stalks the back alleys of my body  
like gangs of skinny 15-year-old boys,  
their backpacks filled with homemade bombs.

I got up this morning trying to keep words  
hinged to truth, trying to keep  
despair on a leash like an  
obedient pit bull.

I sign up at our women's  
prison to teach the ladies how to  
use the extreme weapon,  
metaphor, to write a way out of their cold  
cells, into some truth they know  
but can't yet say.

And then, human  
and needy, I drive to stock up  
on milk, bread, chocolate,  
past the Friends' Meeting House: their  
sign: *Let us see what love will do.*