“The Walls We Put Up”

Patrick McGraw

INT. APARTMENT – DAY

**Wall**

(haughtily)

I don’t know what makes you think it will be any different today. I see him every day. He’s a measured dullard. Oatmeal at 6:45—

**VASE**

(sweetly)

But he adds cranberries to his oatmeal. That’s—oh, I don’t know—a little daring—

**Wall**

(with irritation)

He adds eight, not seven, not nine, eight!

**VASE**

Oh, but he’s wearing that bright striped shirt—

**Wall**

(voice rising)

That’s his Thursday shirt. And today is Thursday!

(forced calm)

Listen, you’re just a vase. Me? I’ve been here since this place was built—

**VASE**

(stage whisper)

And you could use a coat of paint.

**Wall**

What?

**VASE**

(feigning innocence)

Oh, nothing. Just a cough. I could use some water.

**Wall**

(suspicious, but plods on)

Anyway, as I was saying, I’ve seen people come and go, and this guy is milquetoast.

**VASE**

(stage whisper)

You don’t show your age at all.

**Wall**

(assesses the “compliment”)

Thank you. My point is he’ll never amount to anything. He just stares at the paper, pen in hand, just slumped in defeat before words even mark the page. And if he does scribble anything, he instantly crumples the paper and tosses it to the floor.

(rising passion)

No, not instantly, not crumples, not tosses. He folds—FOLDS—the paper and then places it—places it—in the bin. SHOW SOME FURY FOR GOD’S SAKE. There’s no passion in that man, I tell you. He’s a quitter!

**FRONT DOOR**

And I’m telling you, today is different.

**Wall**

(patronizingly)

Well, go on, Evelyn.

**VASE**

(confused)

Evelyn?

**FRONT DOOR**

(To Vase)

He’s just putting on airs. I’m just a door. You can call me Eleven.

(To Wall)

And I’m telling you, today is different, because as he walked out this morning, he was saying, “I know I can. I know I can.”