

LEANNE DUNIC

# Every November, Persimmons

Split: a star-like reflection.  
Flesh like the fire-belly of a newt,  
only since coming each autumn  
have I taken to swallow firm  
fresh mouthfuls, the jam-insides  
of others sun-dried.

My tree bears no shapes  
of pumpkins, acorns,  
hearts.

Year wanes, forest like dead moss  
branched, bamboosed, deciduous  
tomb-embedded slopes.  
Valleys fold, mountain. Ages  
since I've seen these orchards  
blushed with blossoms. Instead,  
same crimson vines retain another  
cemetery. Penetrate overlong tunnels  
to reach where the river tumbles  
and gravestones are made.



Lucinda Cowing



He's always there, waiting. Carts  
my luggage up narrow metal stairs.  
The mechanics of each other's language  
rusted. Before dusk, we savour  
persimmon cakes in the square of  
a ginkgo-gilded park.

He peels skin, slices hard-petaled tops,  
leaves stem to tie into curtains of orange  
strung onto bamboo poles. As they dry  
he honeys their flesh with his touch  
readying their pulpy, jelly inside.

Dried, they can keep for nearly a year.

November. *Happy Birthday.*  
A single shrunken offering.  
Its malleable body crusted  
with white crystals.

