

The Good in the Evil World

By Rebecca Hazelton

Before the war leaned in and blew out
the candles, there were many long days
where lovers called themselves lovers
and a house was a dream but also
four walls, a roof. A father called
to his daughter to see the monarch butterflies,
pausing in their migration to fan the goldenrod,
a tiger in each coy disclosure.

A young man reached for a blackberry
and found draped on a branch a green snake
the color of matcha. A snake the color of matcha
sighed in the sun. People drove in cars.

There were jobs and someone had to work
every morning. A man quit his job
but it was no tragedy. He didn't like the work.

Another man slid in and found it comfortable
enough, and just as easily slid in beside
the man's wife and into the everyday rhythms
of his life and that was no tragedy either.

After rains, a ring of mushrooms would delicately
crack the earth. Spanish moss harbored red mites.
The sky wasn't interesting. No one looked up.

Source: *Poetry* (February 2016)