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.