

Robert Golden

First Snow

The field's brown stubble, burned over by an absconding sun,
a rusted red tractor, plow attached, ruminating at its edge.
The diesel's steady, soft churning shakes its sturdy bones.
It is nearly immortal, inured to seasons' inevitability,
waiting to turn the damp, cold, intransigent soil,
its fecundity shot, comatose, primed to freeze.
She wonders: where is the driver?
No answer in the rising wind.
Seriously gray clouds gather in mourning.
The scene's from a film by Bela Tarr,
unrepentant landscapes in the longest of shots

The woman now alone wandered here, walking her dog.
She has the time to be aimless.
Something taps her forehead, lingers soft and wet.
She lifts her head, curious, expectant.
It's snow, in no hurry, no reason to rush,
just snow quietly opening a door.
The field will whiten, brighten, seem brand new.
Every year she looks for an omen
in this mere promise of white abundance.
She knows the earth turns, tilts. We hold on.
The diesel keeps rhythm, still without its driver.

Robert Golden's poetry has appeared in such journals as *California State Poetry Quarterly*, *Exquisite Corpse*, *The Eclectic Muse*, and *Lake Effect*. In 2016 his poem "The Call" was set to original music and performed in a podcast by *Music for Prose*. He also writes nonfiction and has a blog, micromanagedblues.com, where he writes occasionally on the contemporary work environment. He is a resident of New Bern, North Carolina and the editor of the *Carteret Writers* newsletter