

Fitzgerald Park, December

Samuel Wingfield-Karpowitz

One yellow rose furls itself
as the finial of its dark
thorny stalk, and the world
of the garden does not wish
to heal, or sweeten, but to dwell,
to quietly live. Swaddled people
hunch on the pondside benches
like boulders. Bread torn, tossed, white
gulls, snow globe. Something here
outside of words. Something
near this way of love: a boy,
smooth-faced, unpockets
his chalky hands to reach
for his girl, and she draws back.
His lips move, she stills.
Dusky mallards in the pond
flip tails-up for dinner. With fingertips
he tugs the soft ends
of her knit blue hat down
over the bottoms of her ears,
which have become the same
salmon color as the sky.