If. You. Speak.

by Darryl Price

It doesn't matter to me if you speak
on behalf of some naked truths or not.
Air can still trip you up to your shaved shins
into some nice wet cement and dirty
up all that youthful progress in the process. Nothing can save

us from dawn. What you can do is accept the
latest goop you are given and jump out
of the mushy hole you find yourself wading in
and go skipping back to new beginnings--
for a brief lark's way, eh? Clean yourself off and

continue the next journey inward. What
you'll find is there are many different
meadows within the meadow. The one at
dusk is not the one you met this morning.
That one's gone like a head in the window.

Things have happened since then that have changed things. But the
center remains your best home base. The trick is to
realize it can still be found inside the
different spots like a touchstone or a
portal. You're free to enter the dragon's

breath, of course, no matter what they tell you
in school, but remember you might get out
again in a different country, that's
all. And on top of that your own swirling
bee hive of atoms is constructing you

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always toward your own utter final
disappearance up the ladder of stars--
like a fire on the lips of a lighthouse.
Again this is nothing to get frightened
about—it's only the most natural

order of things. Just get on the bus and
go to the top if you want. It's a big universe.
You'll end up somewhere. In the meantime please
listen for the music that is most alive in the world and dance yourself silly if you
must. And you must. You really, really must.

Bonus poem:

Rain Dance

Every chance we got we jumped
on the ocean's back and sailed
to the new world holding on to a tiger's whiskers, like
dreamers often do. We fought

occasional sea monsters
out of an accrued boredom and
false bravado, sometimes in the natural form of a
giant running wave, sometimes

like smoking serpents made out
of a million tree leaves stuck
together with cloud. Even the sticky sunlight on the
churning wind's spinning arms can simply

turn into a gaping mouth
of burning teeth-- if you are
keeping innocence by the score. Once we entered the new
found shore's borderline looking

like gold thieves in the night we
threw all our noblest aspirations
at the local fauna like all boys do. This caused
a tremendous tidal wave.

Theater

by Darryl Price

There is nothing left to say. Won't it last?
I'm daydreaming again with my green-eyed
head snoozing on my tilted toward a
godforsaken boredom hand anyway.
I'm one of the last peasants joining the
harboring crowd from where I'm standing. I
don't remember how I got pushed up on
this particular wooden stage. Or, hey,

maybe that was me that just got off to
the far off rumble of something coming
at us. What would you do with the answers
if you found them? I would want to feel like
I was being let in on something that
makes me stumble and fall to my knees, but,
like she said, I don't want it to hurt us

so much. Haven't we all had enough of

that kind of dying darkly vacant love?
That's impossible to know I guess. Is
my time almost well done here? Is that the
final answer then? You get to say what
you can't begin to articulate and
then it's too damn late to reconsider
all your bravest options—because once you're
up there you're just bound to mutter something

stupid that gets magnified and exposed.
The one thing you can do is walk away
singing like a ghost. And if you've got a
little original move on tap you
might as well let that rip up the cardboard
scenery as you exit the once fresh
greener grass, show them who they're dancing with
all along. Drop the anger. Don't look back.