

Cups for Saucers

by Darryl Price

They were everywhere walking right above us
or so it seemed, back and forth,
back and forth with their lousy, crunching
heels making hollow chewed up noises that
took all the sweet sounds left on
earth and had them march along to
one awful grumpy song. Something was broken.
You could hear it. But the pitiful
space I was in didn't feel like
the end to me. Even in that
thinly veiled bad situation I had wonderful
hopes stirring inside of me for some
crazy unknown reason. I'd managed to smile
at her while her parents stared at

nothing but fear. Her eyes barely crinkled
some tiny little bit but I saw.
Oh yes. Probably more out of impossible
expectation than anything else, but I didn't
care one whit right then and there
because I was in the best possible
moment of my life at last, at least I had something
else to believe in and hang a
reason to live one more day on.
You could say a frantic bat signal
had been shown to the heavens above
and received by clouds and answered in
the very room we all shared, from
that direst of situations ranging just over

our dirty frozen heads like burning hills.

They stomped their big soles over and
over again on the packed snow for
some reason we couldn't quite fathom and
so we were showered with beautiful ices,
but none of us were moved by
these same threats to breathe even more
deeply than before. No. We played frozen
better than the roots of trees stuck
into the ground so long ago. When
I looked over at her sweetly dried
and cracked face again her eyelashes were
covered with little scattered diamonds. She crossed
her eyes at me then and made

me grin in spite of myself. Thank
God the human connection does not go
out of fashion completely just because some
new childish hatred goes on another stupid
rampage across the pages of a now
familiar book of life. As it will.
As it always has done so forever, as
far as I can see. Making us
all feel so lonely for a simple
crust of freshly baked bread. They don't
build many bombs to feed the hungry
anymore. We slept a little at a
time, but not too much, unless we
should never waken again to find each

other alive or see our true way
home at long last and sometimes we
even dreamed with our eyes open, but
not of snow. We dreamed of blue
and white cups and saucers, swirling us
around and around in the greenest sunshine,

lifting us up to ever newer heights
of laughter and a most satisfying deep,
deep and lasting friendship. At least that's
what I wanted to share with her
ears only when our fingers did finally
connect in the middle of another stormy
day of impossible hiding under the open
battle fields. I tried once to trace

her name on the end of her
fingertip with my own finger, but the
numbness made it hard for me to
feel the letters making themselves appear as
anything more than nudges. In the end
I felt satisfied to lay my fingers
on top of her poor cold fingernails
to keep them somewhat warmer maybe. Underground
like undisclosed bugs this secret refuge between
us became our primary language, our own
remembered country, just the two of us.
We were the white foxes of our
age. We had never been in love.
We were the first. And the last.

