

Waiting, Waiting

by Darryl Price

The fear you represent is a real drag. That's all there is to say. But like every other house on the block I have spiders in the basement who are waiting to be brought up into the golden light. These creatures only want to be good at being alive. Instead

they are given a dangerous reputation to contend with. It's much easier to squash what you can never be. Some will mistake your neck for moonlight and settle into a feel good dreamscape of their own, others will rear up on their hind legs and dare you to play god.

That's a sorry wish too easily granted. Now apply that to the world around you. Things are more like paper than like stone. Every time you choose the easy route you have made the whole world one step closer to blinking out, even if you didn't mean to

(be so unforgiving in the first place). You are not king. There is no king, or there are only kings. Even a real king is not the end of all that is now because we are living in a spiral city, full of holes, that can collapse upon itself at any given moment, lost in time like sand.

Learn to navigate. You're allowed to know things. It's not too late to take back your misfortune in the garden, so we might as well get on with the quest at hand. The idea wasn't to get back, it was to get out, because free is free. Somewhere along

the line this was felt to be pretty well worth it--whatever the dangers ahead. So when you make your album don't forget to be involved in every last detail of it--don't leave it up to someone else to make the small arrangements for you. You've earned the right to

scream or cry or laugh as loud as anybody. And if they sit back and hate you with their stares they are the ones who are swimming in molasses. They are the souls blackening against the sputtering rocks. You are rising, rising, and finding it to be one beautiful ride through all those glorious clouds.

Bonus poem:

Orange Peel

Just your shoulder could cause armies
to rise up out of the sands and clash. That
electricity alone will turn as many stars as
there are into pure desires. I can't help this.

It's like any small miracle. The
kind that creeps up on you and you find yourself
frozen with delight. You don't want to move for fear it will
vanish and have been something made only available

to certain senses
that tend to scurry away in sudden
unexpected moments like new spring deer. Anyway this
thing before you is my small token of thanks,

thanks for the flash of insight, for
the knock on the head of real solid poetry, for
the jolt of dreaming juice, and the lingering colors of all that
sky. Time's gone now. I talk too much. To myself.

Nowhere At All (Times Seven)

by Darryl Price

It's just an echo. Someone that
I knew. I meant to answer you,
stranger, but the stars kept ringing

in my ear. You don't get any
of it back. You just get to see
the book closing in your hands or
someone else's lap. Listen. I'm
not sorry I kissed the moon. I

had such light between my teeth for
ages. When I would speak the most
special words would come out glowing
before melting back into the
soaking wind like small animals.
I got drenched to the bone even
with an umbrella. So that sent
message was never that subtle

to begin with. Just an echo,
but it made all the difference
in the world to me. Because it
was really a new song, but it
sounded so familiar. And
I began to hum my own soft
version. I stood on tree limbs and
calmly cast my fate with as much

boy courage as I could muster.
These things have a way of coming
full circle back to us, looking
for an explanation. Playing
for fun forever was mine, but
eventually even the
gods and goddesses wanted sleep
or more than enough money. That's

when it gets lonely. That's when you
can get lost. Because there's no one

around to care. You're on, I used
to say. You're on, I used to shout.
Now I say it quietly to
myself. They don't want to know. They
all left the game when no one was
looking in their direction, just

because they felt guilty, or you
know because they were hungry. I
saw them in their windows smelling
of bath water and moth wings. The
passed-out sun promised to pick me
up later that morning. I can
still remember waiting alone.
I waited a long time. I'm still

kind of looking out at the world
from that tender moment. So you
see echo or not it's only
me. And now here you are. All the
things I meant to save and give you
have been torn out of my hands but
these few words. I know it's not much,
but I'm glad to see you again.

