

Le voyage dans la Lune.

My eyeball smarted, I felt like the man in the moon in George Méliès 1902 film when that iconic cannon propelled spaceship lands in his ocular orifice. Now teary and stinging, the moonlight burns brighter and brighter on my retina. An illuminated singularity pulses; transforms the ancient gentleman into a monstrous Pacman whose eyes and mouth emanate a blinding phosphorescence.

Certain I was far beyond the Event Horizon the point of no-return I settle back, fingers fidget, knees raised and bolstered, I take a deep breath. Let my Millennium Falcon go to cruise control. I fly the Kessel Run in well under twelve parsecs.

The light intensifies. Goes all psychedelic on me. Ripples my space time fabric. Nebulae superimpose themselves on my cornea. A Jackson Pollock palate of mood flips from one kaleidoscopic image to another. The whole universe spins. From the helm, I watch as Orion morphs into the Eagle, the Crab scuttles across my vision before it settles and blooms into the Triffid. The Eskimo rubs noses with the Blue Turtle, whose flippers flap up a solar wind to blind the Cat's eye. My mouth is dry and I'd die for that Lemon Slice in a stiff G&T.

My tummy churns as this journey reaches its crescendo. I sail through the Pit Asteroid cluster on the run from the Imperial Death Star. A supernova blinds, red mist floats across my iris raising panic. I swallow slowly and inhale gingerly through my nostrils. My eyeball screams with pain, my bulging oculus is clamped wide-open and shaken with a vibration from beyond this world. Has catastrophic decompression set in? I see all through the Hubble telescope trained on a dying sun. In this moment, time stands still, but is what I'm viewing reality, or the memories of past epochs. Light bends beyond hyperspace but can my soul?

My body feels heavy with re-entry, my voyage about to terminate. How much more of this can I take? A robotic voice calls, 'irrigation on' and I feel fluid flow across my eye; there's a coolness on my cheek as it cleanses all my sins. Like a plank, that capsule is still embedded, still pains. Something rips across the side of my face and I feel a release.

A distant voice speaks. It's not the Man in the Moon nor the Force that intones. It's not Chewy either though it does have the depth and cadence of a Wookiee. 'Cataract procedure complete. Normal discharge. No wait, patient allergic to penicillin, we'll start antiseptic drops today and not in twenty-four-hours' time. Mr Ford, we are all done.'

A nurse removes the bolster from under my knees, helps me sit up. 'Thank you. I'm fine, no I don't feel wobbly nor nauseous. Yes, I can stand by myself.'

I blink away the crimson fog of the iodine wash. Low, behold, I see. I look up, through the skylight and observe the unexplored universe that lies beyond. Clear and bright, exposed to my vision once again.