

The Aesthetics of Bill's Propulsion

At nine, his head would burst—
plumes of synaptic jet as he propelled
into the blue, then black of universe;
he seemed to find comfort, escape, reclusion,
though brief, as Mother would bring him home
too sudden, with a less-than-static
booming call to land.

Decades seem like decimals now.

When he'd managed enough
for that rust-plated Maverick,
he was sure he'd be parting
both air and purpose, gliding skillfully
over drab mosaics of soil and gaseous gurge,
but a pilfered pocket
and an untimely gas shortage
left him grounded— stuck on the pad.

Forty, forty-one, forty-two...
had time reversed the count?

Last night, at ten past two
and two past a clock's face of years,
he was thrust into dark so thick
we thought he'd reversed.
His mission was a success,
and Mother's boom has turned static.

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