

# The "Daily" Lucretian

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To say likewise, that the eyes can see nothing of themselves, but the mind looks through them as through doors laid open, this is ridiculous, when sense itself tells them the contrary, and sets it full in their view; especially when we are unable to look upon objects that dazzle the eyes, because our site is confounded by too great a lustre. This could not be, if they were mere doors, nor are open doors that we look through capable of pain. Besides, if our eyes were no more than doors, the mind would see clearer when the eyes were pulled out, and the whole frame taken away.

In this case it is vain to take shelter under the sacred opinion of Democritus, who says that as many parts as there are of the body, so many parts too of the soul are answerable, and are contained in them; for since the principles of the soul are not only much smaller than those of which the body and its parts consist, but are fewer in number, and are spread thinly in distant Spaces all over the limbs, you may be firm so far, that the principles of the Soul take up only so many different spaces and intervals, as may be sufficient for those little seeds that are in us to incite those motions that produce Sensation.

That this sense does not affect every minute part of the body is plain; for we seldom feel the dust that sticks upon us, nor the particles of chalk that drop upon our limbs; nor do we perceive the dew by night, or the fine threads of the spider meeting us, when we are entangled by the subtle net as we pass along; nor the decaying web lighting upon our heads, nor are we sensible of the soft feathers of birds, nor of the flying down of thistles, which from their natural levity are scarce able to descend upon us; nor do we feel the motion of every creeping insect, nor the little traces of the feet which gnats and such animals make upon us. So that the many seeds which are diffused over all the limbs, must be first put into motion before the principles of the soul are agitated and made capable to feel, and before its seeds, by striking upon each other through so many distance spaces, can meet, unite, and part again, and be so variously moved as to produce sense and perception in us.

But the mind it is that keeps up the defences of life, and has a more sovereign power to preserve our beings, than all the faculties of the soul; for, without the mind, the least part of the soul cannot secure its residence in the body for a moment, but follows it readily as a close companion, and vanishes into air along with it, and leaves the cold limbs in the frozen arms of death. But the man whose mind is whole and entire, remains alive, though he be mangled and all his limbs lopped-off; yet his trunk, though his soul be so far gone, and his members separated from him, still lives and breathes the vital air; the trunk, if not spoiled of the whole, yet of a great part of the soul, still continues alive and holds fast its being. So, if you tear the eye all round, if the pupil remains safe, the power of sight continues entire, so long as you do

no injury to the Apple, but cut the white all around, and leave that hole, this may be done without any danger or lost to the sight; but if ever so little of the middle of the eye be pricked through, though the ball otherwise looks bright and sound, the light instantly dies away, and darkness follows. This is the case of the mind and soul, and by such bonds are they always held together.