

Old Shoes for Stranded Soles

by Darryl Price

There are stranded people just like us, that's
Not necessarily what I'm looking for.
Negativity won't pull us through the
Barbed-wire halls of hate. And even if I
Was the only one, I wouldn't want you
To look any different in the mirror. I'm older
Now, no one invites me up to their moons
Any more for a peek at their special stars. That's about as deep as
it gets.

I don't feel all that good about getting
The ghost vote from you now and not then. It would

Have been so nice to know you cared when I
Was freezing in the loveless city corners and
All my straggled about books were crammed onto the
Crude visionary shelves like lost toy soldiers
Acting out some crazed uninvited scene
Of feverish battle to the death. It was bad enough
Without your sewn up sort of love, to keep me thinking I was
Warm, to walk me to the bus stop, to keep
Me from going to trial in my own head. The
Wildflower scene I was interested

In was the one we were good at making up for ourselves. There
are

Clear enough people I'm guessing like us
Out there walking around, but they have gone
Through so many gravity punching jealous
Changes by now they only half resemble

Themselves inside quiet mistaken gestures. Wouldn't call
Them out because no one needs to take my
Place in line. Let them have their exhausted peace in
The big goodbye mirror of life's endless pageantry. I'm still
looking
Outside the gates for more than I ever

Bargained for. Oh shit they're telling me all
They really want from me now is more free entertainment,
Less trains, no conversation. Well I'd rather
See you naked again. I'd rather get
Closer to you. That's as much as I know, as
much as I want to know. The battle of
the books was just a metaphor, a kind
of staged plea for some sanity against
all the stacked loneliness in this cold cold world, a
last attempt at finding one's true presence among so much
shadow to come.

Bonus poems:

I Don't Know Where the Buried Lantern Goes to Sleep When It's
Hungry

When your steaming dragon like hand has so
casually dropped the treasured pine cone

of our hearts from its celestial stitch
like a too hot to handle glowing star.

I'm not even sure it is up to me to

name such altogether pedestrian

phenomenon, taking the risk as it
were for generations after that, i.e.

we would always know such rich witness and

cry out on your behalf like any group
of trained to please acrobatic bears for

a few sad hours of cramped sleeping together and something
indistinguishable to eat. No, I

fear this time you've missed your practiced mark, and the moon
long ago rose up and gave its greatest

single performance to a bunch of wild

dogs pouring themselves up and down the soft
heavenly hills like a warm pungent syrup. But

that is of no real consequence to our
little circle of flaming tigers is it, and

poorly painted ponies, is it? We are
after all still in the midst of this small

folding poem of ours, thrashing through the
many fake paper drums like disturbed birds

but finding no exits, when with all our
broken heads we believe the end of the

performance is a foregone conclusion to anyone with a brain.
I wonder who gets the satisfaction

out of seeing the lights come on again inside?
Yeah, now I see where I'm going again.

These spelling footprints a misplaced refrain.
You've squeezed your last song out of my throat I swear.

Ash

by Darryl Price

You don't understand. I wasn't standing anywhere but
In my own moment in the burning sky. You

Don't understand. You weren't the only person suddenly
Flying apart. I could still see you. This was

A comfort for me. If you understood your
Radio would have been tuned into something much

More like runaway moonlight than the oceans of
Your need to know more and more about

Those cold, cold stars that gave us the
Sad frozen news over and over like a

Crazy slap in the face. Look at me.
I don't know what we were, but we

Saw no beautiful angels coming. Those who sensed us
Thought they were no longer alone in the

Wonderment of a truly unfeeling universe. I couldn't
Bear to be that kind of hope for

Any one. It just didn't seem fair. You
Made your choice right then and I made

Mine by a single thread. I still think you
Were wrong. The trouble with love is that

The days change. People change into different versions
Of themselves and you never know whom you
Are going to get. The snowflakes pile up.

The snail sun eventually gets up and grabs

His shovel and goes about his ancient work

Ethic like an old pro. You don't understand I
Guess. Your expectations lowered my head to such

A degree that there was no way to
Look you in the eye without burning up

And turning to ash. You weren't ringing a
Bell unless it summoned you to your own dinner. That's

Just not something I can believe in for that long.

Wild Geranium (Crane's-Bill)

by Darryl Price

I don't want to be the guy
sneaking like a thief who says
words don't mean we care. I don't
want to be the one cutting
like a throat who says our ghost

is lifting out of this life. Don't
want to be the one who says
all talk's another flight risk.
The one like a cop saying
look away close your eyes that

swan's trumpet is too scared to
sound off. I don't want to be
the one who bets gravity
is a grandfather clock thrown
in the ocean. I don't want

to be the one shrinking like
a vampire who shouts stars are
nothing but holes cut out of
the fabric of our dreams, who
states, I'll never give my heart

a melody of its own
to sway with, says our chance
is a folding campfire, the
one who like a barfing moon
says this is the last best dance.

