

# Life Without a Heart

*by Darryl Price*

isn't so hard to imagine if you can just squint through the minutes  
like a good McGoo, slog through the headline happy seasons and  
sleep at it most of the day. It only hurts real bad whenever you try to  
carry off a roaring laughter instead of a restless cough. No, that  
action in and of itself is a worn out piece of sadly

closed down for good no good joke, heaped upon my own worn down  
soul, good for nothing useful that I can think of, empty as a run  
over paper cup, and certainly not for singing beautiful secrets into  
your garden's pretty flowered ears

anymore. Nothing really makes me laugh like everything  
still matters, not anymore. The odd thing is that single runaway tears  
still drop like suddenly, softly missing stars. I hear them splash into  
the rolling nothingness I can feel without you sometimes, so  
far and far away now like the wings of a couple of ancient bells on  
the necks of a Christmas mare.

Otherwise you know it's all pretty much the same awful sunlit stench  
life offers every time I wake to the tender slap of  
another unanswered dream's extinguishing smoke alarm. No new  
thing comes into view except the damned view:

Oh I do wish I did have something more red this time than more  
blue this time to

fling up into the silly air, like ribbons or neon string, only for you  
now, when all I can come up

with are chewed on memories that look remarkably  
like the threads of a once cherished

but now gone to seed favorite blanket of mine. I always  
said I was against nostalgia

as a way of life, but I yearn, I do,

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Available online at «<http://fictionaut.com/stories/darryl-price/life-without-a-heart>»

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for a drink again of something utterly  
new. I collected all these years of  
these seashells for the garbage. And now once more I  
cast them like dice at your old name. Let them  
sink away, please, take them back, back into  
the deepest part of everything, far from  
where I sit with my emptiness, an old  
silent writer with no words at all for love.

Bonus poem:

Some Water

by Darryl Price

If it all just doesn't matter, it still  
matters to me. I get the tired, hungry  
sediment. But I still care, that's all I'm  
saying, if you are a hurt being who  
for some reason needs me to care. Here, let's  
give them what they really want: the running  
colors of the disappearing sun was  
disappearing, too, into a mash of  
shiny new rivers, where suddenly waves  
collided into napping shores and sparked

the beginning of another new old  
chapter, born again into nothing and  
also everything. Can you eat it, the  
pushing, shoving, elbowing fish asked each  
other. No, said the sprawling ball of roots,  
it's much too salty to do you good. Well,

what about a small nibble anyway,  
said all the gathering field mice. We'll try  
it. We'll try it. Let us try it. Please. A  
cool satiated snake slithered by and

said grimly, you're all a bunch of ninnies.  
A snail looked on with both eyes and said, but  
it really is quite beautiful, isn't  
it. Yes, said a caterpillar, but the  
real best is yet to come. And that best was  
indeed coming, time after time, even  
when being interrupted by a thin  
and matted mangy fox, who proclaimed, thank  
you for setting this wonderful table  
on my behalf, I shall belch out my best

gratitude at the appropriate time  
and place, as per usual. Everyone  
immediately dispersed, except for  
a huffing about frog who had made up  
an original song, an instant hit  
classic, about the whole affair and was  
determined to sing it, right then and there,  
in spite of the obvious fuzziest  
lurking danger. And so the story goes,  
night after night. Maybe with some new made

characters, maybe with the same old ones,  
memorizing their immortal lines, or  
forgetting their mortal cues, and causing  
a solid thumping ruckus down among  
the oblivious cattails, who swing because  
they can, and always feel it deep down in  
their reed of reeds, where it really takes on  
a happy blue tint of its own, before

closing time and the quiet sizzling sounds  
of riding silence grows ever louder.

