White Box

By Frances Leviston

Of Tribulation, these are They,
Denoted by the White.

— Emily Dickinson

Pained, permanent
wakefulness

Exposed
in the split geode

a Santa’s grotto
Jagged milk
quartz crusts
constitute
every surface —
a mouth
all teeth
self-sharpening
like sea urchins’ —
“Uncomfortably beautiful”
toughened glass
spikes
in the doorways
of award-
winning offices
— rough
sleepers from the womb
condemned
to make of anything succulent
rock
of porticoes
iron maidens

Source: Poetry (March 2018)
Frances Leviston’s Disinformation was published by Picador in 2015. She lectures at the University of Manchester.

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