



On Earth As It Is

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## Hello, Brain, It's Me

Ray Vukceвич

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# on earth as it is

*prayer as story, story as prayer*

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*photo by matthew simmons*

## *Hello, Brain, It's Me*

*Ray Vukceвич*

Hello, 90% of my brain which is totally, or at least mostly, inaccessible to consciousness, this is the part of us that thinks of itself as “Ray Vukceвич” although sometimes we suspect that part is really “Henry.” Would people have called him “Hank” if things had developed a little differently? What I’m wondering about today is Time. It’s a subject that seems so simple at first but is not at all simple and probably has a lot to do with Everything. I’d like to run it by you. I hope you will have ideas. I hope you will tell me your ideas. If you do tell me the ideas you have, I’ll write them down. I’ll do my best not to misrepresent you. I promise. Please, please, talk to me.

Okay, okay, you and your mysterious ways. Let me tell you what I’m thinking, and you can send me signs or smells or whatever.

Frankly, I’m feeling a little envious of people whose brains are all the time offering up visions. How come I don’t get even one stinking tablet? I’m one of those pieces of the universe that thinks about all the rest of it, too, you know. What am I? Chopped liver? Maybe I should do some butt bouncing yoga? Bake you some cookies? Kill something? I should email you? I want my ePoofanny! Oh, forget it. You knew Moses, and I’m no Moses. I know, I know, if you’re going to talk to me in the future, you already have. As Master Vonnegut, who is up in heaven, tells us, we are all 4D creatures. We have at least three spatial dimensions and at least one temporal dimension. At one end of us, there we are with our little baby feet, and at the other end (hopefully) with our little old people feet. All those mucho-multi-footed worms, the bunch of us, just floating in some kind of non-spacetime. I’m picturing it as icy blue. Not that we ever experience things that way. All we know about is now, and so, time after time, we must make decisions, and that makes us think we have free will. Sometimes thinking we have free will is a comfort and sometimes it isn’t. How long is “how” anyway? No

matter what you say, the front of "now" will be before the end of "now." I don't see how we can be conscious at all. There isn't time! Unless maybe we are time traveling.

I bet you think I'm rambling. I wonder if you would be more cooperative if I called you "Father" who is standing up there next to Kurt? Yes, I am making fun of you, but making fun is what we do! We are all about fun! Fun! Fun! Fun! But we are so easily distracted and fall into despair over the fact that some of us are longer than others. None of us is really very long, but each of us has all the time there is. Isn't that amazing? Why should any matter be conscious of anything? And why does such matter do more worrying about duration than reveling in the wonder of it all? I mean you're tall, you're wide, you're deep, you're long. Why then the obsession with only one of them? Why should you worry about not living infinitely long when you don't worry about not being infinitely wide? If I were to ask you, hey, how would you like to be infinitely wide? I doubt if you would reply, wow, what a good idea! But why do you ask? Do these pants make my butt look fat? You narrow your eyes. I narrow my eyes back. We remain dueling eye beams until we giggle and everything is okay because we are monkeys! It's glorious to be a monkey!

We are not, strictly speaking, "monkeys." Oh, lighten up, will you! Monkey business is what we are all about. That reminds me of a dope story back when drugs were transcendental. Young Hank is lounging on deep purple pillows puzzling over something way way down there so mysterious, what in the world is it? Some kind of pink creature! Not a monkey. How did it get in? What does it want? How does it fit into the Big Picture? Hours of pondering and philosophizing go by, and then just like that, it hits you that the pink thing is your left foot. And that explains everything! Too bad it isn't laser-etched on a stone tablet. The message? It's Your Foot! Not bad, but people would still figure out a reason to kill one another over it. So forget the tablet. What in the world do you really want? You mean right now, right here? Yes, that's what we mean. Well, it would be wonderful if someone special would come over and smile and snuggle up and pick bugs out of my hair. And we could share a banana. And we wouldn't be afraid, because it would be simply now then, and now is forever.

Ray Vukcevic's new book is *Boarding Instructions: Stories* to be released fall of 2010 from Fairwood Press. His fiction has appeared in many magazines including *Lady Churchill's Rosebud Wristlet*, *SmokeLong Quarterly*, *The Los Angeles Review*, *Night Train*, *Hobart*, *Fantasy & Science Fiction*, and *Polyphony*, and has been collected in *Meet Me in the Moon Room* from Small Beer Press. His first novel is *The Man of Maybe* from St. Martin's. He also works as a programmer in a couple of brain labs at the University of Oregon. Read more about him at <http://www.rayvuk.com>.

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