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ENTS  
T  
Z  
OI  
C

*RIGHT HEMISPHERE*

3	Planetesimals
5	Silent Spring
6	Praying Mantis
7	Blight
8	Ursa Minor
9	Basalt
10	Corpus
12	Wedding
13	On the Nature of Daylight
14	On the Topic of Belonging
15	Poem To My Car, When I'm Not In It
16	New Moon
17	all of me wants all of you
18	Impossible Soul
20	Mandolin Busker
21	On Your Knees
22	We Have Decided to Bomb Syria
24	The Violinist
25	Extraterrestrial
26	Museum of Natural History
27	Acetylene
28	Convent of San Marco, Florence
30	At the Altar of Every Universe
33	Corpus Callosum

# LEFT HEMISPHERE

37	Wings Without Bodies
38	Conifers on the Move: Triptych After Hieronymus Bosch
40	Whatever Part of Me Lived
41	Looking for Love in a Simulated World
42	Climate Change
43	Three-Body Problem
44	Overview Effect
46	Zion National Park
47	Stem
50	To Be Alone With You
51	Smoky Quartz
52	Concerning the UFO Sighting Near Franconia Notch
54	Pangaea
55	Murmuration
56	Edge
57	Moon
58	The Universe:
59	6th Extinction
60	Fathoms
62	Riots
63	Revelations
64	On Earth
65	Natural Causes
66	Strange Arrangement

Notes

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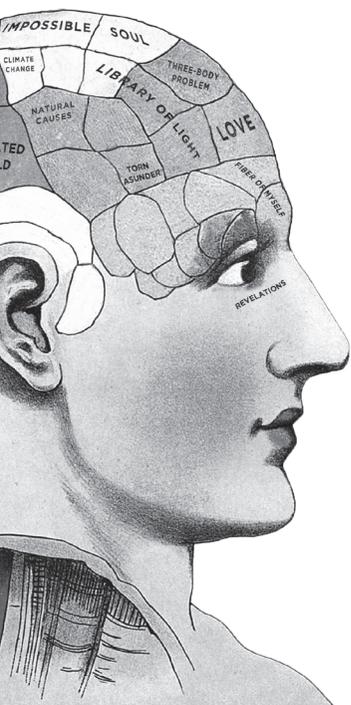
CONTENTS

Some people, including not a few neuroscientists and psychologists—and philosophers—are at least subliminally attracted to the idea that [...] the dynamic properties of neural tissue can do something you might call miraculous, something that harnesses hidden forces undreamed of by science. Maybe they are right, but we mustn't assume that they are from the outset. The rule has to be: no wonder tissue!

—Daniel Dennett from  
*Intuition Pumps and Other Tools for Thinking*

We pretend that the brain is binary, like a computer. But it's not.  
It's completely holographic.

—Jim Harrison



## *Planetesimals*

I am not one of anything,  
really, and keep trying to find  
a lake not overrun by weeds  
so that I might swim out  
at night and lose myself  
overhead, like at the movies.

When I haven't  
the faintest  
clue, I ask  
the trees many  
questions like:  
*do you study  
with leaves  
the enormous face  
of the night?*

I've read that some people drown  
as though they were made of  
a faulty gyroscope. I can't speak  
to the similarities, but I wonder  
what you dream about. I worry  
your mind insists on rest, closes  
its eyes to that vast world.

Maybe this is like getting lost in the woods  
coming back on the same trail; it is not the same  
trail from another direction.

Deceived in a dream, I join in  
with the chorus of the deceived,  
then set off on my own  
through trees, the forest floor  
turned into that 1970s linoleum  
red kitchen pattern.

I imagine leaning against a tree  
under your steady hand. I imagine  
it must be nice to be touched that way,  
all of me in one place.

Sometimes the dogs growl under their breath  
at distant coyotes. Two different conversations,  
same species, so it goes.

What keeps me ecologically sound  
is taste and texture and timing and  
the pleasure and the chance it took  
many years in the making it was not  
so different than seeing you from  
another direction, were it not for fear.  
Now the stars feel just centimeters  
farther from me.

I guess the fluid  
most conducive to travel  
is kindness, and I still  
have a heart for you,  
it sends me in search  
of water and moonless  
nights.

On earth we should not be afraid  
to think of someone as both sunset  
and sunrise, always occurring  
across some distance.

## *Praying Mantis*

Oh, I can tell you how easily someone can turn  
away, but don't take it all to heart.

No one else is looking for that dark energy,  
that thing that holds this all together, even here.

Last night the wind kicked up through the window  
and left the wine glasses chattering, hanging from their stems  
like upside down tulips.

A virus is chasing my beanbag cells. It is gaining speed.  
I am losing.

I look for something inside Snapple bottle caps  
but find only useless facts like: *The Praying Mantis*  
*is the only insect that can turn its head.*

Well, it also decapitates its lovers. So, there's that.

You keep up with your beautiful words.  
You set a hard line for the horizon.

But I am in love with the moon backlit  
by only a sliver of light, enough to reveal  
the whole dark mess.

In the end, I want it closer.

I am not the Praying Mantis, stiff-armed  
and sharp-edged.

I am the night grass (the whole  
busy world). I am the way it feels  
on bare feet.

I am the way I fall into it.  
I am the way of falling.

## *Wedding*

It is not as though I have inherited this disarray / of the soul  
stepped off onto another rung / of another ladder / the likes  
of which are familiar to me in that way of / nothing familiar  
and people are talking everywhere in equal proportion to my need  
for silence / a child screams in minor frustration / a variation  
of an earlier frustration / is it noise or repetition / is it the lines /  
the slow keyboard / the empty greeting / the people you know  
who know other people / I burst into shattered champagne glass  
sharp except for I have announced myself and swept myself /  
into the corner / and really only the rolling hills / only the true  
and guided shadows / only the dense forest / the beds of moss  
/ the silence in miniature / the songbirds refracting light /  
is there no way for me to acquire the iron needed to point north /  
birds in their brains were never given the choice / and now we shift  
/ now north is no longer north and I have lowered myself / from  
the ladder / I have set foot on the linoleum floor / of another universe /  
and the first voice I hear / I swear / will be someone I love /  
even when I wake in the pitch of night / the panic like the voice  
of the stranger complaining about a wedding / the guest who looked  
too long at her phone / his rough and hanging laughter / I am  
standing somewhere with flowers / and where are you? /  
Don't answer / I'm afraid of the answer /

## *Poem to My Car, When I'm Not in It*

All I can think of is how quiet it must be, as I look out from the kitchen window. It must be nice for you to know that I've left, without knowing I'll come back. I can tell from inside that the night rain falling under streetlamps feels good to you, like early December snow, everything feels good to you. Especially when I'm somewhere else doing god knows what, and you are in some parking lot feeling sun or wind feeling good alone, not understanding loneliness. When I come back, sometimes I find spider webs across your windshield, paw prints across your hood. I used to feel close to my first car, but then again I used to feel close to many things and now, only rarely. Some night I'll fall asleep in your back seat after staying to watch the cat walk across the hood, the spider rise and drop across the windshield, and when I'm asleep I'll hear something knocking, and I'll whisper, "Who is it?" and reach for the door only to find the places your doors have been no longer have doors. "Who is it? Who's there?" I'll ask again, my eyes closed, my hands groping. But there were never any doors. Never was any knocking. Better not to confuse something lost with something taken, says the spider suspended, says the cat watching me now from a nearby tree.