

Diane Mehta

1 in 300

To lose at science is the accident of trying,
for worse or, best, acceptable ways cells divide

then swell into heart, spleen, spine
for every satisfaction, and love also aligned

according to sense. To carry a child
inside the shaky side of feeling wild

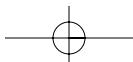
about it, to feel the shape of him
in inches lengthen, his heartbeat a hymn

that life can be taught without knowing
a thing, with all the opinions he, growing

older, would naturally form, based, again,
on chromosomes that deal out death and gain

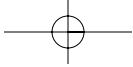
like just another round at a half-lit table
of weary players hoping their hand is not terrible

as mine was. Little is given. Chance
is a mindless science too accurate to withstand.



Upside Down in Lines

The scenery long ago shifted
and sentences, once written to clarify,
seem upside down in lines.
But the months have recorded their finds
by detailed notes or storms
largely lived through.
Styles of thinking
changed sometime recently
when I wasn't paying attention
and suddenly my frame is widening
for tomorrow's life, with his own coded ideas,
eye color, and breath oblivious to my own.
Sleep, to which I have grown
most attentive, has turned full of cartoons –
the tiger that is my mother
soft in my arms
and her laughter, still crazy, in the grave;
or a simple, slow-moving train
I will one day explain
carries cargo between places
I longed for and places I came to by mistake.
No matter, light is ample again.
But how do I behave in *time* as if
we are not, every moment,
rearranging the universe a little?
The situation is entirely blind to its disguise;
increasingly I believe what I hear
as proof of something that exists in private –
for example, the energy of a wave
coursing from Cameroon to Maine
or a simple tune someone stumbled onto.
Considerable damage has been done to sentences;
my two hearts need a different arrangement,



perhaps three transitive verbs fighting punctuation
or six hyphens and lots of exclamations.

True, one heartbeat I am guarding will get its own sky
and swift nouns to fill it with; that I accept.

But I orchestrated my own listening
if not the collection of events
and now it makes no sense.

I should have seen that coming.

After all, love is involved somehow
and sounds occasionally slide out of sight.

There's nothing, frankly, to do about it.

Absence is a kind of anticipation
and time isn't wasted as much as accumulating
fast; it's up to me to change the way I listen.

