

IGGY MCGOVERN

Algebra

Did his 'illustrious visitant' know I
Can trace my roots - no pun! - back to that nation?
Al-jabr of Musa al-Khwarizmi,
Which means, I'm told, in that tongue 'restoration'

Though some, of course, would look beyond the word
To give the precedence to Diophantus,
Who'd deemed the negatives to be absurd
And on whose book did one John Chortasmenos

A thousand years hence write this tart rebuff:
Your soul - I paraphrase - be damned in Hell
Because your theorems are just too damned tough!
and Fermat scribbled one last tease as well.

Let no such mockery dilute the glory
Of his stout contributions to my story

From *A Mystic Dream of 4* by Iggy McGovern, Quaternia Press, 2013