2020 AMS Math Poetry Contest

Outlier

The slick pen glides across paper
precisely scraping the ruler’s edge
marking a line beside many lonesome dots
a line of best fit as snug as a sweater.
The slope is a mere fraction, but the line it fabricated would stretch on,
emcompassing an infinite amount of graph paper.
As the line traveled, it would pass by many data points
and the wispy voices of the outliers would be heard on the wind
calling to the line from worlds away, asking it to contort
to come and gather the lonely dots, and hold them shaking in its tepid arms
but the line never does.
Instead, it continues on without a sideways glance
forever the same slope
forever the same straight line.

--- Sabrina Little, Mackintosh Academy, Boulder