

## **It is Dangerous to Read Newspapers**

**Margaret Atwood**

While I was building neat  
Castles in the sandbox,  
The hasty pits were  
Gilling with bulldozed corpses

And as I walked to the school  
Washed and combed, my feet  
Stepping on the cracks in the cement  
Detonated red bombs.

Now I am grownup  
And literate, and I sit in my chair  
As quietly as a fuse

And the jungles are flaming, the under-  
Brush is charged with soldiers,  
The names on the difficult  
Maps go up in smoke.

I am the cause, I am a stockpile of chemical  
Toys, my body  
Is a deadly gadget,  
I reach out in love, my hands are guns,  
My good intentions are completely lethal.

Even my  
Passive eyes transmute  
Everything I look at to the pocked  
Black and white of a war photo,  
How  
Can I stop myself

It is dangerous to read newspapers.

Each time I hit a key  
On my electric typewriter,  
Speaking of peaceful trees

Another village explodes.