Zeroes

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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.