

The Beautiful

by Darryl Price

"I'm going out of my mind, with a pain that stops and starts, like a corkscrew to my heart, ever since we've been apart."--Bob Dylan

It does no good. No one will remember
you as the author of anything but
yourself. There's so much more music playing
everywhere all at once that it's hard not

to get bored with the same beautiful stuff
for me. We met on a road because we
were young and free and hadn't discovered
enough truths to settle down into anything

comfortable and familiar
yet. That feeling would be the center of
all pain to come. But the road easily
becomes a series of haunted houses,

until you went your way and I went mine.
I'm surprised you made it into a turn
where we were bound to collide again. It's
not that I wanted to see you, but I

couldn't stop feeling your presence blowing
on my skin. I needed to look directly
at the source to know I wasn't sad
for no reason. I've been on many roads

since trying to forget something I never
really knew about trains. It's as good
an image as any when night falls hard
across your desk and the typewriter is

staring at you with both eyes wide and awake
amid the dust and oily ink. There
is no taking you out of the picture
taped to the wall. Like a dry tongue holding

a lemon wafer, it demands acknowledgement
with no remorse. That nothing could
ever replace in significance. Give
it another song, but it's only got

one name you can name that isn't a lie.
You earned the specks on your boots, too, but that
is for your own voice to tell. It hasn't
been all that great to cross old wires with you,

but it isn't without its glad refrain,
aimed harmlessly at the back of your hair,
either. I wanted to kiss your head farewell,
but stayed where I was, holding onto

my dogeared pens, and raising my lopsided
cup to your success; I looked forward
to better days ahead the only way
I knew how, to walk away and not love

and follow you back into the past. So
will we meet somewhere on another road
when the time is right for both parties? Until
that mysterious moment, I hope

you realize all of your wildest dreams deserved
you, this poem wants to deserve you.

