



This work is taken from a book-in-progress, titled “Infinite Variations,” and uses randomly selected text from Darwin’s *Origin of the Species* and the *Old Testament*. Some of these poems have appeared or are forthcoming in: *eratio*, *Word For/Word*, *The Tiny*, and *Foursquare*. Many thanks to the editors of these fine publications.

To Lee and Sonya

With thanks to Nicole Mauro, Stephanie Reents, Brent Jenkins, and Charles Darwin

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Belief in various objects
led to resemblance—
the mouth of the whale
or lower eye.

We cannot explain the world
singularly—various causes
construct for god
bodies in one country
whilst in another
trees or bread.

The hand will strike
segments of a limb used solely
for locomotion
its enemies will change to orchids—

through the occasional *here*
a mamma-blood apparatus
secretes nutritious fluid.

Mankind acquired reason
this should be this
and also *that*

closer and — all the more
a perfect mind.

Let (A) be common
and my hand would seek it
stolen by day or stolen by night

I brought you
sleep eluded
from my eyes
(represented by the outer dotted lines)

you see that it is mine

(thus) in your house I
was torn-by-beasts
unequal distances
for twenty years

I would make good the loss
as we saw in the second chapter

my letters
now accompany
their parent diagram.

Near the head
exists a close analogy—
the tail.

Before the eyes
plumes of birds,
teeth of certain lizards—

under my thigh
your hand
in electric intervals
finally lost
its transition.

Spoken in the ears
as well as the cave,
trees that were buried
now mature

—the same country
put a field of organs
in manifest irritation.

The land is old
and powerful
in defense of which
is something new.

What would you give me
for four hundred years' servitude—
count the stars, can you count them
connecting together
proceeding from north to south,
lowland to upland &c?

Your reward goes out
from your own body raised
only to the rank of doubtful species.

In a parallel story
vultures descend
intercrossing "the species."
There was deep slumber-
fright and great darkness falling.

The sun changed
its intervals.
Many outlying islands
around a continent.
Structures. Very small steps.

The children—
unconscious—

knew "affliction" had come.

Today your nervous filaments
reflect an account of me
at every step
a multitude
I have served you large bodies of facts,
I found in your eye
an optic nerve.

Your words are seven subdivisions—
slight and gradual rays
removing from each
specked articulata
this destitute lens.

Muscular movements
do something
as perfect as converge—

a modified curvature
known as “we”
simultaneous
and therefore
true

I have no power
an aberration of light across the domain of sensations.

Who am I, or if not *it*?
Nature has taken it all: “you” is plural
here: as opposed to “upon.”

A lapse of time between the external
and internal world tends
to make incongruities of reason—
even the most perfect organ
may err as myriads have.

One might say legitimacy is not
in order. extinct even,

Indeed, this is the sign I sent:
the image on the retina will be modified.

Nothing is a difficult foundation,
contradicts the syntax “this that I am.”
As for the optical machine
it sends me to you

a delight of rapid instances
each part
by each part.

Where the manufactory fell afoul with special parts
or organs it was the cupbearer and baker actively at
work. After these events the king’s secondary sexual
process became infuriated. They were closely
regulated in the dungeon house, imprisoned and
fixed. In being useless, they came to differ. Then the
two of them dreamt a dream, each his own in a single
night. The chief baker, he specialized in a particular
function—he could not overcome his tendency. The
cupbearer arose saying “A vine was in front of me, an
extraordinary size branched off from a common
parent, higher and higher but I could not take it!”
The guard came in the morning and saw they were
dejected. Here, he said, your faces are average, not
extraordinary, but I understand. They’re correlated by
specific views. You will be standing higher in the
second chapter, actively at work, each rudimentary
scale adjusted to his dream, each man his own
interpretation.

I am inclined to suspect
we never see
what is
important—

a kingdom divided
among insects
branching the main nerves
according to philosophical
difference.

Facts are perplexing—
hardly two agree,
each after its own tongue
protean or polymorphic
the saying is “at the beginning.”

O dimorphism,
two sexes
connected by difference
also show
one point—

earth in larval state
the great central
ganglion of changing
expectation.

Women advanced in days become more powerful; acted upon by special difficulties. Where is there pleasure? Why does she laugh? Within herself any organ or ordinary muscle is hurried through and finally lost as a means of defense, a little electricity when an animal is irritated. He stood over her, he said, "Conceive a wondrous character finely enveloped in know-how and trivia—a real homologue of the electric battery!" She made bread cakes and ran to fetch a theory, saying "Shall I really give birth to a young ox now that I am old? Is anything surprising, so little known of anyone?" At a set time, she returned to his tent, tender and fine, serving his nerves in a manner reserved for prey. She said, "I am changing character, my plumes worn with distribution. I give my milk to fertile females while time revives my impotence. Only here is behind us—this ceases to be."

Lament if you will
sterility across a land
whose excess pays our ills—
death is the first difference
and all are gone who had become

From before to always
what differs
is the man who rules,
so fertile death holds
our names
in his mouth
a bramble of arrangement

Why act
when there's the limited
good of a little pleasure
a system caved in, buried
by resemblance—

our hands are heavy
and explain in causing
the things we once believed.

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