

Winner: 'Visitation'  
(split prize) P.S. Cottier

## Visitation

He picked them up, just as before,  
the four year old and the nine.  
*How quiet he is, like a ghost*, she thought.  
Seat-strapped and hushed, the trio left:  
the man and the girl and the boy.

Chips, chicken, a sip of coke,  
a little cough mixture, disguised,  
to ease the way for the boy and the girl.  
He plugged the pipe with a chamois,  
once used for the car's high sheen.

They slumped into forever, gases  
slipping them out through belts,  
through the tight-sealed panes of glass.  
They will stay four and nine now,  
and he lodged at thirty-three.

Haunted by visitations  
she sees the boy and the girl,  
waving from the garden's edge.  
The father never appears though,  
divorced even from dreams.