

The Husbanding of Katharine's Life: A Series of Poems

Katharos is the Greek word from which the name Katharine is derived and it means "clean, pure, bright, true, complete, genuine, effective, fit for service".

The Ground of Understanding

1.

Our tree of life was consciousness
We cut the branch and fell
Genes revealed the sacred lust

My darling it is true
You cured myself of me
And I cured you of you

From death's ground we grew
Bound to trust freely
Love we came to care

What matters is the mind we shared
At long as truth could tell
The god we gathered was us

Our tree stands for the good of all
We understood and lived the Fall.

2.

My purifying one Katharine
We took each other as antidotes
To the human disease of disconnection

We purged ourselves of salvation
We refused the ancient ignorance
And embraced the original meaning of sin

We told each other the truth
That death was necessary and life sufficient
That there was no cure for the human condition

Except the intimate care we freely gave
Because there was no other way to live
What was left to leave as our love.

3.

To learn like the flame
 To burn the given
 Turning it into our name
 Change into exchange

To light up what is
 The exposed Us
 That death we trusted
 Ourselves to live

4.

Not the dream of death
 But the death of the dream
 Such is the wide-eyed wake
 I hold in Katharos' true name.

5.

My wife friend lover pupil
 Teacher companion my life
 Wholly other I became
 When mind and heart we came
 Together to gather the good

We have done so as our love
 For each other and the world
 We as lovers of the wisdom
 In each other who came
 To the wisdom of love
 Through each other

You became the value of life
 Brought to life for me
 Now dwelling inside your death
 I remain alive in that value
 Living out your loss.

6.

My love we made love to the end
 We brought the death in your body
 To be borne by our life together

Consciously we completed
 The circuit from you to me
 From birth to death

And back again.

7.

My love I find you inside
 Of everyone I ask out

You gave me your death
 As your final gift

That continues to open me.

8.

Alive you became my world
 Dead now
 The world becomes alive with you.

The Severing

1.

In that stroke of chance
 My other side was gone

Phantom body pain remains
 While the severing continues
 Cell by cell remembering its mate
 Crying out for that care

Never to be again from her
 Half that made me whole
 Gone forever now
 Down this hole of me.

2.

Our bridge is broken
 The center span slowly dissolved before my eyes
 You disappeared into the other side and took it with you

I hear the collapsing black hole roar in the center of every neuron
 It calls out your name in the language of loss
 I translate the pain into the word "connect"
 But the span hangs out over the void

Dead end wires whistle the interstellar tune
 Your light keeps my eyes awake
 It continues to come from the distance beyond your death

Sun now gone into its going
 At the base of my span a tiny rose bud gathers your gaze
 And looks to you as it opens
 I see your face

The unbearable weight of the ages accumulates as my mind
 The inertia of matter never to be patterned your way again
 Presses on my consciousness to continue identifying
 What is what was
 My love my love.

3.

My sweetheart bitter hurt
 My wife life abandoned
 All but the burden
 Consciousness paints
 As our still strife

Still alive in my eyes
 Our promise mine to keep
 For us both
 Yours now broken
 Open into mine alone.

4.

Katharine my sunshine my life my wife
 I speak to you now as the dance of my neurons
 As the possibility of my careful love for this world
 Consciousness caught in its own reflections
 But able to reflect upon them and so see through
 The face that entrances and entices us to fall madly
 In love with ourselves as first and last resort of fear

I needed the darkest of admitted vulnerability
 To see you as my sunshine you who continue
 To light up my life even in the darkness of your death
 For I see for you with you through you
 As I work to leave a window for others
 To do the same through with and for me

Oh my sweetest heart I have not let you
 Go although you long ago have let go of me
 Orpheus put himself to sleep with his music
 Mine keeps me awake
 For I can not stop reaching for you

I know you have gone into my love for you
 That reaches out now to touch everyone I meet
 To greet in your great name that releases me
 To be more than I could ever be alone

Even as now when I am all that is
 Left of you your absence fills me to fulfill
 You as what I must complete again and again
 As the half of my whole and the whole of my half

Looking always to meet your equal and heal the wound
 Time is sealed with your kiss Katharos
 One pair of lips surrounds your pure name.

5.

As light from a sun that no longer exists
 You continue for the rest of my life
 To enter my eyes and fix
 Our constellation in my mind
 That guides me by the truth of your name.

6.

I miss her
So
I target the dead
Center
Of my life
And know
By the pain
I have hit it again.

7.

Every time I remember her
I dismember myself

Limb by limb I lop
Off my reaching for her

I am down to one arm
And its hand that holds
The knife of knowing
Ready to cut itself free

Will she still be remembered
With all my limbs now hers
Without a body from which to reach for me
And I a stump unable to hold on

Blood in the eyes blocks the vision
The knife slides from my fist

Still I cannot forget
I will remain faithful
To her absence and live
That pain consciously

Waiting for my limbs to grow back
So I may touch this world again
So I may hold on to something
Other than this loss.

8.

Tenderly with great care take
 The long thin pin and push
 It with skill through your open
 Unblinking eye into your brain

Continue the pressure steadily past
 All those images of her
 Skewering as you go
 Only the most beautiful until
 The pin stops with a dull ping
 Against the back of the skull
 Where the pain is
 At last pinned to her name

Her name is consciousness
 Common death and loss
 Absence gone into the pity
 Perfectly pointless
 Because everywhere
 You turn is to
 The direction of the other
 As your necessary connection.

9.

At night when I open my eyes it is darker inside than out.

10.

The Kokinshu Seneca Montaigne Epicurus
 I roam history to spread my burden
 But the absolute absence of you grows heavier
 I continue to cultivate this consciousness
 Smouldering stubble after the fire.

11.

So many configurations families nations galaxies
 Neurons coupling across the synaptic void
 Transmitting messages
 Between the minded stars
 Giving meaning to the burning of entities
 Tendered in the image of Katharine and I
 Embraced in the flames.

12.

We wish the flame
To outlive the candle

The candle stands cold
Her last breath holds
The sun as her name.

13.

Your back is now turned to me
Vastly you look into the last of the light
You are turning into the very world I see
You are becoming the beautiful sight
Provider of the life I live by

I see you must go where
There is nothing left to hide
You leave only the truth behind
For me to find myself in

Dressed serenely in dazzled white
I watch you disappear
Into a tear swelling
From the edge of your closed eye

The size of our world
Caught falling

I tumble inside.

14.

Katharos, my pure one, gathering the last of the light and giving it back increased, you look out and see to the very end of your life where the night begins forever for you. We were waiting for each other so we could exchange what we were for what we could become -- and we did, we lived for and through each other, we loved even to your death that parted us back to our separate selves, you to be gone, me to keep going on, taking you with me as remembrance to connect to everyone I meet in your name, Katharos, my lesson of love.

15.

Katharine made the life of her dying the five concepts she wished to be remembered for: beauty, fun, logic, serenity, and above all, truth.

Beauty: she made her dying an act of beauty, a thing of benevolence, bounty, a bonus of good that made others happy in helping themselves to share the value of her life.

Fun: she made her dying fun -- she fooled around with it, treated it at times mischievously and with calculated interest, she even stuck her tongue out at it with a gentle irreverence.

Logic: she made her dying a thing of logic -- a dialogue between life and death, an account of her going and coming, a collection of connected events remembered and enacted, made meaningful by attention and intention. She weighed the means and ends, ratios and reckonings of loss and gain, quantity and quality. She reported all this with a consistent application of logic and reality.

Serenity: she made her dying a temple of serenity, a space of calm clarity -- a clearing in the conditioned busyness of living that invited the person to meditate upon the value of life and its meaning.

Truth: she made her dying the truth -- she willed to know what is, she wanted to learn the facts rather than to yearn for their avoidance. She relied on reality for she knew she had no other choice -- because death is necessary then life is sufficient.

16.

I see you disappearing more each day
Becoming the space between what matters to my mind

Death becomes you
You wear it beautifully as it wears you out

Like the sun you are
Collapsing into yourself
And the result is light

The flowers and people surround you
And grow in your going
They will stand in for you
When you are gone.

17.

Katharos my pure one how beautifully you wear the light
What you looked for and saw in me was the truth of life
Which you exchanged with me that changed us both.

18.

The pain radiates
 From your name
 As the light from the sun

I grow scream by scream
 As the dreams disappear
 Shed husks the bud broken
 Open reaching retching

In the light of separateness
 To touch reality awake
 Consciously connecting
 Because of death life thrives
 When the end arrives
 Ready or not it comes
 As we go.

19.

Pure white blossom you are unfolding your final night
 You know what to do with your light
 Everywhere it goes into the growing of new life.

20.

I wake to the New Year
 Without you

The point of life
 Pushing through my pupil
 Drawing out the lesson of loss
 The gain of the Oedipal pain
 The ancient exchange

The light of you last seen
 Between Arcturus and Betelgeuse
 Going out
 Now into the seeing
 Of the blinding bind

The implacable fact
 Of the truth of death
 As the meaning of life
 And the source of love.

21.

She bears back to birth the failing flesh of her life
 Massive with death collapsing into itself
 She wears her wearing out
 Beautifully she is turning her body into light
 Summoning the sun
 "There is a definite relationship between mass and luminosity.
 Mass creates pressure which produces heat which makes light.
 There is a disappearance of solar mass at a rate of 4.2 million tons per second."

22.

Night after night
 I wake dry throated
 From crying out
 Your unanswerable name.

23.

The work of mourning
 The art of remaining
 Awake
 Through the long sleep.

24.

We knew we would meet
 Building from opposite shores

Separate in the dark
 Our art held true

We did not miss
 We met exactly
 In the middle of our lives

Our different ends
 Came to their same beginning
 As we kissed
 And you disappeared.