

To the Manchester Children's Monster

by Darryl Price

“As you do it unto the least of these so you do it unto me.” —Jesus

These children that you murder are not
your enemy. They are not your pain
or your personal sorrow. They are,
if anything, flowers blowing and
growing in the wind by the side
of the road. They're not your misguided love of

hatred. They are not your sharpened and
drawn poisonous ideology. They are a
direct link to your own seed. These kids
that you murder all have sweet names. You
have not erased their names. You will not
ever erase their names from us. We

are still carrying their names forward as we go.
You have destroyed their faces to prove
you are a sickened barbarian. So you are.
Certainly not a man, you were not
Man-enough to protect them, but yes
always a coward with a gun. That is your place

in the history of this planet now.
They can never forgive you for your
foolish chosen ugliness, not now. These
children that you murder have nothing

to do with your foolish propaganda. Your cruel family politics. They are not the liars here.

You have not silenced them. They laugh and scream and play in your head all day long for all eternity. You will have no home without them. These children make up the sun and the moon and the stars. You have tried to murder the sky, but the sky

will remain because of children like these and yours. Children that you wait in hiding to harm cannot defend you to the parents anymore, their brothers, those left lost and lonely. But they'll have us for dear friends. You have others like you, drenched in

hallucinatory fears. Makers of miserable chaos. These ones that you murder could have helped you to straighten out, out of your self-imposed hell, but you chose to listen to your nightmare master instead. Go. He calls you.

Bonus poems:

The Cliffs by Darryl Price

The flying trees had always gone back to being the forest on its knees again, building its own army against the encroaching birds and their blue widening

scarves. You could say it another way. Peace is
made but only kept by an emphasis on space.
Otherwise everything bites everything else and nothing gets any

sleep or sympathy. Listen. Grab a branch. Humanity is
just another one of those endless philosophical debates. The
flying trees flew into the mountains and stuck there.
It was a long time before they decided to
open their eyes and look down the cliffs at
what their lives had become. The nobility of having

traveled all that way got lost in the translation
from leaf to leaf. It doesn't make any difference.
Roots began their own religion and taught the stones
to speak. Then the rivers tried to buy hedge
favor with certain fish and on and on. Oh did
I mention the owls? They waited until the mice

were good and fat before they came out as
the moon's spies, with their saliva full of stars,
with their feathers full of stolen forks. Snails smeared
a warning on the ground, but weeds covered it
up with a bunch of oversized heads, too big
to be mistaken for a migration of moths. The

flying trees had made the classic mistake of believing
in a god that only loved trees. And now
as you can plainly see they have poetry written
all over their faces. That may not tell the
real story but it does hum the right tune
in the heat. I can't help it. The flying

trees are beautiful in their practiced sorrow like any
group of amateur dancers. They may still have a
long way to go, but I want to whisper

something tender to them before that happens. The flying
trees are remembering something all together, and when it finally
clicks

there will be no more need for such raw confusion. dp

Paths by Darryl Price

I don't know where you are. I have
no idea where you are or
what you are doing or if you're
stuck in anything like tar. But
I remember when you were deep
and dreaming and pretty and out
loud for a living. I believed
in something then and maybe I

still do. I don't know. I couldn't
wait for you to decide if I
should live or die. I didn't have
that many honest choices that
didn't include me being a
someone else at the end of the world. You could
always match your outfit to the
party occasion more than me.

I risked everything for love. It
should come as no surprise that I
broke all the rules and lost. But if
I could speak to the new flowers
here now I would tell them to shine
free, and brightly despite all the storms, the
pummeling hail. This isn't a
long distance phone call from my time

machine. Let the bad news come from
someone else's crooked mouth. I
never meant for you to fall so
far away from me. There are too
many paths in the heart. But I
haven't met any innocent
parties yet. It's too late for me
to pretend to not be fully awake.

Boo is for Buddha

All my life I've been
A sad ghost boy but
Who wanted to be
Happy. All life like
A hurt cartoon stranger
But I just needed to be good at this
And love. All my life
I've rejected the
Blind emptiness of

False innocence. All
My life I've been an
Angry young ghost waiting
For a reprieve.
My life I've admired
Courage and kindness, but it's hard to
Find true healing. All
My life I've been a
Believer but I

Mean to persevere.
All my life I do
My best to bring music
Home to you. All
Life, like a praying
Soul wishing for some small tenderness in
Its head to set us
Free! All my life I've
Spent wild planting and

Weaving this garden
Tapestry for you.
The words contain rows
Of colors—all are
Native to my heart.
All my life like a wandering ghost who
Speaks the silence with
Anyone that will
Listen. All my life

I've been a lonely
Ghost looking for this
Dance. All my life as
If resting my face
In your head of hair. All life
Long traveling on the dharma hoping
For a luminous
Awakening one
Blessed and holy day.

