

There is a Light

Blinding light is the last thing I remember before the crash.

Sixteen months ago, I was in a head-on collision a quarter of a mile from Halcyon. My car was clearly totaled, but it took a couple of weeks for impairments from the head injury to manifest. In a slow freefall into unfamiliar territory, I tried to do what I'd always done the way I always did it, but everything was oddly different. With impacts to perception, coordination, communication, and cognition, and off-balance emotionally and interpersonally, it seemed the order of my life had been totaled, too. I felt like a ghost of myself in a deep inner fog, and wondered if I'd ever get *me* back.

Gradually though, a gentle cadence took hold, as the darkness revealed unfamiliar light in this “dimmer” world of reduced ability. I was simpler, life was simpler, and the changed inner landscape fostered a quiet glow of interest in and appreciation for the present moment. No longer able to juggle a handful of things at once, the injury slowed me down enough, for long enough, with limitations consequential enough, to often see the extraordinary in the ordinary. I paid attention—partly because I couldn't do anything else.

There is an art term, *sfumato* (Italian for “smoky”), which describes how multiple layers of artfully applied tone reveal depth and form, to create nearly imperceptible transitions and hazy outlines that emerge gradually out of darkness. On my journey, the infinitely small steps required to heal the brain took their time, and since I was temporarily rewired to live in the present moment, my progress forward didn't have distinctive edges. Life was on pause, while a million different neural connections I took for granted before the crash reconnected themselves in a gradual transition back to wholeness. I ceased the worry over what I couldn't do, came to appreciate what I *could* do, and gave the rest up to God, time, and the resilience of the miracle of human biology and design.

Through the sfumato-smoky-darkness of last year, the noon healing service and the Temple mantrams reminded me of the divine architecture that represents the heart of God, the central cell that lights up and connects every atom and solar system and human heart to every other. No matter how uncertain or disconnected I may have felt at times, the abiding glow within each cell and neural system, and the miracle of the brain's ability to heal, was always at work— unceasingly at work— connecting me to the light.

“Though clouds and darkness seem to be about me, yet dwell I, eternally, in the Light.”

— Marti Fast