



This Way: Shannon Finnegan

MIT List Visual Arts Center

If you're not there already, get into bed.

Grab something to write with. A voice memo app, a speech-to-text tool, something to type, pencil and paper — whatever you prefer.

Take a moment to settle in: rearrange the pillows, turn on your heating pad, get a glass of water, pull up the weighted blanket, etc.

Hello from my bed to yours. I'm under a gray comforter and looking at gray sky.

What do you notice where you are?

List words that describe your surroundings. (This is a practice I learned from [Georgina Kleege and Scott Wallin](#).)

What textures are within reach?

What objects are around?

Are you experiencing any smells?

Are you experiencing any sounds?

Keep your word list loose. Jot down anything that comes to mind — it doesn't need to be literally or directly connected to what is around.

What's the mood of your surroundings?
What is close and what is farther away?
What stands out?
What took a while to notice?

Share your word list with your friend if you haven't already.

Continue your time in bed — rest, nap, read, watch tv, draw, send emails, take a Zoom meeting — whatever is next for your day.

Thank you to artists who have taught me about being an artist in bed: Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, Alex Dolores-Salerno, Joselia Rebekah Hughes, Carolyn Lazard, Constantina Zavitsanos, Ezra Benus, The Nap Ministry, Octavia Rose Hingle, Emily Sara, Tash King, and others whose art has reached me in ways I can't remember or have yet to map.

I want to end with a line from Leah's poem titled "[I know crips live here](#)" (which Leah notes in her book *Tonguebreaker* is inspired by Eli Clare's piece titled "Interdependence"):

"I know crips live here. I see all the things in reach around your mattress of glory."