

White Noise Machine [2.0]

by [Timothy Ree](#) in the [August 2026](#) issue
Published on July 21, 2026

I could sleep, bet, to the regular pings of baseballs off aluminum bats.
Or a fishing line
 reeling in on endless loop, wild salmon after salmon.
Or a newly lubed bike chain, coasting downhill toward a small village.
Or wooden wheels over

a wooden bridge over a west-running brook.
A neighing & faint hoof-clatter on a paved road across the bridge.
Bootsteps into puddles.

Cows mooing. Owls hooting. Wind chimes
from some porch of a cabin. A woodpecker pecking a pine. A shower
curtain pulled aside

& pulled back, water running, someone sighing,
moaning, humming a tune. A preheated cast iron, well-buttered,
cracking in egg

after egg after sizzling egg. A percolator at boiling point. Puffs of flame into a hot-air balloon or someone blowing into embers of a dying campfire.

Large ziplock bag opening, closing.
The first singe of a nugget of weed in a glass pipe. Bourbon poured
over a giant cube

of ice, then the crackling, like stepping out onto
a half-frozen pond. Birdsong like early light through venetian blinds.
Wind on a white sandy beach

like the rise & fall of a breathing chest. Now the faint squawk of seagulls, the revving of a dirt bike from somewhere

in the dunes. I'm in that dream where I can't sleep
& every button I press switches the scenery. Am I migrating?
Am I being deported? Sometimes to sleep

you need to cut off
your own ears, though the Lord would pick them up & slap 'em back
upside my head, this restless head.