The World is Fraught

For Hazel

A chill settles in,
paranoia slits our souls
as sleeping these 40-odd years
we lay unsuspecting,
and seams fray
and whole bottles of aspirin
will not allay the suspicions.

Our childhoods are over, old dear,
and we are grey and lined.
The world, we have learned, is fraught
with little dangers, with little dangers.

Grenades. Shrapnel. Molotov cocktails.
We creep through middle age
like some greatcoated mud-covered WWI soldier
crawling into No Man’s Land — it awaits us
and is not over. The barbed wire. Mud.
Who has his sights on us?

Glifton Whiten