Spring’s chill air seeps into
the bedsit where the radio announces:
Soviet officials have admitted
that a nuclear accident took place...

In the Ukraine people evacuate
their homes temporarily.
(It is just a precaution –
all is contained.)

In the afternoon, she roasts
spring lamb for their dinner.
Places sprigs of rosemary
into the scored fat of its skin.

He drives to the shops
for carrots and cigarettes
and returns hours later with
beer on his breath.

They learn that Reactor Four
suffered a catastrophic
power increase leading to
an explosion in its core.

Over dinner, she smoulders.
There are no carrots and not enough
colour to balance the greens
and brown gravy. They eat in silence

as a cloud crosses a continent
and a sea and rains down
chemicals that contaminate
next year’s lamb.

Sharon Kernot

Sharon Kernot. ‘London - April, 1986’.
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