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## Five Poems

by Simon Perchik

### It's evening outside

It's evening outside the burn unit  
where this snapshot grafted in place  
still cools the gutted page  
has absorbed its memory :the album  
all night filling with smoke  
though the engine stopped and you  
are standing alone, smiling.

To the side a faithful tree  
with no leaves and those goggles  
don't help --not yet but someday  
a dependable dressing you will hear  
years later as this tree still young  
hear there were summers and rain.

Someone is working on it, a paper  
you can eat in the open  
and once in your bloodstream  
rolls around and around  
with all that laughter you forgot  
as warm as if yesterday  
--you must be having a great time.

### Though over the doorway

Though over the doorway  
an old horseshoe clinks  
empties inside a single nail

keeping it warm --a small room  
a stove, the iron pot  
covered with a ceiling

used to a door  
that opens and closes  
for no reason at all

collects what's around  
left out for good luck  
then winter

--even in the cold  
you sleep on this kitchen floor

Editor's Note

Guidelines

Contact

with its invisible nails

and creaking side to side  
the way the sun is struck  
one morning to the next

then back after the burial  
--a clear advantage  
--you don't give the sun a chance

let it burn as the faint scent  
from oak flooring  
--you have to make it work.

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### As if you could untie each finger

As if you could untie each finger  
let go so your fist  
would drift till it's empty

the way all roads lean  
and once into the turn  
you check for snow and falling rocks

that never fall except as sand  
and salt from ocean mist  
and those bonfires all night

lit along the shore  
--with just one hand you fight back  
wring from this curve in the road

the huge truck rushing past  
filled half with water, half  
with seabirds, half with another sky

hacked out for more mountainside  
--you are forever finding turns  
that come back to you as dirt

overflow with its darkness  
its thirst with no room  
not a breath, not a word, nothing.

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### This feeble kitchen match

This feeble kitchen match  
leans the way a magician's cane  
strikes the stage in flames  
doves and all, shaking more dust

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from that same darkness  
each match shares with stars  
left behind, in there somewhere

and your chest snap open  
for those jack-in-the-box flowers  
stretching out, confident  
the dirt is warm, has no other use

--you will explode, give up everything  
become an offering and the ice under you  
weaker and weaker set out  
for any minute now and your arm.

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### Again this curve comes loose

Again this curve comes loose  
--head-on with the hillside  
lifted into your arms

though you dead still listen  
for those cars stopping by  
in rags, emptied as if a flat

would make the difference  
become a bubble, breathe  
the way a stone will fit

inch by inch into your mouth  
guide the Earth safely down  
to lay your fingers on

--you sift for leaks you can use  
over and over, facing you  
the louder the better.

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**Simon Perchik** is an attorney whose poems have appeared in *Partisan Review*, *The Nation*, *Poetry*, *The New Yorker*, and elsewhere.

His most recent collection is *Almost Rain*, published by River Otter Press (2013). For more information, including free e-books, his essay titled "Magic, Illusion and Other Realities," please visit his website at [www.simonperchik.com](http://www.simonperchik.com).

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