

Cuyahoga
County
**Public
Library**

By Chuck Carlise

STREET GHAZAL

There was music in the stillness, white noise from the street.

Our whole lives condensed: boulders pressed to gravel in the street.

From my bed, the winter of no heat, waking under small
mountains of patchwork blankets, shivering at the buses on the street.

She sends me a line from Kundera: "Road: A strip of ground over which
one walks." Adds, "not a location, a starting point, *your house, my street?*"

At dusk, cicadas sing loud as air-raid sirens. Puddles gather orange light
from street lamps, then scatter it, like tongues of flame in the street.

I don't remember the day I stopped saying her name. Below the window:

leaf-rustle underfoot, a screen door rattling shut, quiet in the street.

Sometimes I'm aware how the past accumulates – dead versions of the self,
like a ticket line behind you, thru the house, to the porch, into the street.

Too many people. Too much rain. I cough coal-dust all week. She
is absent already. It will not be okay. London is a cab in the street.