

# Prayer

*by Marie Howe*

Every day I want to speak with you. And every day something more important  
calls for my attention – the drugstore, the beauty products, the luggage

I need to buy for the trip.

Even now I can hardly sit here

among the falling piles of paper and clothing, the garbage trucks outside  
already screeching and banging.

The mystics say you are as close as my own breath.

Why do I flee from you?

My days and nights pour through me like complaints  
and become a story I forgot to tell.

Help me. Even as I write these words I am planning  
to rise from the chair as soon as I finish this sentence.