

The Nebulous Menace

by Eric Norris (February 2018)



SpaceX Poster

“Cela est bien,” répondit Candide, “mais il faut cultiver notre jardin.”

–Voltaire

Astronomers had seen it first. They
Could not believe the data pouring in.
They passed it to their governments. Thus, the world
Was not to be informed—and was. The void

Grew. Ink blotted out the Milky Way—
With nothing there to soak it up: nothing,
No science, no religion. “My God, there goes
Polaris—the North Star!” Faiths were shaken—

Even in our community on Mars.
Mars has a few more months to shine. I guess,
Ours is the last outpost of sanity:
Sagan Weather Station, Olympus Mons.

I tend to the reactor. At twilight,
I write. I count dust devils dancing on
The edge of night. Good for asparagus—
This Martian soil. Hiroko built a bed

Beneath the dome that we call home. We made
Asparagus omelets on Thanksgiving
As Jupiter went out. I don't know
What Earth expected us to do. To shout?

Eric Norris's short stories and reviews have appeared in: *Foglifter*, *Ambit*,
Impossible Archetype, *The Peacock Journal*, *Classical Outlook*, *E-Verse Radio*,

Singapore Poetry, Softblow, Assaracus, Glitterwolf, New Walk Magazine, The Raintown Review, The Goodmen Project, The Nervous Breakdown, and American Arts Quarterly. His latest book is [Astronomy For Beginners](#).

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