

Charming Quarks

Here's the human brain
with its big bright eyes.
There's the universe

we live in, ninety-five
percent dark—not exactly
a marriage made in heaven,

but an unfortunate mismatch,
Abelard and Blondie, or
Blondie in bifocals,

speculating . . . so maybe
if we were blind, or
the universe were visible,

we'd be in tune, on the same
wavelength—*all you have to do
is listen*, says one poet

of another's famously
quirky work—*all we have
to do is listen*, says Blondie,

*listen with our eyes closed,
and who knows what
secrets will be whispered*

*in the chambers of our
delicate ears? Just think
what blind fish must know,*

and bats, for that matter. . .
while she nattered on I began
to wonder if somewhere

there's a universe we were
made for, meant for, but
never happened to meet—

or maybe we knew it too well,
and left it for this mysterious
stranger—maybe it isn't gravity

that holds us here, but obsession
with whatever resists
our advances: Blondie puts on

a shorter skirt, Abelard
buys her one more book
on metaphysical love, and we

keep the lights burning,
look to the stars to guide
our lives, try to turn

a deaf ear to the darkness
that defines them and draws
us irresistibly toward it.