

# I Take Out The Garbage

*by* Daniel Harris

When I was five,

My mother, who was pregnant with my second brother,  
Asked me to take out the garbage.

I took out the garbage.

When I was ten,

My mother, who was pregnant with my sister,  
Asked me to take out the garbage.

I took out the garbage.

When I was a teenager,

Living at home, my father said,  
Washing the dishes and taking out the garbage  
Are your chores.

I took out the garbage,

When I lived alone,

I took out the garbage.

When I was married,

I took out the garbage.

When I was divorced,

I took out the garbage.

When I remarried,

I took out the garbage.

My wife is now blind,

I cook the meals,

I clean the house.

I take out the garbage.

Last night,

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Available online at *«<http://fictionaut.com/stories/daniel-harris/i-take-out-the-garbage>»*

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I took out the garbage.  
A neighbor saw me,  
Do you always take out the garbage?

Yes, but I like the cool night air,  
I have done it all my life.  
You have a life of garbage,  
She said. I replied,  
A poet takes the garbage out.

