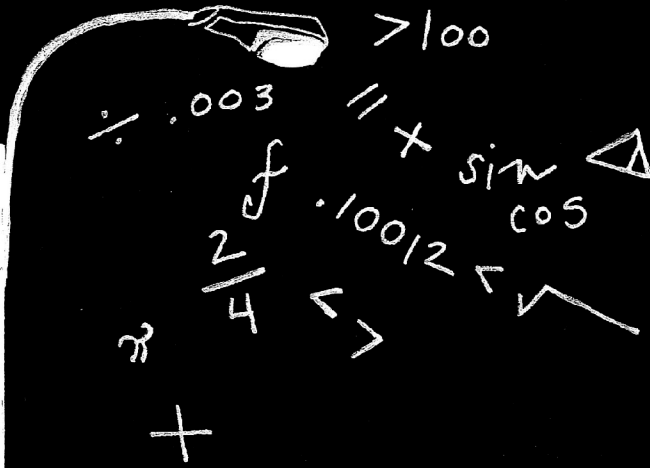


Mathematician Watching the Moths at an All-Night Gas Station



No happenstance us being here beneath the lamps.

You mistake this outpost for the moon,
I come to plot the trajectory of your error.

It's that simple.

And yet, night after night
I still know more of match smoke than of how you go.

It's the approximations that get me—

I'd say loneliness is about a 7 out of 10,
Maybe a little higher after the rain.

Well, you know about the rain.

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Poet **Paul McCormick** worked for many years as a clammer on the Great South Bay. He now writes literary passages for standardized tests. Artist **Kate Baird** lives in New York City where she paints and reads as much as possible.