

## 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?

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