

Horror Flash Fiction

Submitted for assessment as Genre Writing Assignment 2, 27-Jul-2020.

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Sunlight glints through the Cupola windows as the shuttle departs the Harmony module docking port. With it go my crew mates of the last month.

It is unusual for the International Space Station to be run solo, however I'm alone for five days while I wait for Roscosmos to send their crew up. They were due yesterday. Weather at Baikonur held them back.

I wave forlornly as the Atlas V slips from view, despite knowing its passengers can't see me. Should they look back, all they will see is the great ISS flying through the inky blackness of space on bat wings of solar cells.

I am not ready for the sudden oppressive silence. When crewed, there are constant, familiar, human noises: working, talking, eating. Now every sound, the slightest creak of the modules or the rush of gas, is strange and lifeless. The void, kept at bay by simple human noises, is now merely an arm's length away.

The communications system crackles, tearing through the silence, and I jump. I wait a few moments, but no sounds come.

I radio down and receive no response, which is strange as a team at Houston is always on hand.

I move to call again. Through the viewport shines the huge blue-green marble of home, and I pause, the radio halfway to my mouth.

There is a growing bloom of darkness on the Earth's surface somewhere near Texas. I can see the moon and know the shadow is no eclipse. Two more appear in quick succession. Japan. Korea. The same circles. Darkening. Widening.

I call again, an edge creeping into my voice. There is still no reply. No longer even the static from before.

Slowly, something crosses the window, obscuring my view of the world below. The radio falls from my hand.

The thing is no meteor. It is smooth, with a triangular fin atop a thick conical nose. Sunlight glimmers off a coating of moisture. It draws further into view, revealing a glassy window into darkness.

Reflected in the glass, I am framed by my own portal, backlit by bright LEDs. I dare not breathe nor move, lest whatever hides in the blackness catches sight of me and turns its great ship toward my defenceless tomb.

An alarm sounds, and I swivel frantically to silence it. A high-pitched whine I have never heard before and cannot source.

It is me.

In fear, I turn back; the ship still in full view. Surely whoever is inside has spotted me now?

The window has narrowed, and I see it now for what it truly is.

The eye swivels, vertical slit narrowing further as it focuses on me.