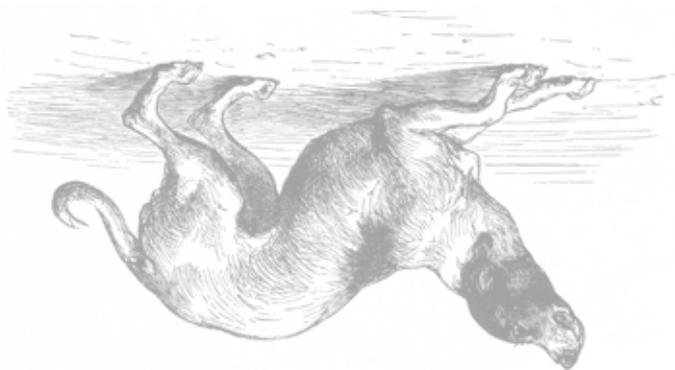


Orange n ogee



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ORANGE

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COVER ILLUSTRATION

Briton Riviere, wood engraving in Charles Darwin's
The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals, 1872.

Go on

495
over. Back

496
up back up.

494
It's not —

497
Dogs don't like to back up, unless they're tugging

493

You died, and it has altered my stance, your stance.

498

a sleeve, a rope.

1

My dog died today.
It was unexpected.
One hour it was barking
then it stopped.

I am used to having something
this size
in my house
making noises
disturbing my sleep.
I have books and a speaker
blankets
bones on the floor.
Why can't things keep going
as they were?

492

You died. It was an imposition.

499

It's part play bow:

2

My dog died today.
Definitely not
yesterday.

The driver was a kid and his text said “hamburgers!”

White bumper.
Red splatter.
Tufts of fur.

491

Something large seized the withers of my soul.

500

forepaws bent, haunches up.

3

My dog died today
mostly metaphorically.
Not that she didn't
but that he hadn't
been alive.

I don't want to talk about

results of electrocardiogram

Let's play

twenty questions. Is it mineral?

Is it mammal? No, don't answer. Is it
a dog?

490

You died. No, you didn't. You departed.

501

The way dogs stalk up slowly, stealthily.

4

My dog died today
allegorically.
Not that it didn't
but that it left
the world to live.

489

You died. All my conscience won't return you.

502

It's not stealthy, not at all.

5

My dog died today.
My friends have tired
of it. That
fuzz-wiry rat thing?
Gozzled shine beast?
Mud-tailed drooler?
Was that even a dog?

488

I don't know.

503

Like Orson Welles in *Touch of Evil*, hiding plainly behind a slender pole.

6

My dog died today, and tomorrow and Wednesday.
Twenty years ago you
are still dead.

487

A dog, in this construction, is *sort of* conscious.¹ Does this
construct change the nature of my loss?

504

Last night, I was reading more about you. How Linnaeus clas-
sified species by teeth.²

1 Joshua Rothman, “Daniel Dennett’s Science of the Soul,” *New Yorker*, March 27, 2017. Rothman conveying Dennett: “The obvious answer to the question of whether animals have selves is that they sort of have them.” <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/03/27/daniel-dennetts-science-of-the-soul>.

2 “Linnaeus counted teeth, which is one reason why he put dogs, wolves, coyotes, jackals, and dingoes in the same genus, *Canis*.” Raymond Coppinger and Lorna Coppinger, *What Is a Dog?* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016), 6.

7

My dog died today.
I don’t miss it.
There’s the cleanup to do.

Then I’ll go out.

486

Dennett believes — if I’m understanding — that consciousness
is materialist — made of functions. Like if you turn on enough
functions, selfhood happens.³

505

If I added a few teeth — would it change me? I have 31. You: 42.
Eleven more.

3 Rothman on Dennett in the *New Yorker*: “It was possible, [Dennett] said, to be ‘neutral about the metaphysical status of the data.’ From the outside, it looks like neurons; from the inside, it feels like consciousness. Problem solved[?]”

8

My dog died today
which is a thing that isn't
true.

It was more of an insect
than a dog
which is a thing that isn't
true. A thought is
more an insect than
a dog.

485

But dogs have part of the awareness of a creature that knows
itself. Daniel Dennett is a philosopher that I know of from —⁴

506

If I, born a woman (except I wasn't? why think I was?). If I, from
uterus with uterus, can become something else, is a dog such

4 *Aeon?* Nope. Ibid. I checked.

9

My dog, who was a spider,
died yesterday.

I was restless at night.
Its legs were hairy. I
crushed it. I got up to get
myself a little drink.

484

When we talk of a dog nearby dogs' ears prick up. They don't
worry, though, what we're saying about them. Whether we
think they are fetching or nice.

507

a faraway possibility? Why can't I add teeth to meet Linnaeus?
I could add a whatchamacallit organ⁵ to my nose.

5 "There is some evidence that humans unconsciously perceive pheromones, perhaps even through a nasal vomeronasal organ." [The * is to a footnote about Martha McClintock.] "Dogs definitely have a vomeronasal organ: it sits above the roof (hard palate) of the mouth, along the floor of the nose (nasal septum)." Alexandra Horowitz, *Inside of a Dog: What Dogs See, Smell, and Know* (New York: Scribner, 2010), 73–74.

E.'s Orange is an outrageous leap into the discourse of grief, an enchanted toast to the complexities of the stories of self, low and high. Wryly wise and cheerfully grotesque, this compelling text is both blues and blueprint for a new territory.

— Ed Skoog, author of *Travelers Leaving for the City*,
Mister Skylight & Run the Red Lights

The most fun I've ever had reading a book. About a dead dog....Like going for a walk, or being taken on a walk and tugging to go faster, faster, and then stopping and turning, chasing, exploring for a while and then, oh yes, going forth again.... This is the most fun I've ever had reading a book so sad.

— Molly Gaudry, author of *We Take Me Apart*
& *Desire: A Haunting*

“My dog died today.” So begins *Orange*, the first book by Seattle poet E. Briskin, in which a narrator of indeterminate gender mourns a dog of indeterminate species. The narrator may not be a reliable one, and the dog, outside of metaphor, may not exist.

With playful digressions into anecdote, the philosophy of consciousness, literature, and animal behavioral science, *Orange* is a book that queers genre, gender, and sequence. Its narrator — disconnected, mournful, comic, angry, irreverent, overwrought, and seemingly always in a coffee shop — ambles through a psyche twisted by loss. Written in a furrowed numbering scheme, *Orange* can be read in many directions.



An audio download is included with this book.

