

***18-year-old female / high school student /  
presenting 4-5 days headache days per week  
/ headaches began at 12-years-old /  
frequency increased at 15-years-old /  
diagnosed anxious depression 15-years-old  
/ right eye specific / pain levels 4-6, 7-9 /  
phono and photo phobia / limited nausea /  
misdiagnosed Hemicrania Continua / pre-  
scribed prednisone / (patient refused sleep  
aid: XANAX) / hospitalised for acute  
symptoms / wrong diagnosis / diagnosed  
Chronic Migraine / right and left eye pain /  
temporal pulsing pain /  
hyperosmia / responded to triptan /  
analgesic use 4-5 days per week /  
analgelsic overuse headache likely /  
presenting 5-6 headache days per week /  
prescribed prophylaxis beta-blocker /  
titrate up / faintness, low blood  
pressure (patient weight class 54kg) /  
titrate up until headache free***

At first it was just black + white. My friends named them *forest fires* - their weekly burn, which I would leave the room to fight. For three years more I went to my parents: *I have a headache. I have another headache. I have a really bad headache today. I took 6 panadols - why won't this headache go away? It feels like a hot rod in my right eye.* But heard *it's just hormonal, don't be stupid.* At 18 I opened a magazine to see CLUSTER HEADACHES, to read that people could have daily pain in either eye so bad they'd want to die. Cluster Headaches were not me, but now I had a Neurologist and Pills and the almighty "Headache Free". All were there to comfort me.

[illegible]

London, You K and Molly and a lot of weed. "I don't drink. No really, I can't."

I had headaches but I don't think I felt them. I headed for change but I stayed inside. I met Agatha, and sat in the Greek Orthodox Church all covered in gold mosaic.

Had you tried Ethiopian food? Lithuanian? Duck? I hadn't had *lunch* since I was 12. I would hide a pack of gummy bears in the freezer at the supermarket on the way to school, and eat them frozen on the way home. I threw my lunch away. Hid food in my cheeks when dinner came.

So now I was eating, at least. Analgesics at an all-time low, and yet my heart began to slow. As the bass drops in the club down below.

Forgive me, please, forgive me, please. Forage my old soul. I have never seen daffodils or heard the word perennial before. The spice shop didn't make me wince. I tried every colour vegetable, slid down the hillside on my back.

The medication set me free even though it was quite hard to breathe.


The clear sky in the deep blue. I was to get a degree, and stay close to you who I knew. Sarah Lawrence College Class of 2019.

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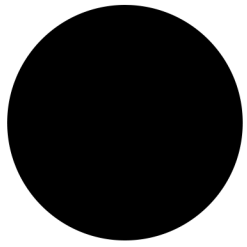
"I'm not ready." 4-5 headache days per week May-September. 200mg beta-blocker. "She can hardly breathe." I didn't want a degree. 10,000mg beta-blocker before The First Day of School. I look like death in my ID. Luckily. My mum had me throw up in a bathroom in Brooklyn.

Dark is setting in, and I am settling into it. I blew out the candle and I am still in the corner stomping out the flames. I met a boy who likes the darkness in me, so I went inside and turned off all the lights. I speak of a head I fought then, in the glow of summer, when your skin is closer to the earth. Let me articulate my experience so you can understand yours. Sometimes it doesn't happen the way you expect it to, drunk in that back corner or that soft street lamp-light. Sometimes you don't even remember it. Awake to the absence. Enough already! I am telling a story and it hurts. Just that one spark, and now all the violent images. This week was a mistake until Wednesday. You see, I met a boy who liked the darkness in me. He went inside and turned down the lights.





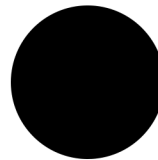
I remember there was singing in the background, and I don't know  
if it was really there, but I heard it all the same. Welcome to  
the constant conversation, please, I want to be away  
from my thoughts for a minute. I have another pain and they still  
feel all the same. Switzerland won't terminate for Migraines.  
One day, I will find the switch and have control over  
the quiet dark.  
It was a fright, right?  
It was a dark  
and cold  
night.



*Patient presenting with stimulant rebound headache / 6-7 migraine days per week for the past 2 months / patient taken leave from university/ prescribed Amitriptyline tri-cyclic antidepressant / see patient in one month / patient presenting with daily migraine for the past month / double amitriptyline dose / patient prescribed Botox injections in 31 sites / patient presenting with daily migraine for the past two months / titrate up amitriptyline / patient feeling confused about the Meaning of Life / titrate up amitriptyline / patient prescribed cephalic trigeminal nerve electroshock therapy / patient presenting with daily migraine for the past three months.*



As if the switch did flip, it was light again and I was home to heal. There is a sacred resource that springs up from total defeat. "The body is a treacherous friend. Give it its due; no more. Pain and pleasure are transitory; endure all dualities with calmness, trying at the same time to remove yourself beyond their power. Imagination is the door through which disease as well as healing enters. Disbelieve in the reality of sickness even when you are ill." There is an old voice that knows what is wrong with and how to fix it - I was to close off, go inside and hear the truth. There was no such thing as Headache-Free.

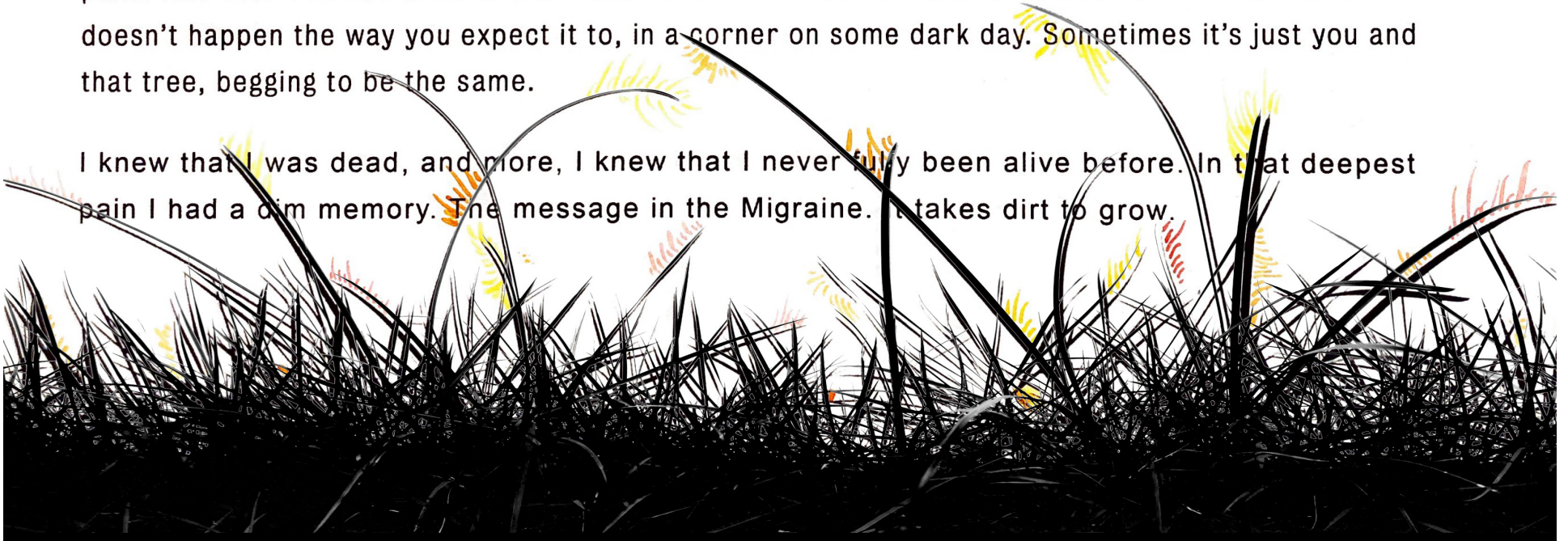


Try Topamax! The Strongest Drug we have been Saving. Grow New Life out of the Old Black Earth and Remove All Meaning! Side effects include; a lack of sunlight, malnutrition, the loss of your will to live, the destruction of your personal relationships, your first phone call to the suicide hotline, total silence every Thursday through Tuesday.

I seek refuge in the truth. I seek refuge in that spiritual structure hidden just behind the body. I seek refuge in the calmness underneath. I seek refuge in what quiet, compared to all this noise. I seek refuge in that old frankincense smell of a church. I seek refuge when they said *peace be with you* - I *felt* it.

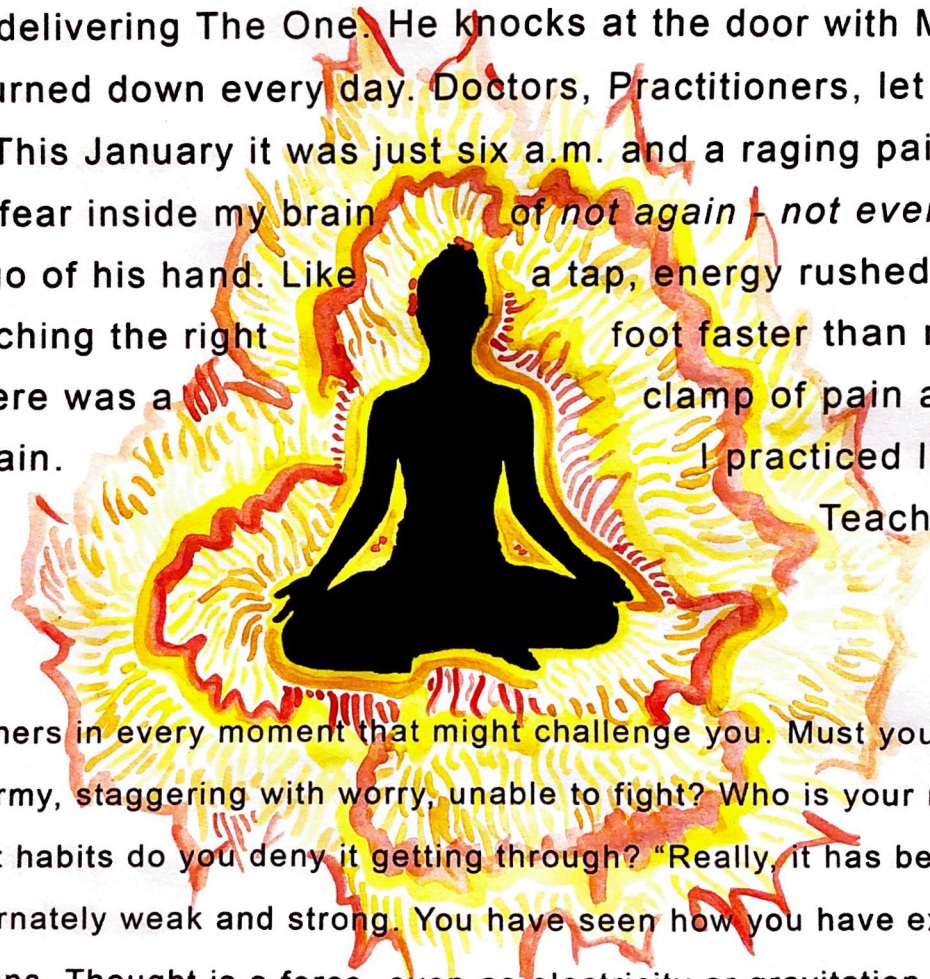
Most Days I Don't Mind Dying. It was a tree that took me down. I faced it to learn the peace in my palm. And then I turned around and it had seeded. The soil beckoned me back to it. Sometimes it doesn't happen the way you expect it to, in a corner on some dark day. Sometimes it's just you and that tree, begging to be the same.

I knew that I was dead, and more, I knew that I never fully been alive before. In that deepest pain I had a dim memory. The message in the Migraine. It takes dirt to grow.





I thought I was under attack. I took a pill to confuse each army, scrambled the forefront, as orders kept sending men from the back. For years the battle isn't fought, so it isn't won. And the fertile ground has been trampled to death. And the soldiers couldn't go home, I welcomed everyone. So down with the army of pills fighting for no one. There is a secret messenger delivering The One. He knocks at the door with Migraine. For eight years he has been turned down every day. Doctors, Practitioners, let me just ask him what he has to say. This January it was just six a.m. and a raging pain came to my face, with that deep fear inside my brain of not again - not every day. I lay in the early dark and I let go of his hand. Like a tap, energy rushed down from the base of my neck reaching the right foot faster than my left - but with one ugly thought, there was a clamp of pain around my liver - and I had to start again. I practiced listening every day. Migraine is a strict Teacher in the school of our own soul.



Consider your own teachers in every moment that might challenge you. Must you face each one with your own incompetent army, staggering with worry, unable to fight? Who is your messenger? What is the message? With what habits do you deny it getting through? "Really, it has been your thoughts that have made you feel alternately weak and strong. You have seen how you have exactly followed your subconscious expectations. Thought is a force, even as electricity or gravitation. I could show you that whatever your powerful mind believes very intensely would instantly come to pass."