

# The Gate Before

*by* Darryl Price

You were always going  
to connect the dots.  
I was always going  
to overfill a bucket

with poems. You would  
eventually drive off waving  
your hand like a  
star on a spring. I'd

shoulder up another notebook  
for the walk. My  
hand would rather hold  
a pencil. Yours would

accept a kiss from  
a perfect stranger. You  
were invited to walk  
in gardens. I was

given the gate before  
we even arrived. You  
somehow managed to change  
into a diamond, but

in a golden glued-down  
seat. I was more  
or less a ruby  
in a skull's eye-socket

and yet we found  
a way to laugh.

That's all I know  
of this thing. Now

you sit somewhere outside  
the wild feelings blowing  
around in my heart,  
the photograph of an

ocean entering a dark  
green tunnel of another  
new amazing day. There's  
nothing more to say

that wouldn't take away  
its real voice and  
replace it with something  
less worth listening to.

Bonus poems:

This isn't just another perfectly wasted day

To me. From here for instance it's  
Still bursting full of little yellow flowers  
Growing out and over the rocky walls

And with wild zooming honey bees barely  
Missing your face as they chase the  
Alluring fragrance to its central sticky source.  
The soft sky is like a long

Silk covered road leading somewhere into a  
Faraway dream. I breathe it all in  
And smile. And in the middle of  
All that free wondering I'm striding all

Alone down a leaf strewn bike path  
Listening to a bunch of noisy insect  
Camps talking over each other about the  
End of this particular Summer's time on

The yearly Autumn stage. A few butterflies spark  
And wave as they tumble past on  
Their somersaulting way, hurrying to the secret  
Mystic summit of their ancient societies. Perhaps

They'll come up with a clever butterfly  
Way to save the planet from disappearing  
Before I'm no longer able to participate.  
One can always hope. There's no smoke

In the air today. I don't know  
If that's a good thing or a  
Bad, but I'm taking it as a  
Sign for now of many miracles to come.

These

things are yours to avoid  
answering. Although you hear me  
well enough to assume any  
action taken is to mean  
something's spoken, our connection doesn't

have to get any deeper  
than it already is, that'd  
only be deceptive. I've reached  
you, I haven't found you.  
These are buds to awaken.

Whatever happens after that is  
a harvest as old as  
time. You shall be given  
a glimpse into the heart  
of a color, a memory

will be made into a  
journey. But don't spend too  
much dream power on talking  
with ghosts. They'll only want  
to haunt you in the

end, that's their nature, yours  
is to finish going through  
without finishing yourself in the  
progress. These are yours to  
float away now. I won't

do it. You are my  
last attempt at modernism any  
way. These are yours because  
I am yours and because  
we've come so very far from home.

