

# TYLER NGUYEN

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Having exhausted all other reasonable alternatives for alleviating this pandemic-induced anhedonia, I've turned to journaling, shouting into the void with all the attendant narcissism. Expect disjointed thoughts every couple days.

Maybe part of the reason we tend to view the media landscape as a sort of vast landfill is how we're introduced to tropes. Few living have experienced the formative years of any popular artistic medium, and so we're inevitably introduced to tropes when they've already been abused to the point of (often inadvertent) parody. Consider how weighty piano bits are used to hamfistedly telegraph equally weighty emotional moments; at one point, this may have been novel and affecting, but decades later, ironic appreciation is the most you'd reasonably expect from *serious* people. Perhaps this is why some

mistake a general hostility towards earnestness for a keen critical eye.

I love murder shows, those fixtures of daytime television. By their nature and presentation, they impress upon viewers the leaden significance of the crime at hand, yet simultaneously undercut that perception with a self-aware proliferation of puns and stilted re-enactments. It's rather fitting for a genre which uses the backdrop of violent crime to present otherwise mundane happenings in sleepy towns and nondescript alleyways as lurid, frivolous, pulpy entertainment. Shows rarely feature compelling mysteries; the range of possibilities is rather narrow—the husband, the lecherous neighbor, the solitary highway cruiser—on par with the breadth of reasonable burrito bowl permutations at Chipotle rather than outcomes for a game of *Clue*, but they're tremendous, gratifying fun.