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## Zeroes

Florin Diacu  
*University of Victoria*

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# Zeroes

Florin Diacu  
diacu@uvic.ca

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Monomials are a simple species  
endowed with odd or even symmetry.  
Zero is their only zero, unless  
they play the all-or-nothing game.

Connect them and polynomials emerge,  
tame rivers winding in a marsh.  
Non-zero zeroes blossom  
where the meanders touch the abscissa,  
that backbone, that needle of steel.

Away from this garden  
chaos abounds.  
Zeroes may squeeze together  
or spread ad infinitum  
or be impossible to grasp.

But when zero is a zero,  
the graph kisses the cross of Descartes,  
the origin,  
the only spot  
where plus and minus  
make love.