

she's just walked through hanging garlands  
artificial colourful flowers  
draped in a doorway  
in bright yellows  
pinks  
dark olive green  
as it brushes past her she is transported  
back to being seven years old with her younger brother  
and sisters  
excitedly pulling out beautiful pleated shapes  
concertinaed cut carefully from paper  
squares in circles  
shiny and matt  
then hung on the ceiling stretched diagonally  
from corner to corner  
criss crossing  
lowering the ceiling  
the arch decorated single colourful chinese lanterns  
the wood fire was roaring  
the old record player was booming  
snow was falling silently outside  
it was the start of the countdown  
to Christmas

Jo Beth Gray