

THE PAULI EFFECT

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Whenever Wolfgang Pauli wandered near
the entrance of a lab, it boded ill
for anything in progress. Fluids spill-
ing, beakers breaking—things would somehow veer
into an unholy chaos, regard-
less of how many times without hazard
the looked-for results had lined up, figured
neatly into the waiting proof—

“Discard
everything in your paper but the last
seven words and you’ll have a decent start—”
That was Pauli’s incinerating art:
to sear away bluster with every blast
of unrelenting logic. When he spoke,
Pauli’s friends listened, waving off the smoke.

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