

Editorial | *Michael H. Brooke, MD, FAAN*

PLEASE WRITE!

Writing is a uniquely human ability and, like all of our abilities, exists in so many shades. For some, it is crystallized speech, which in its reading catches the cadence and inflection of the speaker. For some, it is the struggle to put down on paper thoughts long held but never expressed. For yet others, writing is the means whereby the writer provides a construct to make sense of the outside world, to quiet the world within.

Such divisions, though, are basically meaningless when one considers that all writing confers permanence to human thought. It takes a fraction of a second to scan the panoramic view, to hear a bar of music, to be moved by a child's tears or a mathematical proof. No matter how impressive these experiences, they are evanescent. They are individual and subjective. They disappear into the irretrievable past.

It takes hours to days to try to commit these moments to paper, but, once done, they become fixed. They can be held up to the light and admired, excoriated, or ignored. They become a piece of the writer floating in eternity. Sometimes, as their influence spreads, they can generate unexpected offspring.

Sometimes they remain sterile, tucked away in the back of History's drawer.

There are other divisions in writing; poetry and prose, fact and fiction. They may be less important. Some prose is poetic, some poetry prosaic. Fiction is so often based on fact and fact becomes fiction in the retelling. There remains only one great divide. It is between those who write and those who do not.

Writing is not easy. It may be an obsession. It may be a chore. How does one start? "Read yourself full. Write yourself empty" is more than a useful piece of advice. It is an imperative. So where is this editorial headed?

It is very simple really. The readers of this journal share a different perspective of the world than, say, the readers of the *Entomologist Weekly*. It is a view that should be shared and made permanent. It should not belong to any one generation, gender, or country. The only way that perspective can be recorded is in writing. The editors of *Neurology* have provided the platform. Where is this editorial headed? It is simply to repeat the exhortation to be found at the end of so many letters. Please write!

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