

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,

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.

