

Funeral Service for Eric Nightingale

Minister:

We have come together to celebrate the life of a beloved friend, and to express our deep gratitude for having shared our lives with him.

Eric Nightingale always had trouble with the forms of the School, yet he was among the first to truly commit his life to it, through the act of building his home at Apollo. Every year that passed was difficult for him to stay. And he had options. But he stayed. The thing about Eric is that he stayed.

His life is a challenge to us, to look beyond the myriad, surface realities of our School to the great, central, core reality, and to hold it firmly in our grasp; to not let our grip loosen on the mystical cord that binds us to eternal, imperishable consciousness.

“Eulogy”:

A few words from friends:

“Not many knew the intimate Eric, as he had one of those machines. 10 on the active scale and 10 on the Queen of Hearts scale. But he had a good heart, and he stayed through it all.”

“I experienced the example of his strength, perseverance and determination to live fully despite his physical limitations.”

“You opened to many of us the door of your House, you opened your Heart and has been like a wild Inspiration to Be ourselves and to live the Present in many creative Ways.

Everyday, from morning to dawn, it seems to me that almost the main focus of your activities was to give to your numerous friends and family members, to give energy, advice, practical gifts, an invitation at an event in your house or simply sharing the Present moment in your company.”

“Eric was so often there, to use the moment (often a literary event) to expose what, to us, is hidden in ourselves. I never saw, nor felt, nor thought that he wished any credit or any praise. And, in this person's experience, few make the effort so completely.”

“My friend, I will never forget you.
I will remember the Summer Sunsets
The sharing of Poetry,
Listening to the music.
Through this I learned from you
A better way of living,
And you gave all of yourself to show me the Way.”

A few words from Eric:

“Be present. “Be here now” leads far enough into the future.”

“Happy New Lifetimes.”

Reading, from Walt Whitman:

WHOEVER you are, I fear you are walking the walks of dreams,
I fear these supposed realities are to melt from under your feet and hands;
Even now, your features, joys, speech, house, trade, manners, troubles,
follies, costume, crimes, dissipate away from you,
Your true Soul and Body appear before me,
They stand forth out of affairs-out of commerce, shops, law, science, work,
forms, clothes, the house, medicine, print, buying, selling, eating, drinking,
suffering, dying.

Whoever you are, now I place my hand upon you, that you be my poem;
I whisper with my lips close to your ear,
I have loved many women and men, but I love none better than you.

O I could sing such grandeurs and glories about you!
You have not known what you are-you have slumber'd upon yourself all
your life;
Your eye-lids have been the same as closed most of the time;
What you have done returns already in mockeries; (Your thrift, knowledge,
prayers, if they do not return in mockeries, what is their return?)
The mockeries are not you;
Underneath them, and within them, I see you lurk;

I pursue you where none else has pursued you;
Silence, the desk, the flippant expression, the night, the accustom'd routine,
if these conceal you from others, or from yourself, they do not conceal you
from me;
The shaved face, the unsteady eye, the impure complexion, if these balk
others, they do not balk me,
The pert apparel, the deform'd attitude, drunkenness, greed, premature death,
all these I part aside.

There is no endowment in man or woman that is not tallied in you;
There is no virtue, no beauty, in man or woman, but as good is in you;
No pluck, no endurance in others, but as good is in you;
No pleasure waiting for others, but an equal pleasure waits for
you.
As for me, I give nothing to any one, except I give the like carefully to you;
I sing the songs of the glory of none, not God, sooner than I sing the songs
of the glory of you.

Whoever you are! claim your own at any hazard!
These shows of the east and west are tame, compared to you;
These immense meadows-these interminable rivers-you are immense and
interminable as they;
These furies, elements, storms, motions of Nature, throes of apparent
dissolution-you are he or she who is master or mistress over them,
Master or mistress in your own right over Nature, elements, pain, passion,
dissolution.
The hobbles fall from your ankles-you find an unfailing sufficiency;
Old or young, male or female, rude, low, rejected by the rest,
whatever you are promulges itself;
Through birth, life, death, burial, the means are provided, nothing is scanted;
Through angers, losses, ambition, ignorance, ennui, what you are picks its
way.

Minister:

The earth returns to the earth, and the divine spark returns to its divine
source. In the words of Rabia, "Love comes from eternity, and goes into
eternity". The circle is complete