

The Visitors

We are heavy with gravy and Christmas disappointment,
when in flies the messenger through the French window
charming us with his furious curses, taking the cake.

An almond rolls into a new beginning. We try a box-set
until the old traveller stumbles past, cracked boots
spilling sand. He roars in language we can't understand.

We return our attention to the murder on the screen -
we've seen it all before. But now small hooves
are thundering towards us, crashing through glass

to land on the Axminster. It is the terrible donkey,
the one we all ignore and she is raging,
reeking of journey, braying her unstoppable heartache

disconsolate, the wild-eyed baby clinging to her ears.
We rush for towels, warm blankets, heat the milk.