

# what is amazing

HEATHER CHRISTLE



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WESLEYAN POETRY

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for my parents

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## CONTENTS

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### i

The Seaside!	3
Self-Portrait with Fire	4
Teamwork Should Come from the Soul	5
If You Go into the Woods You Will Find It Has a Technology	6
People Are a Living Structure Like a Coral Reef	7
Moss Does Not Love Other Moss	8
To Kew by Tram	9
No Light and No Hands	10
An Activity	11
How Like an Island	12
More of Form Is More of Content	13
Talk Radio	14
Taxonomy of That November	15
Way out in the Country	16
I'll Be Me and You Be Goethe	17
More Swans and More Women	18
Such a Lovely Garden	19
Wallpaper Everywhere Even the Ceiling	20

---

### ii

We Are Not Getting Anywhere	23
The Small Husband	24
Bash	26
Saturday	27
It Feels Like It Is on Purpose	28
Up Again with the Night	29
The Angry Faun	30
In Accordance	32

---

The Spider	34
Difficulties	35
I Am Coming Over	36
A Very Remarkable Story	37
And Then We Clap Ourselves Together	38
What Is Amazing	39

### iii

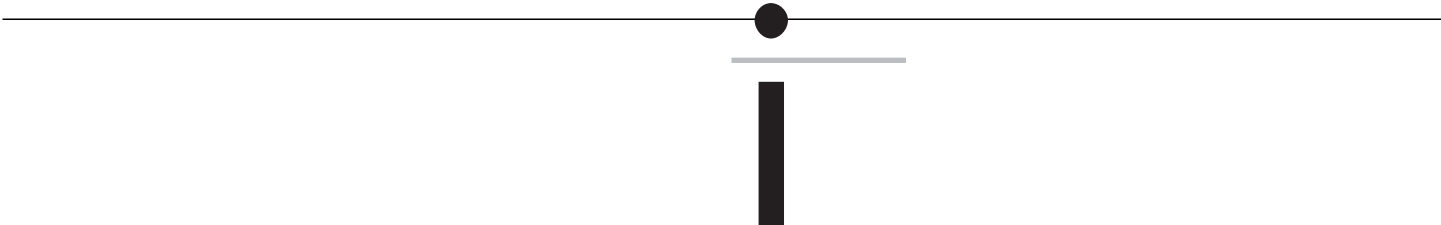
What Will Grow Here	45
Happy and Glorious	46
Parking Lot	47
Go and Play Outside	48
Some Combinations	49
I Will Know You by Your Red Carnation	50
Ladies a Basket	51
Last Time I Wore This Sweater	52
For Henri	53
To Do	54
Infinitives	55
Route 109	56
Classic Hook Shape	57
Under the Moon the Knocking	58
Directly at the Sun	59
A Long Life	62
Basic	63
All Things Bright and Beautiful	64

Acknowledgments	65
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## THE SEASIDE!

This is a wall of great intensity and furious  
it kind of hums yellow and hums  
green and never shall it hum purple Captain  
when will you relieve me The wall  
I love at night is huge and warms me  
like a caterpillar or bag but do I also  
have a family Captain or is the wall  
the only shelter I have known and furious  
why and humming brightly why Why  
is all the beauty in the wall and not  
in me Captain and in you Captain you  
are studded lines of buttons That is  
some finery! Whereas my outfit is it  
like a prison with the dimmer switch  
turned low No my outfit is nothing  
the dimmer switch to nothing But  
I can tell you things I'm not a piece of foam

---

## SELF-PORTRAIT WITH FIRE

They asked me if I was on fire and I said No no no no  
no no no I did not want to make trouble I was lying I was  
on fire on my legs and on my hands I was ashamed I tried  
to hide my legs by kneeling I set the grass on fire The colors  
were a brilliant green and orange combination I liked it and smoke  
I was not in pain or on pain I was on fire and lying why  
to the people Obviously they loved me were warm and pink  
and vocal on a promising spring day with electric buds Electrifying  
I mean I mean bright bright bright like a likeness of me I wanted  
to gnaw and to gnaw on an extra large slice of my likeness

---

## TEAMWORK SHOULD COME FROM THE SOUL

They were projecting a hologram onto my snowsuit  
A hologram of nature A snowsuit of white  
Nature was not moving but I was moving and that  
was most of the plot We got good ratings  
They were going to release nature in Los Angeles  
Houston and Maine but I was never going to be released  
anywhere They were going to give me snacks and  
send me into the tundra and evaluate how long  
I survived It was our greatest collaboration  
I thought Only they were the ones with ideas and  
I contributed two things My body and the suggestion  
that we should maybe try to write it down  
When I died it would be a polar bear that got me  
I predicted and tried to practice relaxing b/c  
I wanted my last feeling to be relaxation  
but they said that wouldn't fit in with the show

---

IF YOU GO INTO THE WOODS YOU WILL  
FIND IT HAS A TECHNOLOGY

This tree has a small LED display  
It is glowing and it can show you words  
and it can show you pictures and it can melt  
from one choice to another and you are looking at it  
and it wants you to share the message  
but it can't see that you are the only one around  
and that everyone else is hibernating  
which you love You are so happy and alone  
with the red and yellow lights It's a nice day  
to be in nature and to read up on the very bland ideas  
this tree has about how to live This tree says  
grow stronger and this tree says fireworks effect  
This tree is the saddest prophet in history  
but you don't tell it that You are trying to show it respect  
which gets tiresome but then it flashes  
a snake at you It's a kind of LED tree hybrid joke  
and you could just kiss it for trying For failing  
But it can't see you and it starts to cry

---

PEOPLE ARE A LIVING STRUCTURE  
LIKE A CORAL REEF

People love to clean their ears and I love people  
very much They are everywhere! Every single  
thing I love I love for windows only and if  
one window reflects another then friends  
for me it's all over And in the windows are trees  
and in the windows are people What are they even doing  
with their hunger and in their new shirts They are  
taking care of themselves and they are taking each other out  
for lunch Oh even the rain has to love them People  
are just too attractive! and the rain places itself  
on the window in order to be closer to the people  
the ones who are eating The ones who are  
busting out vigor Oh people You have to love  
people They are so much like ourselves



---

## MOSS DOES NOT LOVE OTHER MOSS

It isn't dark yet though it should be dark  
The grass is bright You can still see it  
and warm and you can smell it and  
elsewhere two people hold one another close  
in a darkness they have created They can feel  
their insides turning to olive oil and late late  
afternoon light It's hard not to be them  
to be like a fallen off piece of the mountain  
to have traveled so far and still without darkness  
to see the whole system The houses  
pulling up from the soil and to want  
the stars out now To want the stars out now  
like a linen bag over the head

---

## TO KEW BY TRAM

Lying down among the daffodils I am composed  
but not the daffodils because I crushed them! Not  
as an act in itself It was auxiliary Were my next  
attempt to stand myself erect upon my feet  
I would leave behind devastation  
in the organized shape of my body  
This is also how I move myself through  
space Everywhere these holes I don't look  
back to When I return as a giraffe the holes  
will have to change They will say no god  
would plan on such a shape And if then  
I lie down again on these yellow flowers they  
will teach me that my goldenness is dim

---

## NO LIGHT AND NO HANDS

In the field there was a disembodied whistle  
Disembodied by night which disembodies me too  
I was in the field also I was in hearing distance  
Hence I am telling you A whistle is often  
just bad but this one I liked in part  
for its dislocation It was in the field  
with me but did not begin there whereas  
I began there In the daytime I was a hole  
but at night I could be nothing if I wanted  
A wakeful part of nothing with an ear

---

## AN ACTIVITY

There is a quilt and he is beneath it and some light  
comes down through stitches He can see that it's man-made  
Can see his knees and hands and belly and by the light  
he knows the night lies in the future just as he lies  
on the floor The quilt holding him together like skin  
and warm and also with a soft all-natural light He thinks  
from above probably he appears a rough organic form  
Kind of casual like a canoe that's been attached  
to boulders or casual like an island Like he is rising  
from the floor and someone will maybe discover him soon  
Give him a name and go away and tell a soul or two about it  
How he was there and the quilt was there Empty young  
and quiet like a prison yard when breaks the afternoon

---

## HOW LIKE AN ISLAND

How like an island we are in love encouraging  
moss & like an island we are barely moving Just  
to exist takes much concentration & like an island  
in love we have a house in our two imaginations &  
they intersect It strengthens the house & our feelings  
Unlike an island we wake up An island never sleeps  
That is its duty & ours to remain in love barely moving  
We do not want to disturb the house Do not want it  
to fall into the ocean that is always so nearby It surrounds  
us & is moving Like an island the ocean does not see us  
or care why though we persist in loving it at one rate  
or another & are waking close together in the dark

As a child X is too small for the furniture The furniture  
causes his legs to dangle over other junk such as the floor  
and X feels woe X feels like dying or purchasing specially  
made child furniture Small chair Small divan When X  
grows to full size the feeling remains He is out  
of whack with the world and it is like a crab  
who walks out of its shell and that is not a metaphor  
for X's emotional life His feelings are verified true  
The trouble is when X is small X is very very very  
very small and when normal X is very very very  
very normal and in this extremity nothing will fit

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## TALK RADIO

There is only one thing in life that matters  
It has to keep growing and it doesn't need me  
Those are not clues Those are laws  
The thing is the sky It is blinking I think also  
I must be blinking as if to say Sky  
you are not the only one outdoors with autonomy  
and the sky stays very quiet  
It keeps blinking like it is stupid  
People think when something doesn't talk it is interesting  
I am always talking and never interesting  
like a pile of rocks Is that interesting  
or moss wrapped up over the branch  
but nature why don't you say something  
It scares people when there's dead air

---

## TAXONOMY OF THAT NOVEMBER

Then was an animal I could not identify and that also I lived with  
In performing our daily headcount I noticed Then's skull  
was shaped like a tiny cloud and yet I said nothing  
I fed Then some hay and we were feeling wretched  
in the blue pantry and at night we could not dream  
There was a war on but still I got dressed  
beneath the towering stars and no moon  
According to the chore wheel I should have been sweeping  
According to science we should have been dead  
I knocked on Then's teeth and they were not hollow  
like the sun was and I wrote it on my list  
We enjoyed the taste of saltwater and baseball  
we enjoyed on the radio in daylight  
in a blue room that grew off the hallway  
We were happy and wretched and cloudy  
and setting fire to everything for warmth



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