**Darkness**

**If foliage and grass absorbed all the light that falls upon them, and reflected none, they would look black. *(Rutherford Platt)***

**Amazon.com went dark for 40 minutes this week. Extrapolating from the e-commerce giant's most recent financial results, the outage might have cost Amazon more than $2.6 million in lost sales. *(BuzzFeed.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, August 30, 2013)***

**Hamsters may suffer from anxiety and depression during the dark days of winter just as some humans do, new Ohio State University research suggests. Researchers found more symptoms of depression and anxiety in adult hamsters housed for weeks in conditions with limited daylight. The researchers suggest that the findings could provide insight into human seasonal-affective disorder, in which lack of sun exposure leaves people with the winter blues. Female hamsters showed more evidence of depression than males, which corresponds to research in humans that shows more depression among women than men. *(Todd Neff, in Boulder Daily Camera, November 18, 2005)***

**Beavers build at night. *(Don Voorhees, in The Perfectly Useless Book of Useless Information, p. 171)***

**Wadakin and Matsuzuka beef, raised in Japan, are considered the two most tender kinds of beef in the world. The steers from which this meat is taken are isolated in totally dark stalls, fed on beer and beer mash, and hand-massaged by specially trained beef masseurs three times a day. *(David Louis, in Fascinating Facts, p. 61)***

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**On November 9, 1965, the day of the great blackout in the northeastern United States, 62 million phone calls were placed in New York City during a twenty-four-hour period. That is the greatest number of telephone calls ever made in one day. *(David Louis, in Fascinating Facts, p. 39)***

**During the “blackout” of July 13-14, 1977, when electric power to New York City failed during the early evening and was not restored until the next afternoon, a record eighty million telephone calls were made. On an average business day, thirty-six million calls are made in the city. *(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 83)***

***\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\**Evening in Hebrew, means the blending. When the day’s activity is quieted, when the soul stands so close to its maker, and men rest in the quiet certainty of the Father’s love, their consciousness blends with the infinite. *(Dr. Nona L. Brooks)***

**Whenever you see darkness, there is an extraordinary opportunity for the light to burn brighter. *(Bono, U2 lead singer)***

**The darker your business suit on the job, sir, the more authoritative you’ll appear. Or so say the clothing specialists. *(Boyd’s Curiosity Shop, p. 184)***

**The eternal stars shine out as soon as it is dark enough. *(Thomas Carlyle)***

**According to experts, dark chocolate is the candy most likely to cause tooth decay. *(Uncle John’s Unstoppable Bathroom Reader, p. 300)***

**Christmas Cactus: These undemanding plants like indirect light. Let the top inch of soil dry between waterings, and avoid drafts. Next fall, to encourage blooming in time for the holidays, keep the plant in total darkness 12 hours nightly for six to eight weeks, or until flower buds appear. *(Lynn Coulter, in American Profile magazine)***

**The chrysanthemum requires an uninterrupted period of approximately thirteen hours of darkness of an autumn night before it will flower. Commercial flower growers, in order to delay the blossoming for a more profitable market, illuminate the plants briefly at night to break up the dark period. *(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 182)***

**Before the discovery of phytochrome, experiments done with the cocklebur weed showed that the plant would flower only after it had been kept in the dark continuously for exactly eight and a half hours. If the period of darkness was interrupted by even a single flash of ordinary light, the cocklebur failed to flower. By trying out varying wavelengths the scientists at the U.S. Department of Agriculture discovered that while orange-red (600 millimicrons) prevented flowering, light at the far-red end of the spectrum did not check the flowering process. *(Sarah R. Reidman, in Trees Alive, p. 91)***

**Confronting the shadow produces a new humility, allowing us to dissolve dualistic thinking and to live more and more centered in the existential present. Shadow work offers us a great gift: it invites the healing and balancing encounter with “our dark side”, leading us back to our buried potential, to the treasure house wherein lies what we have rejected out of shame, out of fear, out of ignorance or for lack of love. In what we deny, exile, or project lies the possibility to discover our fuller humanity. *(Jeremiah Abrams)***

**But first, we have to figure out what exactly Dark Energy is. So far, we know only that is causes the expansion of the universe to speed up. We call it “dark” because we don’t directly see it. “Dark” is code for “we have absolutely no clue what it is!” Dark Energy is exciting for several reasons. Scientists have determined that Dark Energy makes up two-thirds of the universe. So, until we understand Dark Energy, we clearly cannot understand our universe. *(Meg Urry, in Parade magazine)***

**Without darkness there are no dreams. *(Karla Kuban, in Marshlands)***

***\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\**The total eclipse of the sun is fascinating. Daylight completely disappears, and it becomes as dark as night. Birds and animals often instinctively behave as though night had come. Streetlights and other sun-sensitive lights turn on automatically. The moon, which at other times brightly reflects the sun’s light, now blocks it. The moon appears as a sphere of complete darkness. It is amazing that this small satellite of earth can completely block the light of the immensely bigger sun. *(Eunice Graham, in Portals of Prayer)***

**At an eclipse of the sun, the Ojibwa Indians of North America and the Sencis of Peru shot flaming arrows into the sky, hoping thus to rekindle the light. At the autumnal equinox, ancient Egyptians held a festival called “the nativity of the sun’s walking stick” in the belief that the declining sun needed a staff to lean upon. *(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 397)***

***\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\**When it is dark enough you can see the stars. *(Ralph Waldo Emerson)***

***\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\**Human eyes are so sensitive that on a clear night when there is no moon, a person sitting on a mountain peak can see a match struck 50 miles away. It takes the human eyes an hour to adapt completely to seeing in the dark. Once adapted, however, the eyes are about 100,000 times more sensitive to light than they are in bright sunlight. *(David Louis, in Fascinating Facts, p. 24, 25)***

**When your eyes are tired the world is tired also. When your vision has gone no part of the world can find you. Time to go into the dark where the night has eyes to recognize its own. There you can be sure you are not beyond love. Sometimes it takes darkness and the sweet confinement of your aloneness to learn anything or anyone that does not bring you alive is too small for you. *(David Whyte, in Sweet Darkness)***

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**Fireflies are light bearers, but it is the darkness between most species’ flashes that reveal their true character. Without intermittent darkness, there would be no synchronized light shows. There would be only glare. Stars are, after all, in the sky above us even at midday, but we see them only when the sun takes its leave. Because while it’s true that only light can drive out darkness, there are some forms of light that only darkness can reveal. *(Leigh Ann Henion, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Living in darkness, fish have evolved to a state of blindness in Bluespring Caverns near Bedford, Indiana. *(American Profile magazine)***

**No species of wild plant produces a flower or blossom that is absolutely black, and so far none has been developed artificially. *(E. C. McKenzie, in Tantalizing Facts, p. 100)***

**The famous Gateway Arch in St. Louis turned off its lights in May to provide a secure transit for migrating birds. Some 60 percent of North American songbirds and 40 percent of waterfowl migrate during the spring and fall. St. Louis sits right on a migration route known as the Mississippi flyway, and artificial lights can disorient birds at night. Turning off the lights helps 325 separate species of birds. For more than a decade, the lights went dark for two weeks, but migration patterns have changed, and this year they’ll be kept off the whole month to aid the birds’ journey. (The Week magazine, June 2, 2023)**

**It is awfully easy to be hard-boiled about everything in the daytime, but at night it is another thing. *(Ernest Hemingway, in The Sun Also Rises)***

**Hungary has unusual Monday nights. The streets teem with people, the movie houses are packed. Monday is the big night for theater, art exhibits and concerts. It is also the night for socializing, for long post-prandial conversations. This is because by government decree, Monday is the night television goes dark in Hungary. *(Les Brown, in Channals)***

**Good week for: Iceland, which was named the most desirable country to live in by the U.N. Human Development Index. The tiny island nation, which is frozen and dark most of the year, edged out Norway due to its long life expectancy, high educational levels, and comfortable per capita income. *(The Week magazine, December 7, 2007)***

**It's always darkest right before you stub your toe. *(Al Batt, in Reader's Digest)***

***\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\**One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious. *(C. G. Jung)***

**Even a happy life cannot be without a measure of darkness. The word “happy” would lose its meaning if it were not balanced by sadness. (Carl Jung)**

***\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\**Rudyard Kipling would only write when he had black ink in his pen. *(David Louis, in Fascinating Facts, p. 121)***

**If life didn’t at times present us with some dark moments, then we would never get to enjoy one of God’s brightest creations: the stars. *(David J. Seibert)***

**During World War II, it was possible to get the best look yet at the Andomeda galaxy. The reason: Los Angeles was blacked out at the time, making it possible for the hundred-inch Mt. Wilson telescope near L.A. to be employed to maximum advantage through the fully darkened skies. *(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 391)***

**Some of us are darkness lovers. We do not dislike the early and late daylight of June, but we cherish the increasing dark of November, which we wrap around ourselves in the prosperous warmth of wood stove, oil, electric blanket, storm window and insulation. Inside our warmth we fold ourselves, partly tuber, partly bear, in the dark and its cold -- around us, outside us, safely away from us. We tuck ourselves up in the comfort of cold's opposite, warming ourselves by thought of the cold, lighting ourselves by darkness's idea. *(Donald Hall, in Seasons at Eagle Pond)***

**I will love the light for it shows me the way, yet I will endure the darkness because it shows me the stars. *(Og Mandino)***

**For decades, physicists have theorized that about 20 percent of the universe consists of mysterious "dark matter," a dense, invisible substance floating in interstellar space. Without dark matter, there simply does not appear to be enough mass in the universe to keep the galaxies from flying apart -- and the laws of gravity established by Newton and Einstein would be wrong. It has always been a controversial theory, since dark matter has never been observed. But now, for the first time, a group of scientists says they've witnessed dark matter in action. After examining the collision of two distant galaxies, NASA scientists say they were able to detect the gravitational pull exerted by dark matter. In effect, the dark matter's gravity stripped normal matter from one of the galaxies like an invisible hand. The new findings are "direct evidence" that dark matter exists, cosmologist Sean Carroll tells The Washington Post. "There's no way to explain the observations without dark matter." But scientific skeptics say they won't believe the substance exists until someone produces it in a lab, and explains what it is. *(The Week magazine, September 15, 2006)***

**Melatonin is necessary for the proper functioning of the brain and nervous system. Light inhibits the formation of melatonin and other hormones in the pineal gland. When animals were exposed to constant darkness for six days, there was a fivefold increase in the melatonin -- forming enzyme activity compared with animals kept in continuous light. Exposure to light reduced the ability of the pineal gland to synthesize melatonin. *(Dr. Dolph Ornstein & Jonathan Rothschild, in Let’s Live magazine)***

**Monkeys give birth at night. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Mushrooms have no chlorophyll so they don’t need sunshine to grow and thrive. Some of the earliest commercial mushroom farms were set up in caves in France during the reign of King Louis XIV. *(Noel Botham, in The Amazing Book of Useless Information, p. 175)***

**The darker the olive, the more oil is in it. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Most dramatically, the effect of day length is seen on the flowering of different species of plants. Chrysanthemums, cosmos, dahlias, and poinsettias – so-called short-day plants – produce flowers in early spring or late summer, when there is light for less than twelve hours. In fact, they can be made to flower sooner than normally by covering them through part of the day. On the other hand, clover, delphinium, and gladiolas will produce flowers only when the photo-period is close to fifteen hours. These long-day plants usually flowers in the spring and early summer. (Day-neutral flowers – carnations, dandelions, snapdragons, sunflowers – are indifferent to day length; it could be that they originated close to the equator.) *(Sarah R. Reidman, in Trees Alive, p. 78)***

**The yellow primrose opens only at dusk, and so swiftly that it can be seen and heard. The buds sound like popping soap bubbles as they burst. *(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 178)***

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**A new kind of blind date: Dans le Noir, a new chain restaurant from France, recently opened in New York City and caters to hungry foodies looking for a new sensory experience. A blind waitstaff is trained to serve meals in a dining room that's pitch-black, a state that reportedly intensifies the flavor of food. *(Alison Caporimo, in Reader's Digest)***

**You’ll eat less if you dine in dark restaurants. Or at least the subjects in one research project did so. According to a Johns Hopkins clinician, bright colors stimulate appetites, dark colors suppress. *(L. M. Boyd)***

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**San Francisco in the dark: If you're looking for a new way to experience San Francisco, try temporarily sacrificing your sense of vision, said Sam McManis in The Sacramento Bee. Doing things in the dark heightens the other senses, and the city has long offered a few interesting adventures in sightlessness. I began my sensory-deprivation tour at Opaque, a restaurant where diners eat in the dark and play guess-the-dish. It's a surprisingly rough challenge: My food expert friend mistook pork for beef, and peas for mushrooms. Next up was Audium, where visitors sit in darkness while 176 speakers bombard them with disorienting sounds ranging from thunderous percussion to toddlers playing. My final stop was Pier 15's Tactile Dome, an unlit, multilevel maze that can be navigated only by sense of touch. After feeling my way around from surface to surface -- "was it corrugated grating, fishing nets? Who knows?" -- I eventually crawled my way to the exit, and out into glorious light. *(The Week magazine, May 13, 2016)***

**We think we cannot see a night. But given enough time to adjust the human eye can, for a time, see almost as well as an owl's. *(Isaac Asimov's Book of Facts, p. 322)***

**It is impossible for a solar eclipse to last for more than seven minutes and forty seconds. *(Noel Botham, in The Best Book of Useless Information Ever, p. 63)***

**Sometimes in the dark you see what you want to see. *(Roger Ormerod, in Still Life with Pistol)***

**OK, so what’s the speed of dark? *(Steven Wright, comedian)***

**The darker the man's suit, the more authority he's thought to have. Clothiers say that's the impression onlookers get, no matter what the facts. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Surviving the night shift: Working while everyone else is sleeping takes a serious toll on a person's health. Clocking in to work nights or irregular and rotating shifts is associated with more stress and unhealthy lifestyle habits, such as being sedimentary and following an unhealthy diet, which can lead to diabetes, heart disease, and other chronic health issues, new research reveals. Scientists found that people working nights or extended hours ate more fat and fewer fruits and vegetables than those who work days, a difference that can lead to weight gain. A separate study also found shift workers are more likely to be overweight, struggle with insomnia, and get insufficient sleep on a regular basis, MedicalDaily.com reports. Scientists warn that not getting enough sleep also heightens the risk for metabolic disorders, including obesity and diabetes. "The most important message to shift workers," says researcher Katri Hemio, "is that they should be aware of increased risk for chronic diseases, and that healthy nutrition may lower the risk." *(The Week magazine, June 5, 2015)***

**There is no such thing as darkness; only a failure to see. *(Malcolm Muggeridge, in New York Times)***

**The trunk of the African baobab tree is sometimes as wide as the tree is high. The tree is pollinated by bats, and its blossoms open only in moonlight. *(David Louis, in Fascinating Facts, p. 58)***

**Preparing for a family vacation, my sister-in-law and her husband explained to their young children that they would be sitting in the car for a very long time. The kids were told they would not be arriving at their destination until after dark, and were warned not to keep saying, “Are we there yet?” After a few minutes of peaceful driving, their five-year-old daughter asked, “Is it dark yet?” *(Todd Berbert, in Reader’s Digest)***

**I often think that the night is more alive and more richly colored than the day. *(Vincent Van Gogh)***

**A war was ended by a solar eclipse – and became the oldest event on Earth that can be dated to the exact day. The armies of Lydia and Media were preparing for battle in Asia Minor when the eclipse occurred. Sobered by the event, the two nations signed a peace treaty. Modern astronomers have fixed the date of that eclipse as May 28, 585 B.C. *(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 394)***

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