

# Odd Symmetry

Gregory Nero

**Abstract**—I don't know where any of my bowls are and at this point I'm too afraid to ask.

**Index Terms**—UNHINGED AND LOVING/HATING IT, heyyyyyyyyyyyyyy, heat, LEARNING AND YEARNING, this might get ugly

## THEORIES, IN A FRENZY

Does this agree with reality? Graphite daydreams shaded by ink. Crumpled paper and sleeping with notebooks and binders and my pencil case. The skull is a cradle, then a swing-set, then a roller-coaster. My brain is spinning but I *love* it. This kind of blinding passion is what turns 7pm into 1am in the blink of an eye, and I hope that it consumes me. I'm counting on it.

## THIS MORNING ON: MYSTERY HOUR WITH GREG

Am I nauseous because I'm lovesick or because I ate an entire Jimmy John's sub with spicy range right before bed? (in bed) Probably both?

Either way, I'm gonna throw up.

## IF I HAVE TO CROSS EUCLID ONE MORE TIME I'M GOING TO LOSE IT

I'M TRYING TO TALK ABOUT THE DEADLY PRECISION WITH WHICH THE EVENING STRIKES THE ARMOR OF THE DAY. I'LL KILL THE SUN MYSELF IF I HAVE TO. AND I'LL TELL YOU THIS RIGHT NOW, IF I WERE ICARUS I WOULD HAVE BROUGHT A CROSSBOW TO THE UPPER ATMOSPHERE AND FIRED A GOLDEN ARROW AT THAT RAGING ORB BEFORE PLUMMETING TO MY DEATH.

## HEY HOW ABOUT THAT?

Hey have you noticed that the mourning doves sound different here? Like, it's a different sound. It sounds like they are choking on something. Hey back off bro they are just doing their best out here. How'd u feel if u were just a bird in a desert. You'd be out here saying weird shit too. Wait. Wait a second.

## REVENGE OF THE ARCSIN

What if I told you that I'm afraid of leaving this teahouse? Sit at the far back, shady, the street is miles away and perfect. Bitter gunpowder and a galaxy in my cup. I don't want anything to do with whatever is happening anywhere but here. Finally, something familiar: distraction. It all happened so so fast; the curtain opened, the magician pulling the tablecloth. Was that months ago? Finally, something familiar: heavy chest and tense neck and lead in my throat and that one thing where

I just stare at the wall foreverforeverforever. Windswept limbs on a prairie of mattress. Close my eyes and spins, SPINS! Maestro, cue up that shit that makes me cry. I'm going to indulge myself in this weight and sink into 2 am.

## I NEED TO START A GARDEN I NEED TO START A GARDEN I NEED TO START A GARDEN

Like from that one song. I think I understand. I'm desperate (oh dear, am I desperate) for something alive and nurturing and water water water water, roots in a frenzy, in a panic, searching the soil of summer for something other than dry sandy dirt.

## I CAN'T BE HERE RIGHT NOW

Revving engines, the growl of a beast; sirens, the shrieks of an injured night; I can feel the uprooted and broken pavement pulverizing my teeth.

## FEELING BETTER, TWO WHEELS AT A TIME

Weaving in between cracks and holes and rubble and glass and the sun link tracks. When the air is silent: *thud thud, thud thud, thud thud*. Gears clicking and a gentle rhythm. Breathing because I mean it. Left then right then left again. Let's ride to the end of Mountain.

## LET'S KICK THIS OFF

Now that my hands are bloody.

Have I gotten what I wanted?

Two A's and a B(roken heart).  
Or Something Like That.  
Surely, only a fool would look love in the eyes and run.

My bed sheet likes to sit on the foot of my mattress; crumpled; I can never seem to stop it from running away; tides, storm, quickly; breath gone; you, suddenly; it's all coming now, it's all coming now.

## BIG FEELINGS: BACK WITH A VENGEANCE

My pulse is syrup. Maybe I'm not strong enough for this. Constricted everywhere. Scratching skin and clawing at the color blue. It's more difficult than before. Am I forever damned to exist in the space between what I've done and what I didn't do?

## NEAT AND TIDY

Let's put a bow on this already; wrap it up in my notebook and forget about it until I can't anymore. Then what? Forever is plenty of time to pretend. But if I can just get it all archived, written down, get it from *in here* to *out there* maybe finally I can move on from this. Nice and organized between sheets of paper, dense with spare-drawer thoughts. They stick to me now. Or, crammed between the pages... will the binding hold? How will I possibly fit everything? There's millions of things to say or think or do and; well, maybe there's not. Look at me go, like this is some kind of optimization problem. What are our free variables? Just please, let me reach SOME kind of *local* minimum. That is peace enough, for now. An exhaustive search for the global minimum seems impossible considering the lack of data. Over-interpolation is dangerous.

## OH BO IIIII

BROOOO WHY I S MY P UL SE GO ING ZOOOOOOM  
I'M SITTING D O W N OHH BOII THIS M U ST BE  
YE ARNIN G.

## THE SWIFT AND VIOLENT DEATH OF SPRING

My mask smells like tequila and tobacco. Black and Mild. Wine. Wood tip. Always. Lime. Sometimes. Strange, also this: my eyes are bloodshot nowadays. I got some eye drops. It makes me think: were those veins always there, or did I just never look close enough into my own eyes? Anyways, the eye drops. Truthfully, they rip my spirit from my body and pulverize it into pieces on the bathroom counter. I literally can't get enough of that shit.

## ID

Hey do u wanna go pretend to be different people for an entire day? And maybe it'll stick and all of a sudden we'll never come back. Torn from the velcro of identity.

## MMEERRCY!

Let's have some mercy ourselves, please. There is plenty of time to burn! Watch and listen closely as the rags of his mind twist and the juices of memory drip down his face and into a raging pit of retrospection. BUT HEY that's pretty overdramatic, don'tcha think? MERCY, my friend, have some mercy and let him exist in these words just for a few blissful moments of self expression.

## [ACTIONS]

Okay, let's list the things we want. [list] Hmpf, okay now let's have a look at this. [looks] Well buster, I'm sorry to tell you that you can't have any of these things and you are just going to have to live with what you've got, which is now. Okay, now let's cry for a bit. [cries] And maybe this is regret. [regret] But I don't really subscribe to that! [unsubscribes] That's no way to live. [lives another way]. Growth mindset. [growth] Let's try again tomorrow. [anticipates trying]

## FIRE HAZARD

So I'm 23 but I still regularly forget about water I've set to boil on the stove. I'm disturbed and impressed by this.

## NEW RECORD!

Today I set some new personal records for myself: I cried in not only one, but *two* public bathrooms AND in my hotel room! Let this be proof that I'm always out here achieving, even on my worst (and boy, this was one of my worst) days.

AN ODE TO THE PEP TALK I GAVE MYSELF IN THE HOTEL  
SHOWER IN FLAGSTAFF

Lost appetite, lost interest, I'm afraid of my favorite songs;;; Sick, sick, sick; BUT WE BOUNCED BACK AND WE R  
READY TO GET ITTTTTTTTTTTT

## SOME FUNK

Mom, I'm worried that I'll be stuck like this forever. Gooley, caught in a slime of chaos. My milk is going to expire soon and I under-cooked that linguine but it's good enough. Listen to this stone: *poink, poink, poink*. It's different than the others. I can't possibly be good enough for what I'm trying to do.

## THE AIR HERE

Navigating between waves of heat and settling into summer. The mornings are perfect. Ironed, the air lays flat and thin between the folds and pockets of my lungs. I'm fabric and buttons unravelling when noon comes. Blue: the kind that doesn't give in and always forgets your name even though you've met millions of times. Though, coming back from up North I finally felt Home here. Up until now my favorite spots have been for hiding but now they will be for living. I'm reclaiming the Sky and the Earth and the Sand and sitting cross-legged in the grass while the day dilutes to an orange then a red then a gray. I'm green and purple and pink.

THIS GOT KIND OF SERIOUS REALLY FAST AND I SWEAR  
I'M OKAY I JUST NEEDED TO TRY AND SAY SOME THINGS

If I sacrifice my mind for the blood of understanding I'll finally be worthy to drink from the font of enlightenment. Slaughter me, sage of wisdom, and paint the textbooks red in honor of what I've gained and what I've lost. I'm thirsty, and my gaping mouth erupts with sounds I'll hear but never understand. Passion, priest of mayhem, say a prayer for me and finish the rite. I'm blessed with exactly one minute of tranquility every morning before my brain reawakens to haunt me. I'm trembling in the corner, trying to ward off the obsessions and the ruminations and the nightmares but they always come and they always win and that's why I cherish peace when I find it. I'm begging, kneeling at the hilt of the sword of my mind: please relinquish me from this prison of thought. I'm contorted and squirming from this unending tirade of consciousness. Please, *please*, let me rest.

## SOME POSITIVE THINGS (ADVICE FROM MOM)

I felt an oak leaf the other day. I put my palm on the trunk of a tree and felt the pulse of life in it. I finished one of my favorite books again. I have so many great friends and a family that loves me. I'm learning and I'm being challenged. I'm so excited for the future even though it's hard to see that right now. And I'm growing and I'm making progress even though it's hard to see that right now. And maybe I'll make coffee for myself tomorrow morning and I'll get to bicycle and read and write and I'm just really glad about a lot of things and this is just a small reminder to myself because I really got myself into Mood there for a hot second but now I'm back.

## VIBEEEEEEZ

There's a really sweet song playing and I'm about to make cake in a mug. How about THAT. Cake. In a mug. And my comforter is in the dryer and it will be right on time for me when I'm ready to fall asleep and I just got some new body wash and my sweatshirt is tucked into my sweatpants and I did all of my laundry and I balanced my budget and I ordered something online and if that isn't one hell of a perfect Sunday then damn.

VIBE CHECK: WOW I'M ACTUALLY FEELING BETTER AND  
I'M GONNA ROLL WITH THAT

I shaved my legs and now whenever I get goosebumps there's needles everywhere. It's enriching, being so intimately aware of what gets me excited. *Thinks about optimization problems* YES. THAT'S THE GOOD STUFF.

## A BRIEF REFLECTION ON THIS MONTH

So this has been really great. Not easy or particularly pleasant, but really great. There has just been a lot of growth and learning and thank goodness for that. I'm far from stagnant; no, I couldn't be further away from stagnant. The tidal pools of my mind are rippling with the wind and there's new life taking root there, stronger than before. This isn't the end or the beginning of anything, it just *is*. What a beautiful place to be, *here* and *now*.

I'M DANGEROUSLY CLOSE TO GETTING REALLY INTO  
CHESS AND I'M SO SO EXCITED ABOUT IT