

## Elegy for the Old Thinking

EMARI DIGIORGIO

When the theoretical physicist explains  
that he's found the same self-correcting codes  
in nature that run a browser,

I imagine the forsythia at my window  
administers a program for when to bloom  
or drop its leaves. Gravity's the odd man out,

which is to say that the apple will fall to ground  
as long as moon orbits earth. I tell my baby  
that the stars in the sky are not just lights

but places to go. The theoretical physicist says  
he was only trying to solve some problems  
that no one thought there were answers for.

He says learning supersymmetry is a bit  
like having babies: you focus on the benefits,  
not the pain. I think about the loss

of my childless life, and then, all of the times  
I thought I was essential before.  
Maybe that's the real loss. Outside my window,

the branches and roots cancel out each other,  
so all I see are electric yellow blossoms  
framed in green frond. When you ask a physicist

a question he'll give you a number and the range  
of uncertainty. If you ask me how old  
my daughter is, I'll say 12 weeks, two days,

but if I count back to conception, she's a full year,  
maybe 384 days, a range of uncertainty implied  
by my use of maybe. Somehow—perhaps

it's the same invisible pattern of zeros and ones  
pulsing in leaf vein—even when I sleep,  
my ears tune to hear her call, and since she's

so small, I know that when she cries,  
it's out of need. When she's older, it still  
will be need, though I'll miss holding her length

in the cradle of my arms, how my heartbeat  
is enough to sooth her to sleep. Make me the tree  
or the apple, let her be gravity or light.