

The Art of Astronomy

Some nights I am so in love with the sky, I could ask it to marry me. Devoted as a supplicant at Vespers, I watch for the first star to show itself, to spell its name. Polaris? Sirius? Procyon? Naos? There is so much spinning: suns and planets, planets and moons. My body is no longer a nebula of possibilities. We are all atoms whose coalescence is mere coincidence – a cosmos held to ransom by chance, gradually unmaking itself in fields of broken masonry. When a baby girl is born, her ovaries already contain every story they might tell; constellations of tiny ova. I remind myself: *astronaut* means *star sailor*. The Milky Way is a dried riverbed, a stony path of stelliferous mooring points where navigability is moot – but that's the adventure. It doesn't have to end in darkened rooms. Arcturus. Capella. Rigel. Vega. Every journey must have its start. We may yet be castaways, traversing asterisms as if it were an art.

*Inspired by 'A Gram of &s' by Terrance Hayes;
and 'Anagrams of Happiness' by Kathryn Bevis.*

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