

## Lee Nash – Two Poems

### Chinese lanterns

These Chinese lanterns in my head  
need pruning back. I find the letter,

pressed flower inert –  
geranium masks the scent of deceit.

The first time, I fill the bath;  
steam mingles with my out-breath;

crackled orange paper  
stains my damp body. I find you over

in the ornamental shadows;  
the moon waits for our blows.

All the ripeness in me longs  
for the breaking of the cage.

### Two-star mini-break

He spreads two fresh towels on the bed  
for our impromptu supper –

a giant orange octopus eyes us through a porthole.

We drink coconut and banana juice.  
His left foot is pigeon.

When we've put away king-size batards  
he lies width-ways across the mattress.

Receding; breath slightly liverish;  
one more thing will dissuade me –

he snatches my daughter's phone  
as quick as the stonefish we saw on wide-screen.

I'm back in the queue –  
he's pressing the tension out of my shoulders  
as a way to pass the time.

I decide to leave my stars at the planetarium,  
the magic to the illusionist.

I jam the sprung-door with my foot –  
we peck nervously at each other,  
decide a time for breakfast.

She chooses the top bunk. The heating goes off.

**Lee Nash** lives in France and freelances as an editorial designer for a UK publisher. Her poems have appeared or are forthcoming in print and online journals in the UK, the US and France including *Angle*, *Black Poppy Review*, *Brittle Star*, *Ink*, *Sweat and Tears*, *Orbis*, *Poetry Salzburg Review*, *Sentinel Literary Quarterly*, *The Dawntreader*, *The French Literary Review*, *The Interpreter's House*, *The Journal (UK)*, *The Lake* and *The World Haiku Review*. You can find a selection of her poetry at [leenash@poetry.com](mailto:leenash@poetry.com).