

## Poem Poem Poem Poem Poem

*by Kathleen Balma*

There are certain white noisy things that scientists believe. When aliens contact earth they will do it by making a tonal racket from on high. They will do this celestial honking at regular intervals. They will use the honk method because space can be a raucous place and science needs replication in order to work. Recurrence must be for belief to occur.

This alien din will most likely bloom in B flat. Various branches and twigs of study now corroborate the news that B flat has juju properties. Crocodiles are tamed by it, anomalous echoes echo it, and black holes are constantly humming it. Add to this the true events in my cousin's ears, and the reduplication of B flat magic is overwhelming. Ear anecdote:

My cousin the jazz percussionist woke one day to the opposite of deafness. His ear drums had acquired a heightened tuning in to even the smallest of sounds. A light tapping of fingers on a table; a dog's nails clicking on stairs; the scrape of fork against knife, plate, or tooth—all torture for my poor cousin. In addition to this, he was hearing a high-pitched ringing. This ringing was in B flat. This ringing never went away. Not leaving is a kind of repetition. Some possible conclusions are these:

If my cousin ever hears the alien note, it could hurt him, kill him, tame him, cure him, make him spill something hot, or drive him insane. Alternately, it could blend with the tinnitus already filling him and go undetected. Doubly alternately, it could *be* the tinnitus. The aliens could be blaring their high-tech claxon right now and his super sensitive canals are the only instruments that picked it up. My cousin's ears may have been specially selected to overhear this cosmic megatoot, which suggests that aliens have been in his apartment, which further suggests that their Big Beep Machine (a.k.a., The Universe Horn) is already obsolete, unless they're using my cousin as an instrumental test subject while speed-caroling more cacophonous worlds.

In order for us to trust any of this it must be repeated several times. Read this poem over and over until you believe.