

Published by *Spoonie Press*, September 14, 2021

GOOD MORNING, MIGRAINE

The house is utterly quiet. My husband isn't at his computer in the study next to mine, calling out to me for advice while shopping on Amazon. The dogs aren't chasing each other around the house or barking in the entryway at people walking by outside with or without dogs, or at the UPS and FedEx trucks as ubiquitous as the deer drifting out into our neighborhood from a nearby swampy protected area, or at a roaming cat.

In this quiet, I can even hear the soft ticking of the small brass mantel clock on my desk and it could almost be winter with everything muffled by a snowfall too deep to plow.

It's 3 a.m. and I'm in my study, which is really a library, with honey-colored pine shelves over and under the windows and lining every wall, the book spines gleaming dully in the subdued light, each of them either a friend I once knew or a voyage I'm waiting to take. In daylight they clamor happily, reminding me or cajoling me, but now, at 3 a.m. all they do is hum or whisper and I feel soothed.

The view from my wide, four-panel front window is absent because the wooden blinds are down. I can't space out watching the light shift through oak and maple leaves in the trees across the street. I can't wonder why a neighbor changed the color of her front door. I can't follow the trail of someone biking or running.

A migraine woke me up—again—and there's no need to check any weather site: rain is likely on its way. I used to feel sorry for myself at times like this: on top of the nausea, headache and dizziness, I was losing sleep, something extra precious to me since I had been fighting insomnia for a long time.

And they scared me, because even though a neurologist assured me they could be treated and were not a warning of brain tumors or anything potentially fatal, they made me feel intensely vulnerable.

But one morning (or night) I suddenly saw these migraines as a gift. They took me out of the quotidian. They pulled me from my bed and sometimes from a dream, and as if my heart was beating hard after a workout, I'd feel an unexpected driving pulse: *write—write—write*.

Later in the day, I might listen to some soft classical music or jazz for inspiration, solace, or atmosphere, but at 3 a.m. my words are music enough. And being alive right then, right there, is more than enough.