

Simon Perchik

AND WINTER

And winter as when musicians
crouch, calling down
— the drummer keeps turning away
and the darkness
that can't forget anything

— I listen for tracks, for the stones
that will die and nothing reach home
except some wheel through the snow
— the guy with the piano can't see

or stand or slowly sent ahead
— each hand weighted down
or the breath that now comes only in shadows, always cold

always these small birds
brushed from my ears
making room, letting go

and the emptiness at last at home
— one stone burned for all the others
the way coal all winter
sends for the sun, for the mornings
for the cold.

DON'T ASK THE PIANO PLAYER

Don't ask the piano player
— with just one finger and the sand
crying in a dark place — he'll say

they're names, that every song
is a love song, you use
both arms at first.

What's left is his fingertip
dry, dragged, some spark
will ignite that desert, great dunes

bloodstained and his heart
back to pumping water, cool, clear
— don't ask how long ago

— he only points to that sea sill on fire
deep red, to the thirst
you never stop hearing and wait.

