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Dear Arithmetic

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Dear Arithmetic

Mary Soon Lee¹

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I'm sorry to hear of your difficulties,
your circumstances sadly reduced,
no one calling your number.

Algebra won't let you borrow from her,
the remainder of the old crowd
divided in these hard times.

Even my own children discount you,
as if you were beside the point
in this digital age.

Once you were first among equals,
place set at the head of the table,
an addition to every group.

I know we had our differences,
but I have not forgotten
how you carried us with you.

¹Mary Soon Lee writes both fiction and poetry, and once upon a time earned a degree in mathematics from Cambridge University. Her book *Elemental Haiku*, containing haiku for each element of the periodic table, was published by Ten Speed Press in October 2019. Her website is <http://www.marysoonlee.com> and she tweets at @MarySoonLee.