

## Spurious Correlation Sestina

Jules Nyquist

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# Spurious Correlation Sestina

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when zero  
is a temperature  
it is an interval scale  
that dips below an imaginary  
line to go negative, as in a thermometer  
in a pandemic used as permission to measure

our temperature, but how do we measure  
something that falls below zero  
like the weight of a bird—our thermometer  
won't register an invisible temperature  
and we will disappear like the imaginary  
checkbook balance of youth, on a scale

of probability, the chances of converting the Fahrenheit scale  
to Centigrade was remote, the U.S. still measured  
in Fahrenheit behind the rest of the imaginary  
world where a bank balance waits to zero-  
out and a raven pulls shiny coins from the sky in a temperature-  
controlled out-of-the ether mainframe thermometer

six thousand feet above sea level, a thermometer  
measures the speed on a speedometer scale  
when the motorcycle driver hurls over a temperature-  
reduced mountain ridge to an almost measurable  
crash that soars into a stock-market zero-  
point of ratio scaling, a lie on an imaginary

boundary where the motorcycle driver imagines  
they never hit the car and the thermometer  
never registered above human normal and zero  
meant nothing, it was only an innocent bathroom scale  
that we blamed added ten immeasurable  
pandemic pounds to our weight and the temperature

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<sup>1</sup>Jules Nyquist is the founder of Jules' Poetry Playhouse, a place for poetry and play. <https://www.poetryplayhouse.com>.

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of Earth rose only in the height of trees, a temperature  
that didn't take into account the imaginary  
altitude sickness that turned out to be very measurable  
and tripled the effect of the beer stored in a thermal  
cooler, found by the side of the scaled  
curve of that mountain road where zero

was just a measurement of temperature  
and the imaginary paper bank statement never showed zero  
due to there was nothing to scale on the erratic thermometer.