

The Eye of John Keats in Rome

For hours it stands in the window
once in a while it throws itself onto the Spanish Steps
or into the Tiber

if onto the steps
it bursts and then returns intact
like a gel medusa to the dark-skinned palm of a street vendor

if into the water
it swims and then flies to dry its wings
it sweeps the Hadrian arches of the bridges
the sky of the Vatican domes
the horizons' caravans of stone pines

in the evening it orders the same wine
in the same bar
at last it returns to the window and writes on the pane with its finger

the crowds on the steps won't let it sleep
it doesn't know what to do next
so it starts all over

from the pupil
from the core

translated by Ewa Hryniewicz-Yarbrough

Krystyna Lenkowska