# Affinity for Infinity

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# POETRY FOLDER

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## *Affinity for Infinity*

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Infinity is an infinitely perplexing concept. In these poems I explore various facets. The first one, *Affinity for Infinity*, is just silly. In *Geometry*, I take a more serious, but no more enlightening, approach. *Odd Odds*, *Chaos Theory*, and *Recalculation* touch on the areas of probability, chaos, and emotional and social processes, respectively, all dealing with the infinite possibilities that somehow collapse into the one we experience.

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Affinity for Infinity

> In the city without limits,
> the zip code is an irrational number,
> light travels the shortest distance
> between two minds,
> floorplans are fractals,
> and parallel streets converge
> at the town spiral.
> At the Moebius strip mall,
> drugstores sell remedies
> for ad nauseum,
> shoppers shop til they drop
> into another dimension,
> buy uncountable chess sets,
> and divide the lunch bill by zero.

GEOMETRY

Your story
and my story
trudge silently
on parallel paths
across a dusty,
Euclidean landscape
to an empty horizon
where intersection
never occurs.
But parallel lines
meet at infinity,
and infinity
is everywhere.

*Odd Odds* is based on a science fiction story I read decades ago. Unfortunately, the author's name is lost to me. It was a wonderful depiction of the many effects of the violation of usual probabilities.


ODD ODDS

Everyone who decides to go out
arrives at the same restaurant
and orders the same meal
in a cacophony of coincidence,
as they sit crammed against
each other at tables brought up
from the basement, elbows
resting on vinyl placemats,
while those turned away
devour the nearby eateries.

Everyone who decides to stay home
plugs in the vacuum cleaner:
simultaneous yearnings
for suction, plastic hoses
and canisters, a need to remove
dirt, dust, and dog hair
immediately, a perversion
of probability that stresses
the power grid, causing brown-outs,
and black-outs of certainty.

CHAOS THEORY

> . . . the Butterfly Effect—the notion that a butterfly stirring the air to-
> day in Peking can transform storm systems next month in New York.
>
> <div align="right">-James Gleick, <em>Chaos.</em></div>

To the butterfly
it was no big deal,
this beating of wings
to set off a cyclone
half a world away.
It was just another day,
another day of countless beats,
setting off cyclones
or preventing them
with equal ease,
everywhere,
all day long.

RECALCULATION

As the toddler grows,
from top-heavy staggers

to carefree gait, the head
becomes proportionately smaller,

with continuous adjustments
to the silent equations of the body.

The center of gravity shifts.

Bobble-headed notions topple,
a central belief slides outward,

someone drifts to memory's edge,
another claims the center.

Explanation, revision, shudder and sway,
solving for certainty, solving for love.