

Three Things Not to Think About

by Lynn Beighley

Wait until you are home alone at last. Put the dog outside. Close the cat in the room down the hall, where you can't hear her mew to be let out. Turn off the television. Switch off any devices playing music. Take the phone off the hook. Turn your cell phone off. Step away from the computer. Eliminate any distracting noises.

If it's dark, turn on a bright light. If it's light, open the shades. Get rid of as many shadows as you can. Take a chair from the kitchen table, and turn it to face a blank wall. For best results, make it a white wall.

Sit in the chair and stare at the wall. But, instead of looking at the wall, and rather than allowing your eyes to drift to the tiny spider in the corner or the smudged fingerprint in front of you, make your eyes lose focus. Do you see them, your floaters? Watch them drift, and see how they move each time you blink.

And now listen to the silence. Do you hear the ringing of your tinnitus?

Does your awareness of them distract you? Do you notice that you are no longer thinking about him? Can you keep yourself occupied with this ballet, this concert? Because, like floaters and tinnitus, you shouldn't think about him. But you do anyway.

