

Three Poems by Simon Perchik

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One hand held out --you expect
it to end pressed against a rain
already mixed with turns

and falling too far
--what you will remember
is how this road died down

though you needed both hands
when it counted
the way these handlebars

still reach for a quiet place
and the sound your arms make
when holding close --she

would forget with you
what's ahead, sometimes
dripping, sometimes she would lean

as far as possible
without touching your bones
or make room.

*

These waves still surface, not sure
it's her lips that open and close, kept moist

though you can't hear her voice

scented with rotting wood, weeds
and bottom sand --you row this boat
left, right, swinging your arms

half moonlight, half almost makes out
the words rising from empty shells
and the dress you first saw her in

--you need more arms, clear summer nights
from that inch by inch love song
heavier than these overgrown paths

no longer listening for her forehead
that once anchored the Earth
and water too knows what it has

reeling from a gentle stroke, another
another, facing the sky
it leaves behind, caressing her hair

her breasts, her shimmering --some nights
you can hear her, one by one
--some nights it's colder, colder.

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You come by though the hole
has no other place to go
waits behind this ice-packed dirt

left over from when the sun
had no choice either, spreading out
as emptiness, the last resort

--this hole must sense it will die
the way the sun died, was buried
in the open, alone, circling down

strangely quiet with nothing to cling to
except the endless under and under
just to reach winter, to lift

and care for it --you visit the left out
built from years and years
but you are asking the impossible

with just your fingers --on tiptoe
would make it easier, anything
would make it easier.

Simon Perchik is an attorney whose poems
have appeared in *Partisan Review*,
The Nation, *The New Yorker*, and elsewhere.
For more information, including free e-
books, his essay titled “Magic, Illusion and
Other Realities” and a complete
bibliography, please visit his website at
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