

Eric A. Weil

We Couldn't Be This Lucky

Numbers upon numbers: The Russians
say Asteroid Apophis, about 800 feet long,
aka 2004 MN4, aka 99942 (also an as-yet-unassigned

zip code in Alaska), will hit Earth on 13 April 2036
if it passes through a narrow gravitational keyhole.
NASA gives it one chance in 250,000 --

a "non-zero impact probability." Apophis
is the Greek name for the Egyptian god Apep,
the Uncreator, inscribed on palace and pyramid walls

as an evil serpent come from darkness and chaos.
Apophis will cross Earth's orbit below
geosynchronous spy and communications satellites;

with plenty of darkness and chaos already,
perhaps we will end with a bang after all,
but the odds are against our being that lucky.

Eric A. Weil's poems have appeared in journals as diverse as *Sow's Ear*, *Silk Road*, *Wild Goose Poetry Review*, *Dead Mule*, *The Greensboro Review*, and *American Scholar*. He teaches at Elizabeth City State University in North Carolina and has two chapbooks, *A Horse at the Hirshhorn* and *Returning from Mars*. A third is forthcoming. Two of his one-act plays have seen production: "Enter/Exit" and "Hamlet, Act VI."