



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