# O SOLE MIO!

NEEMAN SOBHAN

I want to rush outdoors and fling my arms out to the clear blue sky and embrace the sun. Finally! After a chain of soggy days and sodden nights of continuous and torrential rain, the sun is back.

Today, I am going around humming the song considered the most trite in the repertoire of any Italian singer; and which we Roman residents normally eye-roll at in a restaurant when a guitar-strumming, tourist-focused entertainer comes around to the table, and to the tune of Elvis' 'It's Now or Never' launches soulfully into: yes, 'O! Sole Mio!' or My Own Sun!

But today, the morning after the night before, when Rome was put on high alert for threat of the Tiber overflowing its banks, and citizens were urged to stay home and not venture into the city centre that spreads around the normally shallow Tiber, I finally noticed the words of the old Neapolitan song. Simple and timely, they spoke my feelings:

*'Che bella cosa na jurnata 'e sole,*
*n'aria serena doppo na tempesta!'*
(What a wonderful thing a sunny day,
the serene air after a storm!)

And what a storm it was, disgorging tons of water along with a whiplash of wind, as if the sky were one gigantic gargoyle spewing the wrath of heavens in the form of hailstorm and churning rain.

Two days ago, it was declared that Rome had seen more rain in one night than in a whole month. It was the night when many houses in Rome were flooded, including the neighbourhood we live in, which is a very pretty but low-lying area of Rome. So, parts of the basement apartment we built at the level of the back garden of our villa, were partially flooded.

Laura and Massimiliano, the sweet young couple who rent the place from us, were amazingly calm and collected when at two o' clock at night they called us to say that there was water inside the apartment. As landlords it was our duty to do something, but other than sloshing down to them with our concern and sympathy and wait-

