Saturday, April 4, 2020

Someone in academia once told me that nothing focuses your attention on work so much as a job search or a promotion. I beg to differ. I can now add pandemic to that list. My focus on my job is lazer sharp.

I’m not usually a fatalist, but a great deal has happened to me over the course of my life in academia. *I’m not rehearsing that tale here; it’s similar to yours, probably. Some highs, some lows. Some things happened that I truly will never understand.* But my teaching has always been sacred to me. The classroom has been my delight and my obsession; my students both bane and balm of my days. So, this thing, this virus, that has intruded on my content and my contentment is more than unwelcome.

The virus is chasing me. I can be ready for this challenge of distance learning – I have done that before – or that challenge of anxious students – they come from so many backgrounds and experiences – I can handle this faculty’s needs or that faculty’s questions — I will do more for that committee -- I will do even more for this initiative. I have. I can. I will. I have. I can. I will.

I’m staying home. Two of my three daughters, my mom, and my husband are home. Four of us work and work and study and work. My mom at nearly 93 just enjoys our company; we all seem to be enjoying taking care of her needs. The dog is getting lots of walks. We all seem to vie for his attention, too.

And when it is class time, I crawl into the Zoom rectangle looking for my students, encouraging them to be curious about words and their meanings. Later, I read their blogposts; their words and meanings lift me up.

I have. I can. I will.