

(Platter of) Figs and Oranges (Set to a Warped Organ Fanfare from too Long Ago)

by Darryl Price

Lonely kids only want this thing to go away and stay away.
To not be lonely anymore. The lonely, uncool
Kids have learned to be absolutely
Still in the moment. Who does this fall to? They
Haven't read enough Vonnegut for your liking?
David Foster Wallace, perhaps? Remote control
Kids stand around and prepare to leave the
Planet on the first ship out of here. Any room, or every room
already taken? Every day these
Isolated kids are devastated even more
By all the silence they must always endure. The sad kids
Die a little more into themselves each night. Poor little
Lonely kids have never seen a magic dragon, much less a
Poem turn itself into a truthful
Way to live. Let's give them that at least. The
Solitary kids don't know what else
We're asking of them, as they've already given so much. Look.
Lonely

Means small crowds of one. And lonely
Means forgotten about, period. Lonely
Means rudely un-awakened for
Some midnight cake fun. These poor kids are not sure if you

Are joking as you speak to them or not. Lonely sits
The borderline between darkness
And cold, cold chills. Lonely means not right
Now, maybe later. Not even maybe later. Sometime. Real soon.
They're used
To it. The lonely kids' curse does
Not fit the crime. The little kids do
Suffer in vain. The lonely kids
Are like an empty pocket, a
Broken window; tiny torn pieces of paper,
Taken apart many more times than necessary. These lonely ones
Can't take much more, I'm telling you. The lonely kids
Act out like squashed upon ants who are still somehow alive in
certain squiggly parts of their bodies. They act as the perfect
excuse

For adults to go get more good and then get drunk.
An art theft before the painting
Is ever finished or dried. The kids are
Just as soluble in forests
As seas. The lonely kids don't know
One moon on their bedroom walls from
Another. The lonely kids have
Not danced in so many years, if ever, that the concept is nothing
more than a foreign country in their heads. Lonely
Means: everything's not okay, ok? But it's fine.
Lonely means, sorry, I can't remember you. Kids
Need to be reactivated
Sometimes. That's where we can come in.
With a few kind words. Working hard as extra
Good listeners. With a plate of warm ripe
Figs and perfect oranges made for the hungry in
Spirit. To honor the life in

Every life, we should lift any that needs it. We honor the life

In clouds. We honor the life in
Trees. We honor the life in dirt.
In mountains. In streams. In stones. We
Honor the life inside words. In thoughts.
In dreams. We honor the life in
Laughter and tears. In the whole of eternity's stars. In busy bees.
Birds. And insects of all kinds.
We should honor it, with all our hearts, in people, too. dp

Bonus poems:

Lies by Darryl Price

You could do it. You could make the
Bullets take another trajectory. But the world will
Continue to harm innocent animals. Children can understand
The language of flowers. They take it for

Granted. That's why they cry over sad things
Oceans away. Their hearts are picking up all
Those signals coming in. Makes them either grow
Up fast or slowly go crazy. But you could do

It with them. You could end all wars forever. Isn't that
Something? It was always you after all. Yes it is amazing.
You could take the perfect photographs. You'll get
The dancer's hand in the end. All you have

To do is lay down your own weapons first. Look
Up in anger for the very last time. Have no unbalanced fear.

You won't need to eat where you are
Going. Could you, please, unlock the front doors while you're still

In there? Just do it because it's right. Nothing to it for someone
like you.

We'll be waiting for your second coming with white
Doves hidden in our shirts. When you do decide
To kick the earth out of its final orbit around the sun

Please remember the poems we left for you at your locked
Garden's gate. They contain the names of all
Those we loved more than you. We've given
Up telling all lies, it's the least we can

Do after running away with each other's hearts. After all you're
the one making the

Ultimate sacrifice. Well. What are you waiting for? You've
Got our rapt attention now. Turn on your TV set and go to sleep.
Our gathered
Antennas are twitching for your grandest of excuses. Just

As we thought. You don't want the job
Either. You ask why we make our homes
In the branches of certain ancient trees. Isn't it obvious?
We want to be the first ones to welcome you home at long last
with unencumbered arms. dp

The Argument by Darryl Price

Someone has lit the sky again, declaring it a new

Morning yet I walk alone. There are broken pieces everywhere.
A new sky has been flicked on and I've become
A mere green figure captured in its blink. The lapping

Of the water has nothing to say. I don't know
Who put that light on again, but they have done
Me a great disservice. I was just about to jump
Into the great mass of endless stars. I was going

To let them swallow me up. But now there's some
Sort of new meaning taking place here around me. It has
Birds in it, and cars, and people clustering like flowers
On the branches of streets. It has breezes squirting delicious

Smells into every corner. Even the buildings seem to be
Getting ready to stand and stretch their rooftops. It used
To make me feel glad, too. So, someone has taken
It upon themselves to light this thing once more and

Here am I pulling a poem out of my hat
For an empty theatre. It's the only thing I know
How to do. I would offer it to you for
Nothing but your hand is nowhere to be found. Someone

Has lit the sky again and I'm sure their intentions
Were noble enough. But those stars were, oh so convincing. The
Arguments were more like songs than bee stings. That's what
You get in the day's wake. Either way I'm simply

Not up to the task. My feet are as sad
As the rest of me. Someone lit the sky again
And without even asking if it might disturb a worried
Dreamer like me. Someone lit the sky and I'm beginning to
scorch.

I'll have to get up and move even if I
Don't want to leave the spot of my disgusted silence
To the ants and butterflies. Here you go then. You get
Your wish. I'm no longer in the shadows trying to

Conceal myself from the rest of the world. But
My heart still feels broken. That's all I'm saying. So
To the someone who lit the sky I'm sure that
Took some guts. But I don't envy you your job.

Mine is much more personal. It hurts like hell every
Hour I try to do it one more time and
better. Enjoy your gig. I wish you the best of
Luck. From where I'm sitting you're going to need it. dp

