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Paul Signorelli
Butler University

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A MAZE OF THOUGHTS

Paul Signorelli

The loneliness of space, a concept that scares my brother and I every day. The universe we call home is one of many wonders. Bright and vibrant planets full of life and warmth; cold and ominous moons keeping an eye on the careless. Elegant rings of gold and crimson that blanket the planets. And the stars, each one possessing incredible energy and beauty from afar. My brother and I don't enjoy playing games with one another, this is because one of us will get mad and accidentally hurl an asteroid into a planet. A most sincere apology to the dinosaurs by the way. We prefer to just observe from afar. There is a certain entertainment factor about watching humans, so small and insignificant, yet so smart and intuitive. As the humans like to gaze up at the sky, we stare right back at them. Earth is the most interesting place to observe, all the war and bloodshed is truly amusing. Sometimes they will set off a particle explosion, better known as a nuclear bomb. What beauty, the pureness of the bomb; so bright and full of energy and yet willing death and destruction upon its innocent victims. My brother and I enjoy the same effect ourselves, summoning uranium and making atoms dance; this immaturity has come to an end for us though. As society progressed into its more mature stages, my brother and I got bored of watching them. There was no war anymore, only the low rumbling of machines and sentient beings. We had spent millennium watching them and now they serve no interest to us.

Anth and I turn to the beyond, wondering if the balls of light we examined before were still there. To our amazement, many of the lights had burned out. Before our own eyes, the sky was becoming darker and lonelier. The pockets of space time that I wished to explore were gone forever. The fabric of space and time, expanding at a rate faster than the speed of light. With this, all the matter in the universe is pushed away from one another. This force is not one of good or evil, it is simply the way of the universe. More and more stars disappeared and the more alone we felt.

One morning, Anth and I sensed something strange. It wasn't another asteroid to play with no; it was much smaller, much heavier. I could already feel its gravitational presence. A black hole was hunting, and we were in its wake.

My brother knew what was happening because it had happened to us many times before. Our perfect little universe starts to pick up speed, planets fly by like a car passing on the highway. Each speck of matter is forced towards the void. My brother and I catch up to the sun; its energy is being pulled from it as its light begins to dwindle. The literal fire burning within the star is ripped from its being. The faster the planets get to the speed of light,

the more spectacular the universe looks. Every star behind us looks like a streak across our vision. We are aboard the starship enterprise and we just hit lightspeed. Fractions of seconds last decades, the planets start to form unusual shapes as the fabric of space is literally stretching, ripping, tearing at the seams of physics. Within an instant, all the planets stretch to an infinite length and contract into an atomic sized ball.

We are now beyond the horizon line, there is no more escape. Even light photons can't find its way out of the maze of immense gravity. The inside of the black hole is truly something spectacular. Pieces of matter transform into pure forms of energy, all that excitement rushes into the center where the brightest, most concentrated being resides. The middle of a black hole has no force, because all the matter is being pulled in separate directions. The center of the strongest universal phenomenon presides a void of force.

The remorse of our universe is only momentary, we now have an opportunity to explore this realm of the beyond. Anth grabs a ball of energy and tosses it to me. It feels heavy as it wants to return to the center, the feeling of warmth from the ball is like wearing gloves on a cold winter's night. As we get better at tossing the ball, the energy twists and turns. The particles start to unsettle and change stature. The now hawking radiation has a mind of its own, it bounces off walls and zooms in and out of the void. "Finally", said Anth, "we can get out of this prison of physics". This particle is the golden snitch of our quidditch game, and we are about to win big. An explosion is a very unjust way of describing the release of this much energy. The pure energy turns back into matter as a force of attraction becomes a push in all directions. My brother and I surf on the wave of energy letting it take us to the ends of the universe. As energy slows, it forms into galaxies. Each one with its own little planet like earth. The fabric of spacetime is expanding so fast that time does not exist beyond that point, we follow it to the edge. As we enter the final frontier, there is nothing. The universe is one big globe, expanding into more and more magical proportions until the globe gets too big and it breaks. There is no matter, there is no space, no time, nothing. Just me and my brother existing above it all. There is no god complex though. We don't know if we are moving because there is no reference of space or time. There is no proof that we exist at all, light dissent exists nor sound. There is no other presence to feel without feelings itself. My brother and I are hopelessly lost in an ocean of nothing, and the life raft can't exist.