

Sight Management

[“*Hyperspace Bypass Construction Zone* is an art installation, a series of large-scale polyhedrons that investigates geometry through light and shadow. . . . They are lit from the inside and cast intricate, colorful shadows all around.” — Yelena Filipchuk & Serge Beaulieu]

Chapter 1. Hyperspace Bypass

Beyond light speed, i.e. imaginary,
because we want to outwit nature,
all the *knowns*—

as if we knew. Every avant turns
into a cliché in time.

Ha! In “time”:

the *bypass* is a hedge, right? We’re doing hyperspace
in a new way, it has an access road,

a clover leaf.

Chapter 2. Luck

To break a law of nature,
you’ll need either
Dick Blick
or a metaphor.

Chapter 3. Construction Zone

... where work’s ongoing,
where something’s being made right now,
in progress.

Here, brass boxes blaze with static polygons,
cages whose only “prisoner” is light:
light gets away. Keats’ grave

says *Here lies one whose name was writ in water.*

The brass boxes say *Everything we make
cannot be held. Everything we care about.*
It spills. They gleam at 4 p.m. and vanish
after dark, you find them then by what pours out.

Yesterday I had a cocktail named to honor Robert Frost,
a *Nothing Gold Can Stay*. The glass that held it

was a globe, a bulb, diffusing
golden light that disappeared with every sip—

Chapter 4: 40 Light Years

away we found some planets
that might have oceans, life.

Found them how? Their dwarf star—
around which they orbit as we orbit the sun—
would dim from time to time: remote eclipses!

We found these possibly hospitable alternate homes
because they interrupted our view of dwarfstarlight.

We were looking at something we stopped
being able to see
and thus discerned a different presence. *Presences.*

It isn't only billionaires who'll want to go—

Jeff & Elon.

Let's write our names in water and in ink.
Then name those seven planets,
draw them in oils, acrylics, watercolor.
Model them in brass.

Their dwarf sun's name is Trappist-1,
acronymish for TRAnsiting
Planets and
Planetesimals
Small

Telescope

Not a trap or cage, that mini-star, not a monk
who microbrews. A way of looking that depends

on noticing what we no longer see.

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This poem, written for Canal Convergence and Scottsdale Public Art, first appeared in print in *The Laurel Review* (Vol. 51 #2, 2018) and was reprinted in *Hold Sway* (NY: Barrow Street, 2019). It's also the first poem I wrote about the TRAPPIST telescopes.