

Migraine Suite

Darlene Young

Prelude

Something is not right.
A haunting quaver
to the world. Your mind
feels viscous, your body
watery. The lights have dimmed.
The sense
of the smell
of ozone.

Allemande

A greasy fingerprint on the lower right
of the screen of the world becomes
a tiny crescent of jazzy spangles,
expanding, growing toward you
like the titles on a superhero movie.
A takeover is in progress. You discover
you cannot see faces or sentences
in entirety. Focus on a single eye,
a mouth. When mouths speak,
you cannot recognize the words.
When you speak, the words
shirk and cavort. You are drifting
out to sea.

Courante

The neon scythe-

shaped sparklers become the burr
of a dental drill,
dull-saw shriek on hardwood,
all that is jagged,
splintered, pluck- tangled, zipper- snagged. Snarled
steel wool claxon, burnt
skillet egg-ash, earwigs, asterisks. Sand
in the eyes, a broken
tooth, scraped frost, roadkill. You watch
this dizzy dance
behind closed eyes, limp, an over-full dull
pail of bolts.

Sarabande

Time, soggy paper,

thins into nothing. You drift

in a forever, existing everywhere

and nowhere, like God. You are still here.

You are still here. You are still
here. You realize the brouhaha is quieting,
slightly. And slightly.

As the tide ebbs, you find yourself

standing in nausea
like rank seaweed. Your middle
expands to fill the universe,

scummy and foamed. Not a churning
but a slow rot. Time is. Is
time. Is
stagnant.

Gigue

Retroflux.

The air is clear
but wobbly. You slink,
haggard and flimsy, poke
tentatively the corners of your mind—
is it over? Are all the termites
dead? You cannot yet laugh,
but sit on the porch, rocking,
smiling faintly, like Grandma.
You might decide
to live.

DARLENE YOUNG {youngbookshelf@gmail.com} has published two poetry collections, *Homespun and Angel Feathers* (BCC Press, 2019) and *Here* (BCC Press, 2023). She teaches creative writing at Brigham Young University and has served as poetry editor of *Dialogue* and *Segullah*. Her work has been noted in *Best American Essays* and nominated for the Pushcart Prize. She lives in South Jordan, Utah.