

## [Eveline Pye: Three Poems](#) [1]

April 11, 2016 [Math Poetry](#) [2]

### **Celestial Navigation**

a three-dimensional universe  
icosahedron  
suspended from the ceiling

a surge of electricity  
orange becomes yellow  
casts a bright shadow

a tiger moth is drawn inside  
this triangular world  
sun bulb at its center

its chitin wings slowly singe  
and it burns  
in the bliss of incongruence

### **Three**



grew in arithmetical series  
If my garden of numbers

then beyond the lawn

would be geometric  
my pink pencil would fill  
space with paper roses

clematis would climb  
the lover's arch  
bounded by thistles

we would grow  
away then together  
graft each onto the other

thistle clematis rose  
assisted reproduction  
a child with three parents

## **The Law of Statistics**

*for Sally Clark 1964 – 2007*

You, Sally Clark, solicitor,  
discover your son, Christopher  
dead in his Moses basket. Harry, born  
a year later, dies in his bouncy chair.

Pediatrician for the Crown,  
Sir Roy Meadow, tells the jury  
two cot deaths in the same family  
would occur only once in a century.

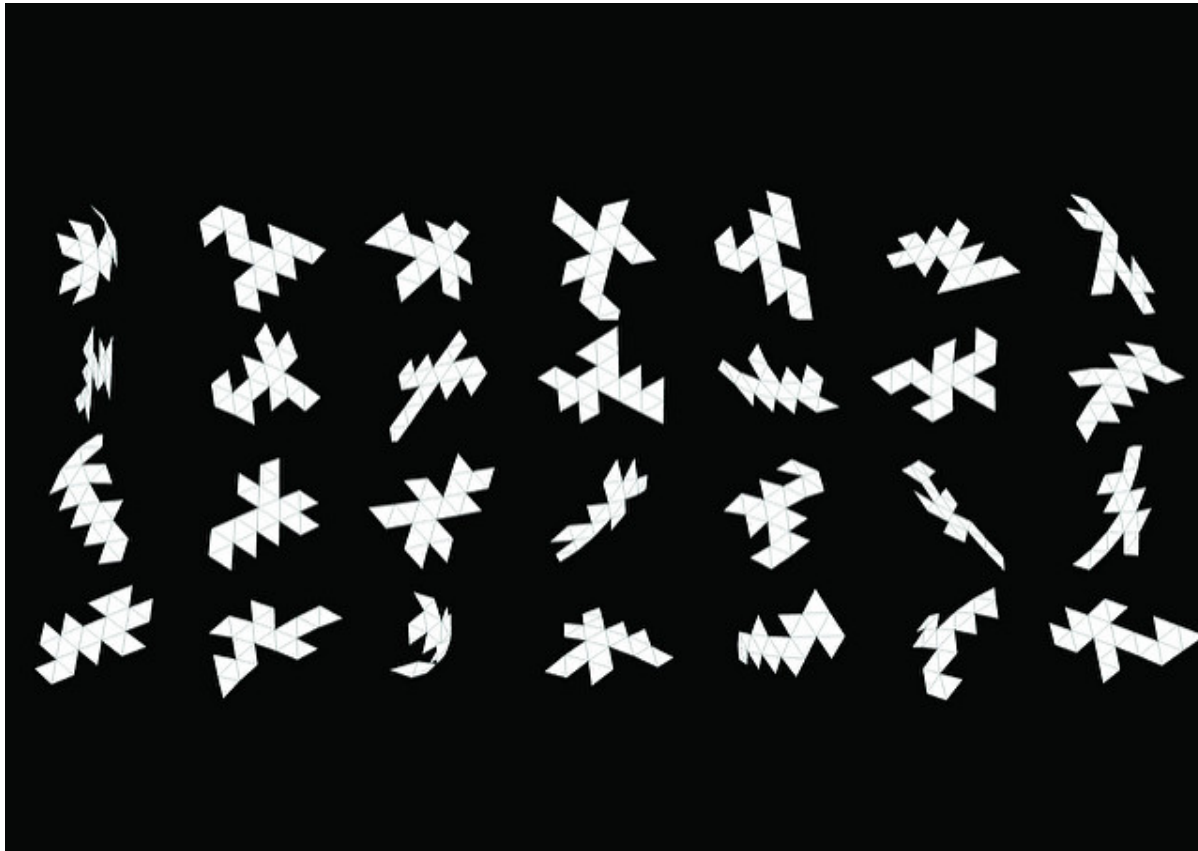
Odds are one in seventy-three million,  
lower than the lottery, beyond all  
reasonable doubt. An easy decision:  
*You must be guilty.*

At Styal Prison, the horde screams,  
*Here's the nonce! Die woman, die!*  
They bang on the door, clamber up,  
gawp as you cringe in a holding cell.

At the second appeal, your body  
is free but your mind has crumpled.  
You drink until you die,  
your third son, left without a mother.

I tell this story to my medical students,  
show death by natural causes  
was more likely than murder.

Silence



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Eveline Pye was an operational research analyst in the Zambian Copper Industry, before lecturing in statistics at Glasgow Caledonian University for 22 years. Her statistical poetry was featured in *Significance*, the joint magazine of the Royal Statistical Society and the American Statistical Association in their *Life in Statistics* series. Her poems appear in the *Bridges 2013 Poetry Anthology* (in the “Enschede” section, Tesselations Publishing). A collection about Zambia, [Smoke that Thunders](#) [4], was published by Mariscat Press in 2015.

## Eveline Pye: Three Poems

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[4] <http://www.mariscatpress.com/smokethatthunder.html>