

her thoughts are so anxious
this street is not safe
their belongings could be stolen
his bike could be pinched
that child could be abused
they could get run over
that man looks a dangerous drunk
we could be at war

her life has lost its vibrancy
she has lost women, work, words
she's overwhelmed by people
she's afraid of everyday actions
getting a bus, walking in the street
her hands shake, she can't stand still
her throat feels strangled
her chest feels tight, her face is tingling
her eyes want to close everything out
she is at war with her world

the spring sun feels warm on her face
children laughing makes her smile
she has managed out today
we could be at war
but today she senses peace

Jo Beth Gray