

Having brunch with my friends

by Steven Pirani

I ordered biscuits and gravy
at the Sunset Grill,

Just before the Amber Alert hit,
and our phones screamed out.

Through their food
everyone looked at their feet:

An infant,
1-year-and-9-months, missing with
her father,
24 years.

In an instant,
our meals are cold,
and the air in the room
sinks to the floor.

Death is on our plates,
and it's touching my potatoes.

Panicked,
the room inhales and swallows.
It eats the dead and unburies the air,
and drowns the face of death
in yolk and gravy.

Oh, and what a lovely meal it was

—They found her in Onondaga Creek,
in a little yellow bag—

though we were rushed from our table
before we could digest.

