

# My Yellow Wall

by [James Como](#) (April 2022)



*All That is Beautiful*, Ben Shahn, 1966

A brick apartment building stands on East 91<sup>st</sup> Street.  
I see it, on the corner closest to the river, every morning  
from across that street. I've never been inside.  
Its bricks are pale yellow *per se*, not painted.  
But my eyes are old and I am color blind.  
Not black-and-white color blind.  
Still, yellow is tricky. The building  
appears of a color nearly the same as  
objects I know to be yellow, because I'd been catechized.

None of this matters, though, because of what happens:  
the sun hits it flush and the burnished bricks transfigure,

the yellow intolerably charged as simmering gold,  
and yet more solid, a light-beyond-light empyrean  
breaking through—one never knows,  
can *never* know—cascading upon that inner eye,  
a revelation proffered for my wonder, so I am  
transfixed and (uncharacteristically), now,  
finally I need not search for meaning.

I Am is here.

Either that, or this I, me, is insane.

But I am indifferent to that cold difference.

The brick, its yellow, the sun,  
three for me together, an unmerited gift.  
I must remember to be grateful.

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**James Como's** new book is *Mystical Perelandra: My Lifelong Reading of C. S. Lewis and His Favorite Book* (Winged Lion Press).

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