



You were sharp, you were bright, like the cutting edge of a jewel
Always strong, always right, that kind of Irish girl

Your collection of sea glass, all soft from the waves
But your sharp edges would not wear away.

Now you stand in the sand, the tide up to your chin
Take a breath, you will rise and finally be drawn in

**The ocean will polish your edges away
And deliver you home to the shore where you may
be found at last
By a girl alone on the beach
An Irish lass—the sharp edge that was Kathleen**

All the men; line them up, and bowl them down like pins
That was fun; now they're gone, and it's down to this last man

**There was something in you that could never give in
As if love was a game you believed you could win
and if it was you've won
Because I am here to concede
So receive your cup—the champion: Kathleen**

There are those who wander through this world without much sense of line
A bit of this, a bit of that—they waste away their time
But when you were born you burst forth with something on your mind.
You were bright, you were strong. You were right, you were wrong, but

You were young you were proud, raising up your flaming sword
That was then, this is now it's time for something more

**The ocean will polish your edges away
And deliver you home to the shore where you may
be found at last
By a girl alone on the beach
An Irish lass—the sharp edge that was Kathleen**

**To be found at last by a girl alone on the beach
An Irish lass—the sea glass that was Kathleen**

From Nov 17th, 2008:

For me, a useful analogy has been to liken the mysteries of death to the ocean. We are all going there in time, of course. Those of us who have been caring for Kathleen these last months have been living near the shore, and she has been standing in the water. As the tide slowly comes in, we have all been compelled to move away, while she stays and is engulfed. Now, she is chest deep-- deeper. She is far from shore, and she is not facing us anymore. She is facing the horizon.

Just some timeline facts:

K's daughter Honora flew into town Thursday night, and she and Aiden (her son) met with K then. She was speaking at that time, but the next AM, K's situation turned downhill. She was basically non-responsive for most of the day, though her eyes were 'speaking' some. Later on Friday, she recovered her voice a bit. Her sister Maureen flew in and they visited into the night.

K is really often in her own world now. Though she occasionally speaks and responds to us, she more often says things that reflect whatever is in her head, with no relation to us or whatever is happening around her. Sunday Kathleen "visited" a pizza parlor-- the line was long, and she was concerned about getting her slice. K also went to a house she had once lived in, etc. But mostly she sleeps- and dreams. You can see her eyes moving under mostly closed lids. Sometimes her mouth forms words that we cannot make out.

But sometimes she surprises us. On Sunday, K opened her eyes, looked around at the people there. "Good friends" she said, quite clearly. Last night, I am told she was awake and asked for her camera. She turned it in her hands, held it to her nose. "It smells good." she said. She arranged the people there for a photo. Even though there was no film in the camera, I'm told she squeezed off a few.

Over the weekend, we all took turns at her bedside. I spent a while with her while she slept on Sunday. I relived everything I could recall of our 4-year relationship, lingering on high (and low) points, remembering it all, bringing forth tears. I silently thanked her for our time together, and made myself ready to let her go whenever she decides to leave.

K has always had a strong will to live. She has always enjoyed a good fight, and has not taken this situation without one. But she has also found peace inside herself with her life. While she has fought, she has also accepted. Now, she looks more to me like a peaceful traveler. Her bags are packed, and she has made ready to depart.

I am not one of the few that she has selected to be with her when she passes. Hospice has suggested that those of us who are not invited to be with her when she actually goes have a last visit and let her know that we are saying goodbye. I just came back from my final visit with her. It'd unclear how long the last wisps of Kathleen's spirit and body will still be here, but most say days to a week. Or tomorrow. We will see what happens over the next little while.

Thanks for being there! I'll keep you informed.