

A Lovely Ghost Sings a Haunting Thing at Her Own Reflection

by Darryl Price

We've come this far. That's all we know. We've watched others reach their abrupt ends. They've given us this exact moment and we've taken it from them, sometimes without thinking.

It's time for the next communication. I know what concern is when it is all you can do, all you can think and feel, but also everything you miss about certain summer stars, certain wild winds, certain blowing grasses, those certain familiar changing pools you must step in to reach your arms around someone at last again and again. This original cool depth stays with you like an expanding emptiness

that widens over time into a great basin of loneliness. You have no choice but to sit down in it eventually and sob out the bitterness or give up completely. They don't understand this any better now than they did before you were taken by a lovely ghost on a hill, or glimpsed the truth of your own hollow heart in a stone blockaded window, or brought to your senses like an inviting sunset only in a sound like a dream. These things always hurt, but still they will chide you for not playing the latest game as it is written down. The one

thing they hate above all others is when someone doesn't

believe in their Holiday spirits. I should know. If what
the sea is when the only other person you can
be with who doesn't care about your impending health issues
because in the moment you are together there is only
the issue of true happiness and how to spend it
wants nothing more than your company at any given time.
Let's go together to that spot. I know what loss
is —an ancient city, a cricket's leg, a circle. And
above all that, a great swirl of birds doing nothing.

Bonus poem:

The Search for Falling Streamers

by Darryl Price

I search for the music, but I get in the
way. I search for the music, but I don't know
why. I'd like to get rid of this aftertaste. Replace
it with the stink and noise of something burning in
just this moment and nowhere else, a candle of our
own choosing. These things are all like small vacations taken
on the wings of moths. By morning you have to
swear to yourself that they were real and not something

you heard against the pillow as you were nodding off.
I search for the music, but all I get is
an ache that punctuates my thinking like a sailboat so
far out to sea all I can see is my
belief in sailboats wrapped up in some glittering spot on

the bouncing horizon like a long forgotten dream. You can't keep calling that a lie. It's more than that, although the definitions do seem to dance through the dawning curtains

like falling streamers, one after the other, until you'll take any one of them over all of them at once.

I search for the music, but it keeps reminding me that it no longer resembles the living, so what am I to do with all these leftover shells? I don't want to start a hut at my age. You've seen it all before anyway. The sea coughs up its tablets to anyone willing to swallow them, but it makes no

guarantee to the bridesmaid. Perhaps an alliance of some sort—between skin and sky? No, that's been done. The only thing that ever accomplished was to peel away the top layer of meaning and leave everyone feeling raw about the latest same old weather we're having. No, we're going to have to do better than that. The poem we're in deserves its own music. And that means we have to get up and dance to whatever noise makes us happiest.

