

Risotto

Our creation of savoury risotto
required aromatic herbs to be
freshly picked and roughly chopped;
chestnut mushrooms and spicy
home-grown onions sliced
meticulously just the way
you showed me. So dreamily
then I stirred the sticky rice,
anticipating our bottle of Sancerre.

On hearing screeching brakes,
I left our fragrant risotto
cooling on the stove.
In the framed picture
of the window
(a winter Watteau)
I glimpsed the collision.
The transitory stillness drove
a stalagmite through my heart.
Frantic knocking on the door
galvanised me into action.
The boy's windmill semaphore
bade me follow him.
I was escorted, aproned
but jacketless, my slippered
feet over-typed his footprints
towards the jumbled scene.

I see it still. A flurry of rice-white
snow petals obliterating skid marks,
delaying paramedics, settling shroud-like
on your boots. Chaos all around
is soft-footed but deadly.
I cradled you in my arms
protecting you from the
predatory gaze of onlookers.

Formalities followed protocol.

Steadily, slowly the years have drifted by,
but softly wafting odours of risotto
still silence my tongue. The fragmented
image of chalky grains chokes
my throat with its unsavoury cremation.