
Mark Wallace

from Party In My Body

What are you trying to warn me approaches? I'd like to look away but the things I'm not seeing would still be there. Lead me to a deeper impurity. Time to walk to the store again? Brief shock of static in the language of money. Nothing happens without professionals but professionals help nothing happen. Can a song make small new noise in a city shut by ice storms? Doing more with less! I have big plans, you know. It's too easy to look for darkness.

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As evidence of what's wrong with me, at last I have the silence I wanted. Exaggerations in weather reports! Freedom includes acting dumb in public. I'm learning to reconcile hunger for love with awareness of common neurotic rituals. On a holiday the promise of the mailbox fails me. Imagination's bad enough and now you've linked it with action. A popular special topics class studies the literature of apocalypse. Should I come down from this high lonely mountain to labor again with sore back in the streets? Is it because we're surrounded by many that people long to believe in a few? The night before a winter storm, I sit warm in my room.

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He prides himself on never doing the kind of thing he just did. The storm that had been predicted for days decided to ignore the prediction. Walking winter streets, I feel a lack of distinguishing features on nothing in particular. There's a beacon in this rocky world according to the bank ad. Too busy flying to see the exhaust? I'm out of milk again. Some lights in that building are blue. Don't save me from my savior complex. Movies on airplanes! Just when I began to feel whole I found I'd scared everyone off.

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I'd like a little fun before it's time to disintegrate. Can I leave the living room yet? What's the latest technique for measuring freedom? When it's this cold, everyone looks like they're smoking. Sure we all lie sometimes, some of us just do it more quickly. False teeth made from elephant tusks. Feeling like there's nothing to say! How many bureaucrats does it take to form mistaken standards for art? Do you feel enough closeness to others? When I think of all the chances I've missed, I get eager to miss some more.

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Why draw a line between dreams and the day? Why say I am more than the landscape unless I believe the landscape is dead? My commitment to poetry isn't ironic. What happens if we shatter illusions? What parts of ourselves are at stake? Writing changes everything, more so because it's not noticed. Let's talk about what we love. A railroad bridge in snow and I wonder where the trains go. It's time to lose my body into what can be made of it. Hoping to be happy!

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The hat sits on a pile of papers as if they're going out in the cold. Theories of who should touch us and why. From fairy tale to traffic nightmare, some thrill to the chill of first flakes, but ice stops travelers in their tracks. Why does the age demand nothing? Am I transcendent or drunk? People flutter in doorways and demented angels are ripe for a fall. All the things to choke on! If this looming gray building makes use of poetry, can poetry be to blame? When people hurry to work, it's not because work will vanish but because they know it exists without them. Gnash your teeth in an empty office and sing as though rebellion is here.

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The ease of changing one's public image! Can I help you out of the general malaise? He got friendly and we lit him on fire. Did the attendant stamp your time card? I tried to move, found I had. Please welcome the impostor and his puffed-up credentials. Some days the world still lets me object. I'm glad to hear you're looking past it. Refuse to sign the oath. Wasn't it great that the cabbie's argument interrupted the poetry reading?

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What kind of mind does it take to pull oneself out of the muck? In the sun, a row of small white crosses. I know this isn't the last jubilation, bodies pushing against the unknown. Is that a pit in the middle of the road? This symbol mixes sperm and blood in one more teasing crucifix. How people become bosses! All these monks have studied the classics. Shall we invent a melodrama and cast it with a dubious night? Is that poetry down on its knees, pleading with the producer? Close and close, far away.

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Make new mixtures of motives. If you try to help flailing people, you often end up helping them flail. A basic lesson: our faces aren't that far from the ground. What's up? Why am I caught here holding the short end? Essentially, no one noticed. Fearing isolation, a woman locks herself in a room. Wearing heavy coats in warm weather! Around here you have to watch who you talk to. Many studies have been conducted over the past five years.

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During the making of *The Godfather*, organized crime owned Paramount Studios. Giving people what they want! Victors and vanquished prepare to feel righteous. Fog wrapped around the city like fog. Do you think of your life in terms of endings? How did you come by so many hormones? Getting lost in the woods, we invented civilization. Are all these hands and faces fragile whatever intentions they hide? I'm not hurt enough to give up poetry. That's our show for tonight.

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