



A Day in the Life of a Writer

Lisa Evans

DAY STARTS WITH RUN OR WALK, depending on state of knees, with friend Claire the ceramicist who is younger and fitter but talks more which evens things up. She is also immensely productive, and prevarication or displacement not in lexicon. I try, and fail, to emulate her work ethic. Shower, breakfast, and make long journey up to attic.

Do know how privileged my life is, and not just courtesy of Covid, it was always this enviable commute — except when I'm in rehearsals of course but that's just delight. Delight I wonder if will ever see again. Enough! This sort of introspection about death of industry no good to man, nor beast nor, more especially, playwright.

Can usually knock good hour on head dealing with admin, emails, dusting desk – old scrubbed-wood kitchen table left behind in house parents bought when expecting me – totally superstitious about doing best, also worst and mediocre, writing at this table.

It is now that day falls into good or bad basket. Former goes: *Open current file, pay attention to number of scenes to be written today, get on with it.* Sadly, this basket not overflowing.

On other hand, bad basket days very familiar. Start with giving self good talking-to along lines of listening to self's own advice. Sadly self all too often reverts to back of class, smoking behind sports hall, cooking sausages over Bunsen burner during Science behaviour. Not funny. Not



cool. Going to hate self by supper time. Won't be allowed out for afternoon walk. Will be grumpy all evening. Get on with it!

Carrot comes into view — another ep of latest Covid Netflix addiction. Only if you've done your pages. Comes as Mrs Danvers' voice, icy, stern and always delivered wearing black at top of stairs. Like to add there is no Rebecca or nameless heroine in our house and so far no murders to speak of.

If going well, snappy with any interruptions. Let phone ring. Ignore family, including cat — if you want to be let out after ten minutes, don't come in in the first place.

If going badly will listen to *anyone's* troubles for hours. Attentive friend and tidy office both dire signs. Chaos, however, is good. Although this time of year office also doubles as Santa's grotto, aka displacement heaven leading to premature wrapping and lists. Curiously, 'Write scenes for day' never appears on list.

Dark sky on other side of Velux window. Any minute now day will be over, domestic tasks beckon. At top of stairs Danvers takes out loud hailer.

Okay okay, will write bloody scenes if must. Remember wise old writer's advice 'No one made you become a writer'. Wise old writer dead and what's more, much better writer than I'll ever be. Danvers removes knotted rope, places hands back on keyboard. Write scenes. Read them aloud. Rewrite. Sky turns to ink. Why not just do this earlier?

Shut up! Am working.