

Daylight
by Melissa O'Neil

Daylight savings has come again,
and, today, the sun is burning off the clouds,
giving a hint that Spring might finally have come
after an interminable winter.

Across the world is chaos,
bombs raining down, families torn apart,
the occupying soldiers left dead in the street.

But in my morning,
the sun is burning off the morning haze
so it looks like smoke rising off the horizon.
My children are safe at home.
My husband has not been forced
to stay behind and fight,
left behind to defend.

As I sit on my perch basking in the sun's brightness,
an older couple walks by me.
I exclaim to them, before I can stop myself,
"The sun has come out!"
My glee is like that of a child's,
delighting at the bright warmth.
The woman says, "Yes!", and they walk on, smiling.

As I turn my face to the sun,
I watch the smoke-like haze rise,
and I am filled with both gratitude and dread,
gratitude for this moment and
dread for all of the mothers who cannot be safe,
who cannot keep their babies safe.
Across the world, train stations in neighboring countries have strollers
lined up for incoming refugee mothers who are fleeing,
left there by other mothers who know the extra weight of a child,
who know how much a stroller can ease that burden.

What if we could all turn our faces to the sun?
What if we could all see one another's humanity
instead of what keeps us separate?
The dew on the grass glistens like tears.
The world is connected,

both beauty and heartbreak in the same breath.