

Chicken Stir-Fry with a Misguided Christian Friend

Gristle clings to the meat and begs
for a sharp knife to slice it clean.
It goes raw into the wok and spits

off droplets broken free by the sudden heat.
It changes color, grows red-faced
as if embarrassed—or angry—to so soon be colliding

in the hot bath with broccoli, carrot, and water chestnut.
One thick cauliflower resists the urging
of the wooden spoon to mix.

It is frozen harder than the others and clings
high up on the side of the bowl, as if afraid.
It fights to retain its pure white color,

missing the point that it is made better—
not worse—from the sizzling heat and the
influence of the other vegetables.

Eventually it joins the pleasant mixture
And sends up a pleasant smell
into the small yellow-walled kitchen.

A splash of aromatic sauce brings it all
to life and we place bowl, fork, and water on the table.
He talks of nothing but how Jesus will one day
separate Wheat from Chaff.