

# Four Poems

David Kaczynski

October 22, 2024

# Contents

Ode to Linda . . . . .	3
Altar of the Dead . . . . .	3
My Map . . . . .	4
The Red Stone . . . . .	4

## Ode to Linda

I don't see people  
I see stars  
constellations  
approximating ideas  
or words that, transcending,  
escape

A bird sings  
flutters  
above, behind  
purified sound  
I don't turn, no

I only turn for you  
goddess of memory  
and presence  
around the place  
where a comet  
struck my heart.

## Altar of the Dead

*Death cuts off understanding.*  
— Yasunari Kawabata

I'm taught to let go  
but it happens regardless.  
So this clinging is  
but remembering  
missing  
honoring  
cherished ones we  
might've held tighter  
closer to our hearts  
never dropped  
or left broken.

May I not forget the names  
of my dead.  
At times I wonder:  
Are they really dead?  
Or did they leave me  
in other ways?

Dissolving bonds, erasing  
those gracefully etched times,  
turning memory into stone –  
buried strata that await some  
future, life-changing upheaval.

Sipping tea, I scan the  
smog-blurred horizon.  
The fault, I suspect, lies  
in our hearts so choked  
with need and custom that  
clarity is only imagined.

Resting here in absence  
I strain to remember  
if not to re-create  
what almost was.

## **My Map**

The map rolled up in my hand  
made me an architect of empty spaces,  
displacing intimacy with self-importance.  
These days I carry it folded in my pack.

Probably I need this perfect square  
of mind, its grimy page flattened  
against the ground as I pore over  
whorled fates like a palmist,  
absurdly following myself.

But at night my map unfolds  
like a live creature uncurling  
in the dark and wafts me up  
through uncompassed space  
shot through with moonlight.

## **The Red Stone**

I sat myself on the red stone  
so often, so long till now  
in one spellbound moment  
I feel myself becoming the stone  
embraced by it, devoured, assimilated.

I should have known the stone  
was once a sentient being.  
It could've been a living head  
transformed by thoughts  
its being preserved, not trapped.

Am I a fossil, then?  
Even so, I wouldn't last forever  
perhaps till the next eon's dawn.  
Then why shouldn't I write poems  
with a bare chance to outlive me?

---

David Kaczynski is the past executive director of Karma Triyana Dharmachakra, a Buddhist Monastery located in Woodstock, NY. He previously served as executive director of New Yorkers Against the Death Penalty, a statewide advocacy group, and as assistant director of Equinox Youth Shelter in Albany, NY, where he worked to assist youth and their families in crisis. During the 1980's, he lived without electricity or running water on a remote plot in the west Texas desert where he now resides with his wife, Linda Patrik, a retired philosophy professor. His published works include *Every Last Tie: the Story of the Unabomber and His Family* (memoir), *A Dream Named You* (poetry), *Beginnings* (poetry), and *Refugees in Samsara – the Myth of Boundaries* (fiction).

The Ted K Archive

David Kaczynski  
Four Poems  
October 22, 2024

<[culturaldaily.com/david-kaczynski-four-poems](http://culturaldaily.com/david-kaczynski-four-poems)>

**[www.thetedkarchive.com](http://www.thetedkarchive.com)**