

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/2

SIMON PERCHIK

Steve, I send on 5 poems for your consideration. Best, Si.

*

This shadow half iron, half
reaching out, breaking loose
--with both hands the hands

that no longer come for you
and in their place the dirt
grows back together

--in such a wound you die
in two places at the same time
make a path for the sky

you remember and underneath
--nothing but your arms
tearing each other apart

--handful by handful there's room
for a little more shadow
a little more you can say.

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/2

*

The rain climbing along your wrist
makes it seem easy --you breathe
through your hand, for two

--it helps to wet your eyelids
look where water has taken root
in pieces, knows how to grieve

the way your arm throws out
its still warm breezes and each morning
heavier --dirt learned this long ago

still fills your mouth with the word
for sister so nothing
can break without thirst

or blossom or with your hand
crushing you for more tears
and morning after morning.

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/2

*

You must enjoy the risk
swallowing rainwater, splashing
so close to the ground

wait alone for the train
you know is never in time
can't rub the tracks dry

or keep you from leaning too far
--it's the chance you take, wave
--sometimes waves, sometimes for nothing.

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/2

*

You mourn the way this sand
has no strength, keeps warm
between one day and another

and your closed hands
that need the place
left by a small stone

dropping slowly in water
though what rests here
is the emptiness already mist

and nothing starts again
--you dig as if this beach
blossoms once your fingers

open and these dead
lose their way among the flowers
that no longer come home

--you kneel easily now
pulled down by your shadow
following head first as rain

heavier and heavier
tracing a face with just your lips
and worn out nod.

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/2

*

You have this kinship, the limp
balances you and the Earth
already blossoming

with nothing under it
though you lift one foot
closer to the other

hillside after hillside
the way mud settles and clots
--you're used to losing, come

so this cane can grab your hand
almost in time and what's left
above the ground, knows

you're drowning, in rain
stops and starts, in dirt
and tells you everything.

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/2

*

This shadow half iron, half
reaching out, breaking loose
--with both hands the hands

that no longer come for you
and in their place the dirt
grows back together

--in such a wound you die
in two places at the same time
make a path for the sky

you remember and underneath
--nothing but your arms
tearing each other apart

--handful by handful there's room
for a little more shadow
a little more you can say.

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/2

*

The rain climbing along your wrist
makes it seem easy --you breathe
through your hand, for two

--it helps to wet your eyelids
look where water has taken root
in pieces, knows how to grieve

the way your arm throws out
its still warm breezes and each morning
heavier --dirt learned this long ago

still fills your mouth with the word
for sister so nothing
can break without thirst

or blossom or with your hand
crushing you for more tears
and morning after morning.

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/2

*

You must enjoy the risk
swallowing rainwater, splashing
so close to the ground

wait alone for the train
you know is never in time
can't rub the tracks dry

or keep you from leaning too far
--it's the chance you take, wave
--sometimes waves, sometimes for nothing.

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/2

*

You mourn the way this sand
has no strength, keeps warm
between one day and another

and your closed hands
that need the place
left by a small stone

dropping slowly in water
though what rests here
is the emptiness already mist

and nothing starts again
--you dig as if this beach
blossoms once your fingers

open and these dead
lose their way among the flowers
that no longer come home

--you kneel easily now
pulled down by your shadow
following head first as rain

heavier and heavier
tracing a face with just your lips
and worn out nod.

Wilderness House Literary Review 6/2

*

You have this kinship, the limp
balances you and the Earth
already blossoming

with nothing under it
though you lift one foot
closer to the other

hillside after hillside
the way mud settles and clots
--you're used to losing, come

so this cane can grab your hand
almost in time and what's left
above the ground, knows

you're drowning, in rain
stops and starts, in dirt
and tells you everything.