wasted

they say youth
is wasted on the young

admittedly I look back
at photos and marvel
how perfectly my skin
stretched over
young bones

I was fearless
and clueless
in equal measure
possessed of
absolute belief
in opinions half-baked

but I also remember
angst about everything
the drama of best friends
falling out
the bitching
the dating
the waiting
to use the house phone

what about things
that didn't keep me awake
but would now
student-debt
starting out on a career path
internships for goodness sake

there's the insurmountable
housing-ladder
child-care costs
and global warming

they say ageing is
a dirty word
there's osteoporosis
memory loss
and sagging skin

my body is slower
softer, rounder
but loved and respected
magnificent machine
that it is
more resilient
than I ever imagined
it could be

past my middle age
but not yet ancient
I've everything to live for
nothing left to prove

I can't understand
old people
constantly complaining
chasing the myth
of eternal youth
expensive face creams
and pills bought online
that never deliver
what they promise

if you ask me
not that you did
(but such is my privilege:
I have opinions
and you will hear them)

you can value
or bemoan your age
at any age
don't squander what you have
whilst ever you have it
waste is the worst blight
of any generation

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