

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.*