Steve Toth on Darrel Gray 3

Contributed by Andrei Codrescu

Remembering Darrell Gray 3 by Steve Toth Â Â Â to Steve

The telephone rang It was Darrell calling from rehab He asked if he could stay with us so not to go back to old places & old ways but when we met the bus Darrell was already drunk arguing with the bus driver trying to get him to go off the route & take him to our place The visit went down hill from there Darrell slipping out that night leaving the doorÂ wide openÂ so as not to wake us Darrell running away the day after & finally Darrell playingÂ the mean drunk on the thrid dayÂ I told him he was too much & had to leave the next morning

The last time I saw Darrell Gray
I was so happy
to see him go
that I stood on the corner
watching his bus disappear
just to make sure
he didn't get off & try to come back
Fear got the best of me that day
That's the kind of friend I was
Darrell wasn't all form & no content
He'd opened me up
to a form of life I wanted
to bury as quickly & completely as possible
That was my survival instinct

In the effort to become effortless
the morning comes to those who awaken
This planet may look more
like a parking lot every day
& yet out of all possible realities
you've chosen one in which
you find yourself reading
this very line of poetry
Nothing is as simple as it looks at first
At a distance I could almost pass
as human but up close
I'm a real disappointment Â