

## DEATH: A STARRING ROLE IN THE CELESTIAL SCENARIO

It never was the enemy supposed  
nor is it sinister or strange. The act  
could not go on without it. Plays are closed  
by saturation, change, the emptied fact,  
not death. This is an honest partnership,  
this ancient inviolate contract that  
makes the drama work, that gives us grip  
and drive. Imagine how wearying flat  
our plots, our rote lines ad infinitum,  
dailiness of now, foreverness of here,  
a strung out status quo of tedium.  
The wise Director gives no sonneteer  
a part so long he mouths a shibboleth  
instead of song. The scene is saved by death!

But death is just a word we mortals use,  
other entities don't regard the same.  
Time curves away, form alters to diffuse  
its atoms, rebuilds, takes another name.  
No part is new— man, beast, nor any noun.  
All deeds are old before the doer thinks them.  
Frontiers still beckon (ours are up and down)  
but scripts may fail before the printer inks them.  
Matter returns to the elemental wheel;  
we must do the same for nothing's wasted.  
Energy rewinds on the cosmic reel  
as basic thread for stars being basted.  
Beginnings must terminate some other phase;  
endings are stages where cyclic portieres raise.

Death never was the enemy we thought,  
Nor is it sinister or strange. Our acts  
Could not go on without it, this pivot tip  
That makes the drama work. Our closing is brought  
About by saturation, emptied facts,  
Not death. It gives us earthly drive and grip,  
This old inviolate contract to equip  
Us with an exit that repels but attracts,  
Spares us rote lines, dull plots, our staling breath.  
Foreverness of now and here impacts.  
The wise Director leaves no player caught  
On stage so long he mouths a shibboleth  
Instead of song. The scene is saved by death,  
Resumed by understudies we have taught.

But death is just a word we mortals use,  
All entities don't regard the same.  
No design is new— man, beast or other thing.  
Time curves away, form alters to diffuse  
Its atoms, rebuilds, takes another name.  
Matter returns to an elemental spring;  
We must do the same, completing the ring.  
Energy recycles, fuels cosmic flame  
As basic thread for stars being basted.  
Each role we learn supports the total frame;  
Evolving stages offer different views.  
Nothing we master is lost or wasted;  
We're part of vast collages being pasted.  
Endings are openings where each one renews.

Transition is a better term. Our scenes  
Will change dimensions, turn with different keys  
And combinations, be perceived by other  
Sensors. Those dimensions number more than genes!  
The ones we know will be passé, and of these  
Who understands the fourth? Time is mother  
Of birth, death is the sire, space the brother.  
Death deserves far better press; veinous freeze  
And stumbling lungs are not reacts of truth.  
The revulsion we feel is for disease  
And wounds and all ignoble painful means  
By which we meet, unready and uncouth,  
In evil scheme, old age or careless youth.  
Fear no death itself— perfection supervenes.