

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 whirl 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)