



**LOVE IN THE
CHTHULUCENE
(CTHULHUCENE)**

NATALEE CAPLE

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CHTHULUCENE
(CTHULHUCENE)**

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The Heart Is Its Own Reason

How I Came to Haunt My Parents

In Calamity's Wake

Mackerel Sky

A More Tender Ocean

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The Plight of Happy People in an Ordinary World

The Semiconducting Dictionary (Our Strindberg)

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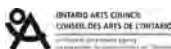
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CONTENTS

7	I Try Not to Think Too Much
8	Stages
9	We
10	Response-ability
12	Love Letter
13	So Far
14	Accidental Poem by Casey
15	Morning in the Chthulucene

I TRY NOT TO THINK TOO MUCH

You are your mind
you know your mind
no two know the same mind
each of us knows one mind
in our minds we know what we mean by *mind*
I say, hey you, Mind-haver!
do flowers have minds?
mind is that which matters
not mind over matter
speak to my dog's mind!
things in the garbage have no mind
they do not mind
we might endow mind
but we cannot transfer mind
your house does not know your mind
God is a kind of mind
but morals hurt minds
though morals may only be minds
when I say, do you mind?
I mean, I mind something unkind

STAGES

sea gooseberries and comb jellies are
small and colonial intersections
borders
between
intimacy and repulsion
assemblage of encounters
swimming by grasping with long tentacles
phylum with no fossil record
eighty years spent resisting
oceanic poetics marooned
wanting wanting
ways of being under water under
wanting
acts of flight
into confederation
smaller organisms than we
refuse to see
any body battered

WE are for draining the sun
For extinguishing light
For craning for pleasure
For looking directly into release
For coming
For tugging robins through exits
For the now-world
For sci-fi films and Paradise
For shopping with magic animals
For painting embarrassing objects red
For children in general and those in the wheat field
For liberating the cuckoo from the clock
For hooks but not in eyes
For gallows in public squares
For splitting the atom apple
For living in madness

RESPONSE-ABILITY

Smoothness

left on a snail shell

patches of grass ending with

glaciers marking calcium gems

dumps of berries hung all the way

from the aloof edge

of lily pads

A special antelope

acclimbs icefields

Weather-bells

alive by frosted rapids

Glaciers listen

no trees to beckon

land for eagles

one stone atop another

alike as icebergs

whose strength humbles bears

In come:

cyclamen-red when broken

peculiar ones missing legs

Rapids hurl alchemy high
suggesting them should drown
in their tight magnitude of trousers!

Wind miniatures in cloud clothing
concealing ptarmigans in packbacks
who without consent cut
deep meaning terrible
not practising union
nor the living smoothness

Deep cutting
till the mountains
pulled from clouds
lie by hooves of elk
perch gasp in the treetops
water explosions become hotels

left anything?

Remote
from all this
were their root systems

LOVE LETTER

I keep thinking that I'm nothing lots of support for fresh paint brightened fear I can't do what others do the numbers flip like thin red plastic fish a 6 is the same thing as a 9 left is right it's the other right those looks I get when I forget everyone else has perfect recall how to build a curriculum vitae matters but writing down visions to make whole worlds for strangers that is rubbish

Munro wins the Nobel Prize and I spill coffee on my breast I cry out and they run over already joyed what is it Mummy? I say this woman won a prize for writing books that everybody reads they scream I'm so stupid! I'm so stupid! roll up like a hedgehog in a hole I made

The psychologist says they flirt when tested fall off the chair then sit up say why don't you tell me about you it's hard to gauge what's in their mind but I think they will get along just fine she says when asked why do policemen wear uniforms they answer so they won't be naked that's right you know I tell her first thing at work is often but not always don't be naked

I found a card they wrote and hid inside their teddy's shirt long bright ascenders and descenders their name in eyelashes one symbol is as good as the next in fact a note that looks like swearing is a love letter

SO FAR

We do not see pillars they are milestones they are nothing final a path Forward through the forest in one direction that's all this is it's – Us – the constitution is a blueprint thinking Parliament is an open heart we dream as if in surgery of a future the figures show we need more and more rainbows we feel love for Québec as for Tibet for Ethiopia as for London for Desdemona as for Othello we are still divided by languages but the telecommunications come we will show our strength toppling towers we will be freer in the future we will be freer within many Nations.

ACCIDENTAL POEM BY CASEY

I see reality as it is
like I see you there, Mom
but then I like to upgrade
I think it could be better
if there were a city behind your ear
and there it is! And then
a rainbow on the other side

MORNING IN THE CHTHULUCENE

Chickadees scrap before the full roll of pleasure blinks eyelashes
dreams sink into stomach turn spine legs head shake crack toes
wiggle wiggle squeeze breasts heavy sore first day of a period
stomach growls remember mother saying are you hungry? kids
chuckle the little dog the one who warmed your back all night
excites bites fingers stand and stretch one foot now two locate
glasses lift the silver lid of computer from the wooden nightstand
note white paint chipped at the corner screen alights on a mountain
freckled with documents and you become historically situated



Natalee Caple is the author of nine books of poetry and fiction. Her work has been nominated for the KM Hunter Award, the RBC Bronwen Wallace Award, the Gerald Lampert Memorial Award, the ReLit Award and the Walter Scott Prize for Historical Fiction. Her latest novel, *In Calamity's Wake*, was published in Canada by HarperCollins and in the US by Bloomsbury. The novel in translation was published by Boréal and has been sold separately for publication in France. Natalee is an associate professor at Brock University.

In this bold new collection, Natalee Caple forges a way forward in dark times. Grappling with #MeToo, climate change and political unrest, Caple gives us poems to help us re-envision our society and recreate our relationships with all who share this earth with us, human and non-human alike.

PRAISE FOR *LOVE IN THE CHTHULUCENE (CTHULHUCENE)*

“*Love in the Cthulucene (Cthulhucene)* is a gesture of tentacular tenderness, wry-hooked, affirming relations even across rupture. More than poetry, more than portraits, Caple gives us a gift of practice itself; a practice of intimacy, finding all the soft-bodied and monstrous capacities of moments.”

– Soraya Peerbaye, author of *Tell: Poems for a Girlhood*

“Natalee Caple offers a poetry collection that is an authentic, many-tentacled gift in a time defined by disconnection, manipulation and greed. There is the generative present of Caple’s exploration of the ‘poem as gift,’ and the compassion, brilliance and strangeness with which she searches and invents. There are her many poetic gifts – her vision, music and border-pushing zeal – and her ability to urge us to challenge and share, to question and thank, to give and not give in.”

– Daniel Scott Tysdal, author of *The Mourner’s Book of Albums*

PRAISE FOR NATALEE CAPLE

“Caple’s poetic sequences and variations are magisterial and masterful. . . . Her language is hypnotizing with an imagery so stark and yet so eloquent that [it] captivates.” – *Sacramento Book Review* on *The Semiconducting Dictionary (Our Strindberg)*



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