

If You Are Without Mercy

by Darryl Price

"The opposite of fear is not courage but compassion."--Peter J. Gomes

you are going to die a
most pitiful death from your own tears
of crushing boredom. Crying over
your self you will probably
never understand how it is a
simple blue-capped flower saves
the world, one open petal
at a time. You'll always

fail to have enough courage to sing a Beatles song out loud.
You shall immediately
be forgotten the moment
you are gone. You'll continue
to buy all the wrong records by all
the wrong artists. You'll shower
alone whenever it rains. Especially when it rains.
You'll see nothing special in

the eye in the sky above
the lake, only meaningless
stars. You will not be held close together
on purpose. Forget all the
little names for joy. You won't
get to taste the yummy joke
at the molten center of
the cosmic wormhole. You've tortured that bridge

well into a flood of thin enough flaky ashes. We don't
return your hate. We never do. You're still as free as ever

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to shoot up as many fear
inducing dreams as you'd like. But
we say why not melt the gun that was once
your welcoming heart back into its shipping box. Without some
ongoing mercy you
are without a true and recurring love of your own in this world. You
will not
live to know your own potential for now.

a bonus poem:

Lake Bed

The creature with the broken mirror for a face
decided to throw a constant barrage
of rocks at my already silent windows
and when I climbed down to quietly
greet her and shoo her away, for she had the most beautiful wings
on her back, she
tried instantly to blind me with the moon's
swiveled reflection, all of a sudden
bursting forth from her polished pores like little
pencil thin laser beams going off

in every direction at once, but it
just so happens my friends that the moon and

I are what you would call old chums. I knew
exactly where to look to keep from getting
instantly fried like a gooey egg splotched and greasy right
on the spot. She then took my left hand ever
so sweetly mind you and led me to
the beautiful dark body of the lake

where we gathered sand like miniature
Milky Ways and made grand wishes together, she
then tripped me onto a root and pushed me
in. She started to beat the ground all around
the shore with her sleeping laughter like
a single handful of branches on fire,
but I simply rose on up out of that
dripping and drying lake bed wearing the same

water's shirt like a long silk robe to hide me. And when
she tried pulling the snowy hood over
my head I just let her. That's when I shrank
into a mini ball like a blue river
rock and fell back to the soft arms of Mother earth and
crawled out below the hem she was yanking
apart with all her many serrated fingers and
walked right past her, back into the house of

mutated lights. She sat on a mossy seat
outside the invisible rain's umbrella, mocking the world at large
and howling at nothing, for about another
full hour. Finally I heard her
rusty car door of a heart open and
slam and the tiny engine of her selfish
greed starting to pull away the many
miles she had come to judge and sentence

me to a hopeless night's frosty fever.

Some time later I heard a real honest
to God robin singing loudly like it
hadn't a single care in all the whole
blessed world. And I thought to myself oh
yeah it might just be the day has come for
some good old hot fluffy pancakes. All you
can eat. Smothered in loads of butter and lots of maple syrup.

