

Poetry of Peace



Cherie Kephart



PRAISE

*for Cherie Kephart and
Poetry of Peace*

“Visceral, gritty, and laced with rich metaphor, Cherie captures us in these beautiful verses and takes us beyond our usual trance into the very essence of what the earthly sojourn is about—descending into the dark depths which we dread, and tracing back to the Infinity that we discover we really are.”

—Suresh Ramaswamy
author of *Just Be* and teacher of *Transform Your Life*

“Cherie Kephart’s words sing with an honest, and often raw, clarity. *Poetry of Peace* is a tapestry of love and desire, despair and loneliness, the challenges of surviving life. Approach this collection as you would a gourmet meal: prepare for the extraordinary.”

—Clifton King
author of *Poetry Organic*

“*Poetry of Peace* is the olive branch carried by the dove of peace, opening us to the beauty that is all Life. Enlivening the extraordinary in the ordinary, the miracles in the mundane. The heart can rest and rise in these words, for they carry the sacred that is at the core of each moment, reminding us that we are already home.”

—Nicole Martel, M.A.
transformational breath and
holistic wellness practitioner

“Cherie’s poems transport us to a depth within ourselves that connects us to something vast and sacred. It is as if she has access to a language we have not fully learned yet, and she finds just the right combination of ingredients to satiate and delight. Be prepared to fall in love over and over again as you journey through this rich collection.”

—Shelley McQuarterer
founder & director of
Learn Homeopathy Now

“From the depths of her soul, Cherie shares with you her unique journey; each poem takes you down a different path of her life, exposing you to her very core, peeling back every emotion, every thought, and placing you in that very moment with her. As she continues to battle, to grow, to transform and to heal, you are able to journey with her and see why she is the gifted writer she is today. This is a different kind of masterpiece—it's *Poetry for Peace*.”

—Tenia Bentley
holistic health practitioner

“It is good to have poems such as these, words that slow us up for just a bit, to steady or unsettle us, amidst the language where we live.”

—Sandy Carpenter
poet and writing teacher

“This is a beautiful collection of poetry that takes us through the journey of life in all its beauty—dark and light, hard and soft, sad and happy. All of life’s journeys are unique to each of us, yet the words on these pages sing true for us all.”

—Asa Wild
artist and fellow explorer

“*Poetry of Peace* is, at times, soft and tender, at others, the rawness is accosting. Through all the suffering and the seeking, Cherie's greatest strength is in simultaneous perseverance and surrender. ‘Be who you are, not who you were,’ she writes, and with hard-earned wisdom realizes, ‘the only way out is the way back in.’ As fortune favors the brave, Cherie ultimately leaves us uplifted with the words of her physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual liberation.”

—Eliza Rhodes
author of *Sign Language*



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for the beauty of peace



ABOUT

Poetry of Peace

My life has been about ascension. I have traveled from the innocence of a child filled with wonder, aspirations, and belief in the impossible, to the deepest depths of darkness.

Harnessing the strength of spirit, I found my way through the shadows. I came to understand that no matter how bleak life becomes, there is always light, and peace remains within. At times, it has been forgotten, or difficult to retrieve, but it never leaves. Now I reopen my eyes and heart and become a child once again.

May you be open to the world and truly see it, be brave and steady as you encounter darkness, breathe deep as you move into light, and embrace grace as you arrive once again with peace.

“The wound is the place where the Light enters you.”
—Rumi



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Seeing the World

WONDER



I wonder if the moon makes sense
on the other side of the stars
or the night's solemn blackness
tells tales of more than slumber.

I wonder how dolphins sing shrill
tones vibrating into the world
no two moments of sound the same
a composition I cannot follow.

But I understand the sun.
Its rhythmic warmth and healing
gifted to all, radiating love
beyond all measure.

I hope to wake up one day and be
the sun so I can feel what it's like
to live with grace.

CHILD IN MY LIFE

A decorative flourish consisting of a long, thin, curved line that starts under the 'C' of 'CHILD' and ends in a spiral under the 'E' of 'LIFE'.

I am a child in the theater of my life
the beginner, hoping, waiting for exposure
to the wholesome wonders of the world.

I reset my mind to blankness
and know I am young again.

I believe in all I see and hear
it is wise to be naïve.

To realize radiance for the first
time for anything, always.

The mind knows no past and feels
at ease, open, and released into light.

I am the child in the theater of my life
my actions simple, honest, and loving
let me be free, I roar, and let me be me.

FEATS



I feel the richness of the grass like silk
beneath my feet. *You are welcome*
here, the green blades say. And so I walk
over the feats of fallen lyricists entombed
in this field, their forever home.

Dirt and stone shield their eyes, they are blind
to the wild weeds that shroud their bodies,
swaddle their creative minds; these minds
so raptly regarded time over inspired time.

All these legends, where I now stand
on their land, yield to my breath
where my words will tread
where my feats will be known.

DREAMS



Dreams gained
are those dreamt awake.

Notice how the lake
holds the reflection
of the mysterious
white mountains.

These little moments
hold great triumph
whisper their legacy
into my soul.

Observe the heron
basking in the stillness
of the early morning
before the day begins.

Perceive of the harmony
in each broad breath
healthy heartbeat
and sonorous sigh.

Dreams lost become
sunshine of another day.

I WISH...



you could see what my eyes see
your tender transcendent soul hypnotizing
mine. I hear the noise of my own voice
in yours. Roaring, it wrestles with your heart.

I wish...

we could be together in silence under
that majestic star-strewn sky, dwarfing
both you and me.

I wish...

we could move together in ways only
our two souls know how and bathe
in the oneness of us, our beauty
never to fade.

COLORFUL



I am
more than
cream bones in a shell
grey inside my skull
blue of my veins
white of my cells.

I am
green pastures of hope
recycled yellow streaks
of cowardice for some
purple majesty fortified
with red badges of courage.

COMPLICATED

A decorative flourish consisting of a thin, grey, swirling line that starts from the left, loops under the word 'COMPLICATED', and ends in a small spiral on the right.

My heart is...
complicated.

My heart is...
infused with lust
burdened with grief
laced with passion
obscured by despair
fueled by desire
strangled by fear
lifted by love
arrested by anger.

My heart...
beats fiercely
breaks slowly
gains momentum
loses its rhythm
falls short of a miracle
leaves me no choice
obeys my soul
betrays my mind.

My heart is...
complicated.

IF YOU WERE HERE

A decorative flourish consisting of a series of curved lines that sweep from the left side of the title towards the right, ending in a small spiral.

Leaves drift
like nothing before
and never again
against your skin.

Pale blotches
around your eyes
I would remember
if you were here.

I die every day
just to wake up
next to you.

I remain youthful
but adventure
escapes my bones.

I'm aged
but not ready
for permanent sleep.

Goodbye drips
from your mouth...
I would remember
if you were here.

ONE MORE TIME

A decorative flourish consisting of a long, thin, curved line that starts under the word 'ONE' and ends in a spiral under the word 'TIME'.

Simply move on
and again wonder,
how did I get here?
One day it will be over
and it will be fine,
like the night lifted
by dawn given to rise
again in someone else's sky.

STAY



Inside the walls of a vacant room, her long bony fingers stretch out across the keys. Her heavy breath collides with the jarring discord she creates. The music is no more.

Show me how the rain cascades down the mountains of your sacred soul, she softly sighs. Show me the years gone astray the ones of yesterday, for there is hardly a ghost left for me to talk with anymore.

Please, pull up that old chair, press the glass to your lips, drink the coolness into your voice, then sing for me! Frolic in your senses, neglect your place in this space, and stay here with me in antiquity.

I SEE...



the depth
without the tools
to know.

Wisdom rests
on forgetting
our thoughts
and realizing
the quiet truths.

I see the depth
without the tools
to know...

and I see everything.

I Am...



a shadow. Afraid of the light.
Oppressed by sudden movements.

I am a storm. A surge of eruptions.
Strength laced with erratic emotions.

I am a galaxy. Fogginess floating.
Absent in space and time.

I am a thought. Born of delusion.
Words and gestures taken to heart.

In the I's of the world, I am nothing.
But in my eyes, I am everything.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cherie Kephart is a writer, artist, and poet. Raised in Venice, California, Cherie longed to travel and experience the way other people lived. After serving as a Peace Corps volunteer in Zambia on a water sanitation and health education project, Cherie returned to the United States with an African souvenir she didn't expect: a mysterious illness. She fell severely ill and almost died, leaving her with several symptoms that went undiagnosed for many years. This inspired Cherie to write her memoir, *A Few Minor Adjustments: A Memoir of Healing*, taking the reader on a powerful but entertaining journey through her adventures and search for life-saving answers.

Her memoir has won several awards and received an outpouring of heartfelt responses, motivating Cherie to write a companion book, *The Healing 100: A Practical Guide to Transforming Your Body, Mind, and Spirit*.

Since first absorbing the magnificent words of John Keats when she was a child, Cherie yearned to write poetry—to share her thoughts and her own rhythm of language with the world. To realize her dream as a poet spawns music in

her soul. *Poetry of Peace* chronicles her discovery of healing at both a deeper and a higher level.

Cherie has earned a Masters in Medical and Cultural Anthropology and has been celebrated for her holistic approach to healing and her willingness to examine her life lessons in her writing.

Stay connected at: CherieKephart.com



ALSO BY

CHERIE KEPHART

A Few Minor Adjustments: A Memoir of Healing



*The Healing 100:
A Practical Guide to Transforming Your Body, Mind, and Spirit*



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