

Butterflies and Fresh Paint

by Darryl Price

For Pearl

So radiantly a threat to them
are you, so radiantly a threat
you present, my dear, but between us

there is still that unspoken pact; just
one more song, please. So radiantly
you fill their cups with the beauty of

leaves and grapes. So radiantly your
small reassuring smile like a star
from a dream. So radiantly a

wild threat--horses running away with
our spare set of keys. Like butterflies
and fresh paint. Like an arm hung over

the side of a boat. So dangerous
and misunderstood, refined, ruthless.
So radiantly a threat something's

bound to get torn like a kite. But to
be fair it's a threat with shine on its
side. So radiantly a threat you

make to them I want to join in. So
radiant like I'll hardly laugh as
much again. TV angels came down from

heaven for a commercial look.
So radiantly a threat are you

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that it names you the best answer yet

to the boldest questions of why. So
radiantly a threat to them I'm
instantly blasted out of my shelf.

Bonus poems:

Introduction to American Brush Painting/ An S.O.S. by Darryl Price

Whatever it is I was
Supposed to learn, Master, I
Have already forgotten it. Whatever
Good thing could have come

From my being here lost
Ground a long time ago.
Now they line up to
Spit in my paints with

Their fists doing the talking.
My poems are plucked and
Scattered or stuck into hatbands
As a joke. Whatever it

Was that was meant to
Free them only left them
Angered and more. Whatever it
Is I was going to

Become, Master, I am only

Me. I should be glad
That I served no purpose,
Changed nothing. You should have

Never put anything in this
Care, Master. Why did you
Trust me to deliver such
A precious gift? I could

Barely open my eyes for
The force of the winds
Against me. Now it is
Lost, a snowflake. Whatever it

Is I was supposed to
Show up knowing took the
Opposite path to wisdom and
Carved a hollow walk for

Some very real tears. Now
I'm back at your door
With nothing to show for
It but empty pockets and

A broken heart. Whatever it
Is, Master, it's beyond this
Protecting, the enemy's got it
Locked in their brutish arms.

New Blank Book by Darryl Price

The hand is always reaching for you and me. We
can't worry about that. You'll have a moment in time
to say your piece. Then the whole thing gets buried
beneath the waves like it never happened in any special
way. The surface will simply be a new blank book.

But I'll know you put up a beautiful fight. And
if you're lucky someone will have seen something flash on
the horizon of their own dreaming and this will spark
a revolution in their thinking. That's worth the try, and
any-way the other way is a false start from the

dawn to the next day. The hand is a bunch
of idiots, but not the good kind. The hand is
black cloth thrown over a lamp. The hand is picking
on you, what're you going to do? The hand is
a liar. The hand is always throwing bombs. The hand

is an octopus, not the good kind. Its beak will
tear you apart in your prettiest sleep. The hand is
a trap door. A venom spraying worm. But that's its
electric blue nature. We need to take blue back and
give it to the children who thought we lost them

in the land of forgotten leaves. We never stop looking,
but neither does the hand. The hand is a fire,
not the good kind, but terrible tasting in its kiss
of empty betrayal. Might as well tell it like it
is. The hand is a shame, but not ashamed. The

hand is a prison, a bank, a zoo, a thirst,
a stop in the progress of all spontaneous dance. The
hand is around your throat. The hand is down your
pants. The hand is holding a dirty dagger behind its
smiling back, but you know all that. I'm just saying,

let's get out of here. Please. I don't want to
do it without you. It gets so lonely. Silent and
cold. I leave these words for you to find. I
trust you to not misunderstand them. Use their power. Put
that magic spell where it will do the most good. dp

