



The Porcupinity
of the Stars

Gary Barwin



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do why worry we?
word every earth on is
in place perfect the

ONE

PLANTING CONSENT

I carried my TV down the stairs
buried it on a hill
with a beautiful view

by spring a small antenna
sprouted in that place

somewhere under the earth
wispy clouds and the wingbeats of birds

INSIDE H

it is dark and soft
the world is a towel

a little priest raises his arms
he will speak with an open mouth
a glimpse of the planet
its fleshy inner core

plush H towel people
we mist the sky with our blue plum lungs
make heaven heron-dark with our breathing
fog the limits with spirit and blue exhalation

in each of us
lungs that are H
for we belong to the air

h
I say
H
because it is a pleasure and a surprise to breathe

FEET

I cut off my left, give it to the sea
others give their right

father, sister, mother, shoes
I look out at the ocean

heart, kidneys, lungs, brother
I wait for the consolation of water

OPPOSABLE CONSCIOUSNESS

under the papers of my desk
I discover
a small stone

yesterday I invented fire
today
I will create
a new tool
I will call it hammer

I pick up the stone
I smash it against my forehead

the clouds part and there is thunder
the trumpets of my ears
signal those to the east of me
those to the west
an army sets out across a blood red sea

a tiny baby is propped
in wet sand between the shores
I will call it baby
a useful tool
neither one thing
nor the other

NAKED STONES THE WHOLE DAY LONG

shaman of the wallpaper
headboard priest in boxers
we wander the glad morning
where the sighing future waits

a sweet flower surrounds us
our fingers the dark plough of anxious hours
sun falls on the melismatic bones of heroes
each cup of clever sky clinging to
the city like a snowflake in the mouth

this is the earth
fences more tolerable than dreams
jockey shorts in the jaws of
each well-formed heart in every pleasant land

dancing on the road I feel
oxen fall from my shoulders
mother, children, father
wading away from night

there's a seraph on my bosom
fate on apathy's glimmering brow
lips are blue fire lashes
or idle thought

an hour an eye I love
earth's contingent language
ancient blue petal

SOME OF THE PARTS

the girl pushed
a long-handled broom
along the floor
Father could hardly bear it
tears streamed from his eyes
silent laughter transformed his face
his body was shaken with
spasms of delight

he was a bird
no bigger than a dust mite
looking for his place
in the world

his lifted wings were
invisible to all who knew
the broom as broom

the pleasurable eddies
of the Big Bang
the broad sweep
of time across the floor
the updraft of memory

those who knew
felt the swoop
of Father's wings
saw them raised in quaking splendour as
he created from the spasms
of his tiny body
the rippling laughter
the swept-clean ghost