

“The Leak Under the Sink”

By Uche Iheanacho

*Sometimes, she liked to imagine her apartment was drifting through space, with the stars as her only neighbors.*

It's 6:27am when she greets the day, dragged from the dregs of sloth and dreams.

A limp arm reaches for the blinds above her head. The sun is out, but it too is only just waking up. She drags herself from her lofty bed of clouds onto her plush bedroom rug, wishing (like every morning) for the stars she calls her neighbors.

Into the kitchen she trudges, house slippers plop plopping underneath her. She can already taste the warm spice of her Winter Wake Up Tea on her heavy tongue. Gooseflesh grows on her bare arms.

The apartment is cold.

As she opens the blinds to let in the light, she thinks that her stars can wait.

She turns to head deeper into the kitchen, an aviled arm already reaching for the wake-me-up cupboard, when her right foot steps into a puddle of galactic matter. The gooseflesh flutters from her arms down to her toes.

Her eyes follow.

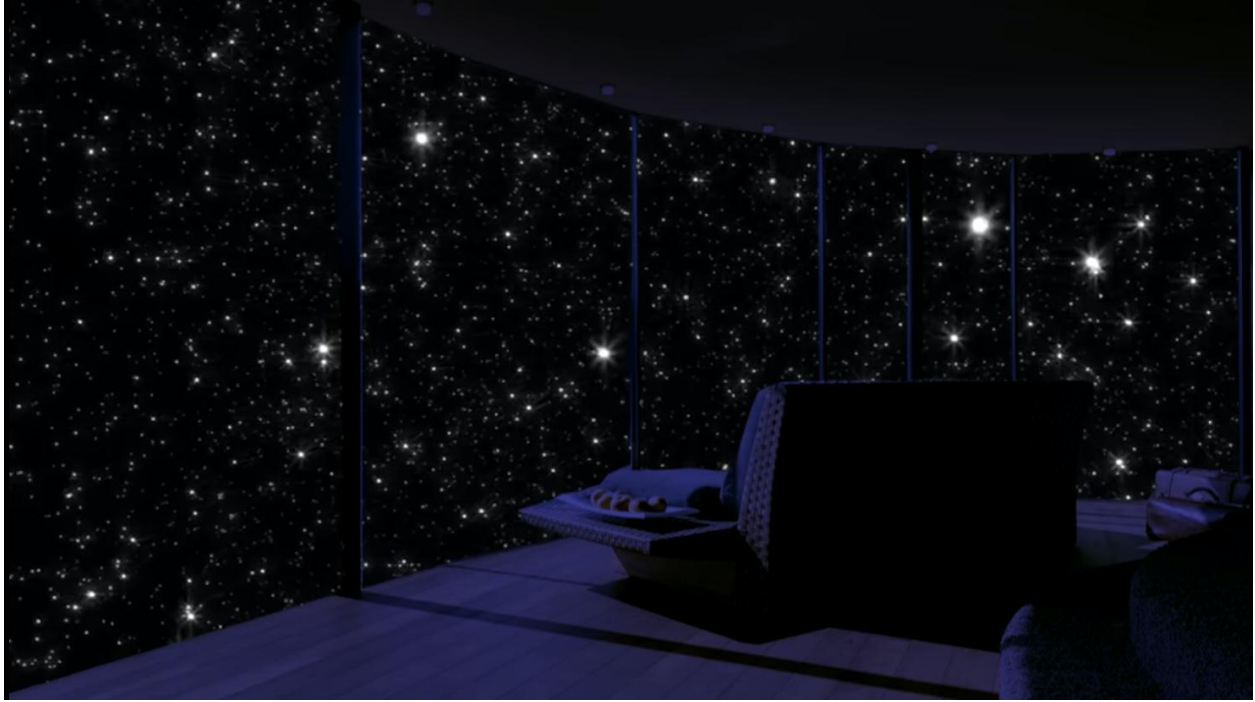
She stands in a puddle of quantized astromatter, desolate and teeming all at once. Black, blank, shimmering, zooming. It is running. It is racing. Her morning mind is the same. *So that's where the stars went*, she thinks, half here and half there in all senses of the phrase. The stars on her toes tickle her into movement, and she starts.

The liquid seeps from the cupboard under the sink, a place she goes rarely and thinks of never. What she thinks is not *Why is there a puddle of dimension on my kitchen floor?* but rather *I have to clean this up*. She is not ready for an adventure today. She pulls her frozen foot from the ice and into the kitchen sun. As she goes for the mop, she hears the stars on her floor twinkling in the silent rays of the bright morning.

It sounds like mischief.

They laugh at her. *Some neighbors*.

She's not sorry when she mops up the galaxy at her feet.



*Cred: Living Room Spaceship, Universe*