

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.