

HAROLD SKULSKY

Asteroid

According to Reuters
an uninvited guest is due in this corner of the Milky Way
in a fortnight:
an asteroid will be passing through
the neighbourhood.

If it hits, of course, that will be that.

No point in nursing grievances.
Safety in these parts
was never the idea;
from the original Singularity on,
the idea of being hung up out here was precisely
target practice.

Not to worry;
the chances of a bull's eye this time round are vanishingly low.
One in several hundred thousand.
He has other plans.

That red-faced Sunday shooter
(crouching in the high brush out beyond alpha centauri
sweating and squinting into the sun),
though a crack marksman,
nearly always makes a point of missing.
I know what you will say to this,
and you are (up to a point)
quite right:

There is after all matter here
 out of which
 one can construct
 a worry;

Yes, I grant you.
 I have constructed worries
 about less.

But what strikes me at the moment
 and perhaps should strike you
 is not the sniper's malice.

It is his lack of imagination;
 there is something not trivial,
 he doesn't appreciate.

The things of ours that are castled up safely beyond his rage,
 things shameless and full of
 exasperating light
 flame serenely
 beyond the range of his weapon.
 And they too are dangerous.

Let him beware of them.
 Let him beware of us.