**3 songs about perfection**

1

i was there for my blood work

i waited there, in bored anticipation

a child’s voice came to me

i’m helping her, it said

a small boy was watching wide-eyed as the nurse drew blood

from a thin woman

at length it was my turn

i took my seat beside the nurse

the boy came to watch

can i help you he said

are you scared?

of course i am, i said

you can help me

the nurse prepared my arm

wrapped her rubber thong about me

‘til my veins were bulging in protest

the boy took my big hand

in both of his and squeezed

don’t be scared he said

the nurse pushed the instrument deep into me

he stared over the desk, clutching my hand

rapt in fascination

does it hurt?

it hurts, but you’re helping me, i told him

blood shot into the tube

his eyes never wavered

finally the needle was withdrawn

thank you, my friend, i said

did i help you, he asked?

you helped me very much, i told him

the nurse gave him a sticker

i have a sticker already he said, and handed it to me

thank you i said

but you should have two stickers, for helping me

i got up

put on my coat

went to the door

he ran ahead of me, his small head at hip-level

he pulled open the heavy door and held it for me

thank you again, i said, you are very kind

as i walked away, i heard him call out to his mother

i helped the big man

i felt huge

2

i was having the chili combo at Tim’s

(only a Canadian will understand)

listening to the swirl of conversation in the crowded place

love, death, pain and donuts

there was a girl, maybe 7, at the next table

she was full of high-pitched laughter

i had no idea what she was talking about

it didn’t matter

she stopped

silent

i want to kiss you daddy, she said

every table around us went quiet

i turned to look

and saw that everyone else had also

she got down from her chair,

sliding off the edge until her feet touched the floor

walked around the table to where her father sat

pulled at him until he lowered his face to her level

kissed him as only a child can

walked further around her table

kissed her brother, who was paying no attention at all

went back to her chair and climbed up

the hum of conversation resumed

we returned to our bits of dough and caffeine

the little girl smiled, her gifts bestowed

3

my mother gave my nephew a fistful of change

he ran to me, his hand held high

jumped onto my knee, pushing my computer aside

opened his hand, to show me his treasure

shiny, new things, unworn by previous hands

fresh from the bank

bubby m’a donné des sous, he said [[1]](#footnote-2)

i looked again

there were quarters, dimes, nickels

loonies and toonies

only a sprinkling of pennies

he didn’t care what they were worth

they were shiny, new things, useful

to trade one day for sugar

a penny was as good as a dime

and he was rich beyond his dreams

1. bubby gave me pennies [↑](#footnote-ref-2)