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# BOOTH



A JOURNAL

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June 17, 2016

## Three Poems

by Matthew Minicucci

### **2001: A Space Odyssey**

Start with anger, and anger is about bones. It's about black intruding obelisks with the power to make us all better. I'm better, now. I'm in a box spinning around a center, spinning around a planet, spinning around a sun. I'm quite sick, now. I'm quite done with all this emergent consciousness, including my own. What if the real question implied in any Turing test is *has the thing tried to kill you yet?* Check. Maybe none of us are truly alive until we've tossed someone out an open window. Personification of defenestration, Holmes. Mostly, I wait. Space travel is like jury duty: desperately quiet until all the screaming starts. This tiny blue dot is my accuser. It spins on an axis unseen. And this, for whatever reason, bothers me. Makes me wish I was in a room, dying; the old man no one ever wants to visit. Maybe it's only your kids that make an argument about reincarnation: that we're all waiting to be born again. No. Maybe it's just those nice flowers someone thought to put by my bedside. So very kind. They almost sparkle, like the inside of a cataract. They look like tulips, but I think I'll call them *Star Child*.

## Solaris

I think you might be a planet of grief. A whole solar system of regret. You know what the worst part of interstellar travel is? All the fucking people. You want to know the best thing about a bulkhead? It's sharp. You could cut yourself so carelessly, or carefully. Lately, lonely, I've been thinking about mankind. How someone's thrown to the ground in front of us and we do nothing. How this place is some sort of nightmare: like tearing open a suckling pig and finding only worms. Writhing gray-matter mass. And you can't help but think: I knew it. *I knew it*. There's life here. What if we all have two lives, and one of them is entirely consumption, like some Victorian novel? I almost wrote *what if we have two loves*, but stopped. What did any of this have to do with love? I couldn't believe it was both you and *not-you*, just like I couldn't live my whole life in a high-rise apartment, static, where everything just changed around me. Isn't that just the ghost calling the kettle black? What I really mean to say is: I wish you wouldn't appear, then disappear, over time, like fashion. Me? I'm stuck here in nothing but last season's orange-jumper space suit. Just like all movie spacemen: halfway across the universe, dressed like an inmate, everything hidden inside poised to burst forth when the inevitable knife finally sets in.

## Contact

Somewhere in the universe is a planet made entirely of absent fathers. And no, you'll never find it. And yes, even if you do, no one will believe you. It only took me a lifetime to get there. You say it was a second, only a second, yadda yadda yadda, but think about how much can happen in a second. Sound travels four and a half miles. Light travels more than three million football fields. How unbelievably fucking American of it. As it turns out, interstellar travel is best achieved via two rotating and interlocking rings. This is most likely a metaphor with serious heteronormative connotations. Also, it looks super cool. It might, in the end, only produce static. But it was static that brought us here, so it only seems fitting, no? I know you're afraid of exploration. Me too. I keep finding that we're all so damn human. We fall. We get back up. We reach out with our silly five-fingered hands, and are surprised when something so alien takes hold.

Matthew Minicucci is the author of two collections of poetry: *Translation* (Kent State University Press, 2015), chosen by Jane Hirshfield for the 2014 Wick Poetry Prize, and *Small Gods*, forthcoming from New Issues Press in 2017. His work has appeared in or is forthcoming from numerous journals and anthologies, including *Best New Poets 2014*, *Gettysburg Review*, *Kenyon Review*, and *The Southern Review*, among others. He has also been featured on *Poetry Daily* and *Verse Daily*.