Muzzle

By Julia Salem

In a bleary part of town,
I traverse the blackboard silence of snow.

Through the slats of the cypresses
Flounce paper-white feathers of snow.

On the red leaves of my palms
Distend melted messages of snow.

The road is iron anvil
Stinging with sparks of snow.

My nocturnal heart thrums
In white wasp whir of snow.

Moonlight purls like nectar
Sweetening the blandness of snow.

Glaucous berries hang from the rowans
Like frostbitten pearls of snow.

Mice hide in the lee of alders,
Shirking the cold tusks of snow.

Shadows vine like crewelwork
On linen twill of snow.

Around your black spade pupil
Lurks an avalanche of snow.

I wish you’d toss your cards
Like fireworks against cumuli of snow.

Instead, my name catches in your throat,
Congealed in its amnion of snow.

Source: Poetry (December 2019)