

Mirrors/srorriM

by Darryl Price

It's weird to be here. I wonder if you
are here too. You'd probably say oh that
was years ago. And you would be right. But
I like the things we believed in then. Some
of them I still do. You're old I guess. You
were so pretty and golden in your new
bathing suit. And I was too skinny from
smoking too much and eating too little.
But I was always up for writing you
another lovesong. I don't know if we had

troubled minds. We had aching hearts. And there
didn't seem to be much relief for that.
But still we laughed a lot. And we knew how
to take care of each other. That's something.
I don't like to hear the people calling
other people monsters. It makes me think
of broken mirrors. Trees full of them. Stars
flashing them like knives. Windows on houses
where no one has seen a living face in
years. It's weird to be here, incapable

of talking with you without missing the
smallest things, except through a bunch of typed
out words on a computer screen. I used
to love my typewriter. The way it pressed
each letter deep into the paper's dough,
the crowded sentences starting to line
up like chattering concert goers with
thrills and unknown expectations in their
eyes. We held hands once and it seemed like the

only safe thing that made any real sense

to me in the world. Now I'm like one of those guys walking alone on the beach, no big dog, no favorite frisbee, just a goofy fishing hat and some sunglasses. Not wanting to know what time it is, but being able to tell any way by the color of the sand and sea. You learn a few solid things and try to forget everything else. It's weird to be here. I'm still me. I wonder if you're still you. The

you that was the most beautiful person in the room of beautiful people. I liked looking for you. And I liked finding you. It's weird to be here. Now is such a far away place to be. And here isn't much better. I wanted to say that I'm sorry, but I don't know what for. We had dreams that came and asked us to get into different cars. I didn't want you to go with them. I didn't trust them, but I

trusted you. It's weird to be here. The world is still as cruel as a snake. It hasn't gotten any kinder. I hope it has been kind to you. Weird. But not so wrong I suppose. You knew how to smile. Everyone said so. I admired that about you. My crookedly round face could only try to almost get it right, feeling mostly out of place in every place, except when I was anywhere with you. Not so much a

miracle, let them say, but we know, it
was our little secret. It's weird. I made
it into the poetry papers, but
you're not here to read them. It's weird to be
here. It's not where I thought I'd be. It's a
rotten town everywhere you go. But I
wouldn't call it a wasted life. We just
didn't know it would call us to leave each
other forever to the other side
of the moon. But I look up and I smile.

Bonus poem:

Goodbye Bees by Darryl Price(first unrevised draft)

Try to understand. There were real dragons. Some were friendly, but
they were fire-breathing dragons after all. You didn't want to end up
standing on the wrong side of a spilled belch. Try to
understand. The barefoot woman standing in the grass just outside
her garden gate was perfect for the sun, perfect for
any wind. Her hair was like a noble flag calling you
to enlist your heart into something more caring than corrupt. Like a
grand slam to the side of the head. Bees barely
noticed. Birds typed the words you felt, above her unenlisted head,
high in the clouds, with their sing-song beaks on full

tattletale throttle. Try to understand. We were just boys. We had
barely thought more deeply about what we were doing than seeing
the invitation. Only the adventure itself ever took us farther
away from our own skins. Down the stairs. Down the road. Suddenly
we were
holding on for dear life. Trying to understand frustration. This

was something new. And hurt in ways no gun could
ever hope to protect us from. Bees elbowed their way
past our frozen stampede like we were made of flimsy daisy
chains. Try to understand. We were watching paintings coming to
life. Try. We were the lovers of love. Our hands and faces were

for us, only for each other to see. Bees buzzed around
everyone's heads. The barefoot woman moved into a beautiful
house
and stayed behind its white picket windows forever. We were
young dreamers breathing in space together. You blew my mind. Is
this
the place we made a secret plan to always appreciate
the bees? The heart breaks. It's a crime. No one
claims to have seen anything. The heart breaks. No one
understands. No one comes. Our hands. Our faces. Our bees.
I got on my tiger. What else was I going
to do? He is now my only true friend. Good company though.

