

Flared Nostrils

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I smell like old people
when I visit him
in this place corralling the sick
and dying, like a musty attic
wiped
with a single cotton ball,
alcohol
heavied.
The pungent promise
evaporates,
leaving
behind
the returning
worn
odor
of time, dust, and use
mingled with suspenders, shawls,
slippers, and sticks for walking,

I disdain
this aroma
that clings to my frame
like knit pants to knee highs,
revealing illusion
as I step back,
tricked,
offended and brazen,
gloating in my newness,
daring
Death
to spritz
my squared shoulders
with its signature cologne