

Walls

A wall says,
“You’re not welcome.”
“You have no seat on the board.”
“This land is posted: Keep Out.”

Walls never say,
“There’s plenty for all.”
“Color doesn’t matter.”
“Here’s your ballot.”

When a wall blocks your path,
If you have the will to fight
And no fear of dying,
You can take it down—
Alone, or with others,
One stone at a time,
Hack, hack, hack.

The Great Wall of China was breached.
The Berlin Wall fell to the wrecker’s ball.
Cutters snip through barbed wire walls.
Walls of white trembled before Selma marchers,

Walls writ into law fall to voting machines,
And if not voting machines,
To revolution,
violent and non-violent.

The world is a maze
With a thousand thousand walls
Bearing names like Narcissism,
Egotism, Sexism, Pride,
Hypocrisy, Ignorance, Nation Building,
Organized Religion, Greed, Intolerance.

No matter how artfully applied the makeup,
No matter how chic the outward attire,
No matter how cultured or well-mannered,
Walls throb with an insatiable lust
For dominance, for lordship,
For the power of life or death
Over any and all challengers.