

Atlas It Hunches

Even in disuse, the walls of the theater
are still. You'd think on Sunday afternoons
while the world is away, those black bricks
would sing to themselves in the absence
of sound and color, like its students do.

But no even when great setpieces clutter
the stage and the walls go months without so
much as dust, the walls of the theater wait

Oh Beautiful Wallflowers they are. In
the busy hours when young actors fill space
like an ideal gas, in the edges not reached by
the dim slant light
the insulated wires snug between bricks don't
look both ways and in their
Apparent Solitude sneak down from their
shelf to dance to themselves in the dark. The
ceiling too, in its underbelly a night sky held by
spotlights, globes of gas. While the world
sleeps, it doesn't lift itself in relief to wander
the streets of Berks County.

No it remains in place.

Atlas, it hunches,
keeping out the rain.

In my corner behind the set,
the walls of the theater watch over the
last vestige of my character.
The motion of a glove that presses to the wall.
A gray water bottle, a marked-up script.

But in the empty dark when you pull the
curtain closed. hang your costume on its hook.
when you turn your back to these hallowed
halls for the last time never to return. know
The Walls of The Theater silently weep for
you. Before you go, place your hand bare on
the black bricks and feel them heave.

They weep for you.