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Nerve Language is an extraordinary and courageous book. Every poem in it sparkles like snow, like diamonds, like black coal about to be lit: it is that cold, that shining, that fiery with inspiration and madness, the desperation of our age transmuted alchemically into a kind of holiness, an opening into the possibility of the miraculous. It should be required reading for every modern citizen; it might save us from ruin.

— DI BRANDT

Daniel Paul Schreber was a high-ranking judge in Leipzig in 1894 before he plunged into an alarming and excruciating mental disruption during which God spoke to him directly by way of a nerve language. He thought that a terrible disaster had befallen the universe, and that he was the last person left alive. Schreber believed it was incumbent upon him to restore the cosmos, and in order to do so he had to enter the world of female voluptuousness, of the feminine.

In this exquisite new work based in part on the memoirs of Schreber, poet Brian Henderson gives voice to a radical human interiority, to what is wild and clamorous and craning, the imagined Schreber's ragged desires revealing to us much about our own.


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