

POETRY

If anyone asks you
how the perfect satisfaction
of all our sexual wanting
will look, lift your face
and say,

Like this.

When someone mentions the gracefulness
of the night sky, climb up on the roof
and dance and say,

Like this.

If anyone wants to know what "spirit" is,
or what "God's fragrance" means,
lean your head toward him or her.
Keep your face there close.

Like this.

When someone quotes the old poetic image
about clouds gradually uncovering the moon,
slowly loosen knot by knot the strings
of your robe.

Like this.

If anyone wonders how Jesus raised the dead,
don't try to explain the miracle.
Kiss me on the lips.

Like this. Like this.

When someone asks what it means
to "die for love," point
here.

If someone asks how tall I am, frown
and measure with your fingers the space
between the creases on your forehead.

This tall.

The soul sometimes leaves the body, then
returns.
When someone doesn't believe that,
walk back into my house.

Like this.

When lovers moan,
they're telling our story.

Like this.

I am a sky where spirits live.
Stare into this deepening blue,
while the breeze says a secret.

Like this.

When someone asks what there is to do,
light the candle in his hand.

Like this.

How did Joseph's scent come to Jacob?

Huuuuu.

How did Jacob's sight return?

Huuuu.

A little wind cleans the eyes.

Like this.

When Shams comes back from Tabriz,
he'll put just his head around the edge
of the door to surprise us

Like this.

- Like This from *The Essential Rumi*

DHARMA

Buddha's Final Teaching

"Make of yourself a light. Rely upon yourself. Do not depend upon anyone else. Make my teachings your light. Rely upon them. Do not depend on others' teachings."

-Buddha

Deepening Practice

Men and women confronting change are never fully prepared for the demands of the moment, but they are strengthened to meet uncertainty if they can claim a history of improvisation.

-Mary Catherine Bateson

Suchness

In Buddhism, the word "suchness" is used to mean "the essence or particular characteristics of a thing or a person, its true nature." Each person has his or her suchness. If we want to live in peace and happiness with a person, we have to see the suchness of that person. Once we see it, we understand him or her, and there will be no trouble. We can live peacefully and happily together.

If we do not know enough about the suchness of that person, we may get ourselves into trouble. But if we know, then we can enjoy each other very much and benefit a lot from one another. The key is knowing a person's suchness. We do not expect a person always to be a flower. We have to understand his or her garbage as well.

-Thich Nhat Hanh