

ROSALYN STEWART

Red Poem

That night
I drank too much
red wine

The man in the room with me
had been my lover
for three years
and he told me to take off
my long winter coat
and he told me to get into bed

and he told me to put the bottle down,
I had already drunk too much
red wine.

and that was when I slurped it
bottle-neck-pure Bette Davis style
and sat back down in the cold snow
of my skin, the brittle branch
of my spine needling the igloo wall.

In the parking lot new lovers wrestled
against the gravity of their clothes.
That was us once, I thought
searching the jacket he always wore
for smokes and finding none.

“Put down the bottle,” he repeated
not at all smiling and, eventually, I did.