

Byron Beynon

The Spanish Steps, Rome

i.m. John Keats 1795-1821

The afternoon ends,
an open bedroom window
looks down at razor-dressed Italians,
guide book tourists,
a stall ablaze with flowers.
The boat-shaped fountain by Pietro Bernini,
aground near the Spanish Steps
is broken and boarded.
The calm insides of No.26
Piazza di Spagna retain
books of poetry, portraits,
life and death masks,
a letter from a President,
the brief note signed by Thomas Hardy,
each the formal remains of another age
on display.
The fireplace is like ice
in these repaired rooms
where the furniture was taken and burnt,
the walls scraped.
I stand in a small space
where death entered at eleven o'clock,
then leave by the staircase
he painfully climbed.
A life lived for poetry echoes and says
“that which is creative must create itself.”

Byron Beynon lives in Wales. His poems have appeared in numerous publications including Agenda, Chicago Poetry Review, Poetry Wales, Quadrant, The French Literary Review, Poetry Ireland Review and Emprise Review (USA). Recent collections include Cuffs (Rack Press) and Nocturne In Blue (Lapwing Publications), both launched at the Dylan Thomas Centre. He has also been co-editor of the poetry magazine, Roundyhouse. He was also involved in coordinating the Wales' contribution to the poetry anthology Fifty Strong (Heinemann), which was a project to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the South Bank Centre's poetry library at the Royal Festival Hall, London.

