

# SYLVIA

1949 2022

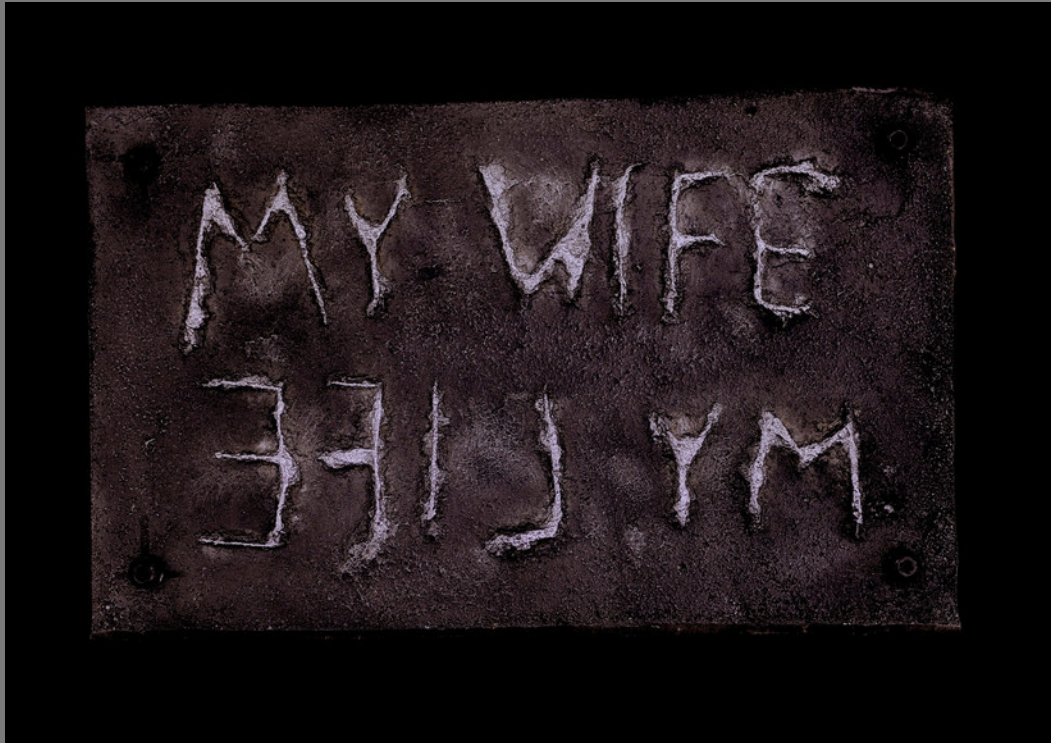
# LAST WORDS

We met on a cold rainy day in October. She willingly helped drag my dinghy out of the water in Hingham Harbor and into the back of my truck.



We were married for almost 25 years.  
It was the third marriage for both of us.

We cooked together, ate together, worked out together, drank together, sailed together, slept together, loved together.



We were inseparable

*Will you miss me?*

She often boasted about her years of jumping out of airplanes, making 38 jumps, landing in a tree and breaking her back. She had a black belt in karate, ran 35 miles a week.

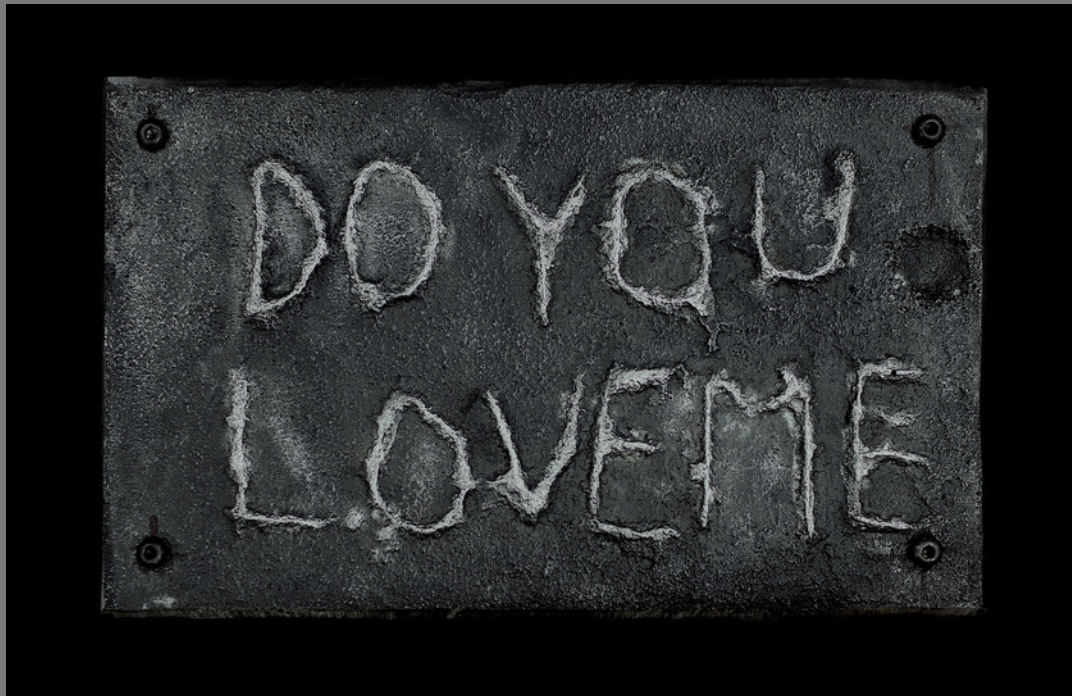


She did all of this before I met her although we did our share of blue water sailing and had our own challenging experiences.

During the last 2 or 3 years of her life she slowly deteriorated.  
Why? I don't know. She told me that she had been depressed  
for some time.

*When I'm dead in the ground*

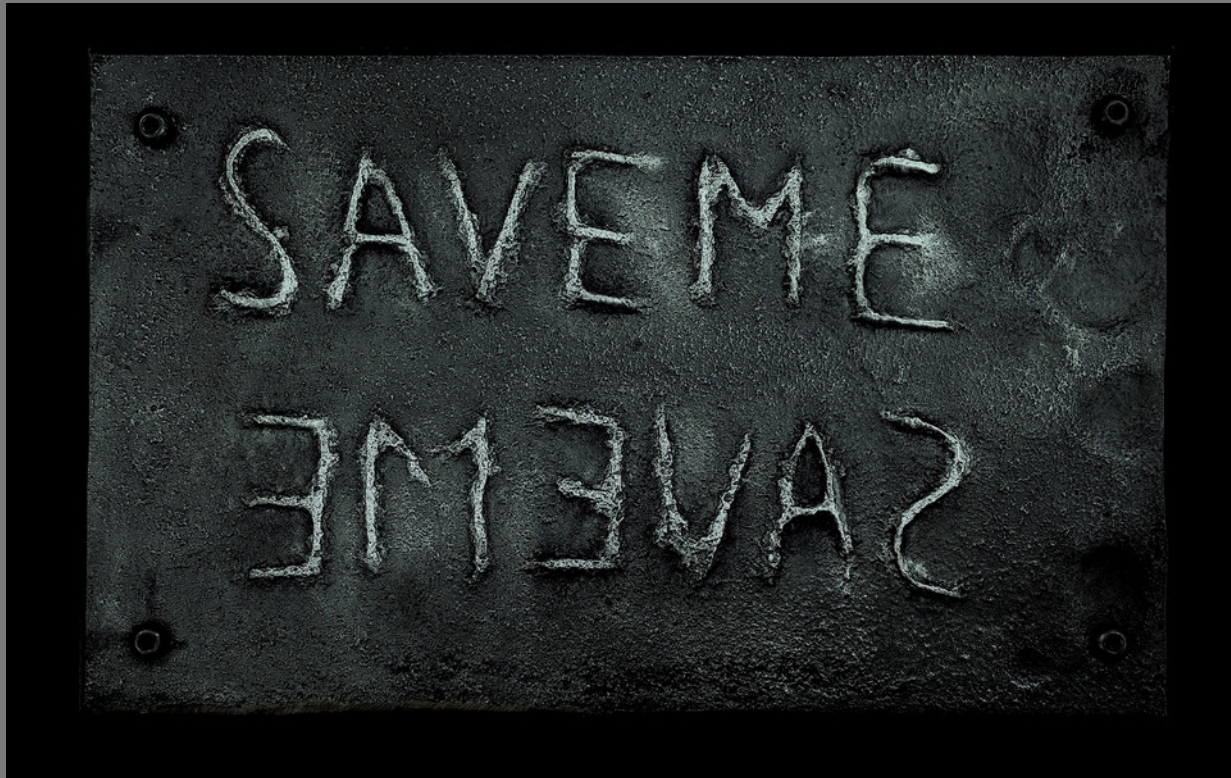
One night she told me that her mother had never, not once, not ever, congratulated or encouraged her on her many accomplishments. It was a hidden, momentary confession that bubbled up to the surface unannounced. I think it quietly broke her heart but strengthened her spirit.



At the same time she spoke of her idyllic childhood.

*will you dismiss me?*

I asked a psychiatrist friend of mine if he had ever heard of someone starving themselves to death over 2 years. He said "No". I said "well now you have".



By the time she died she had lost almost 60 pounds.

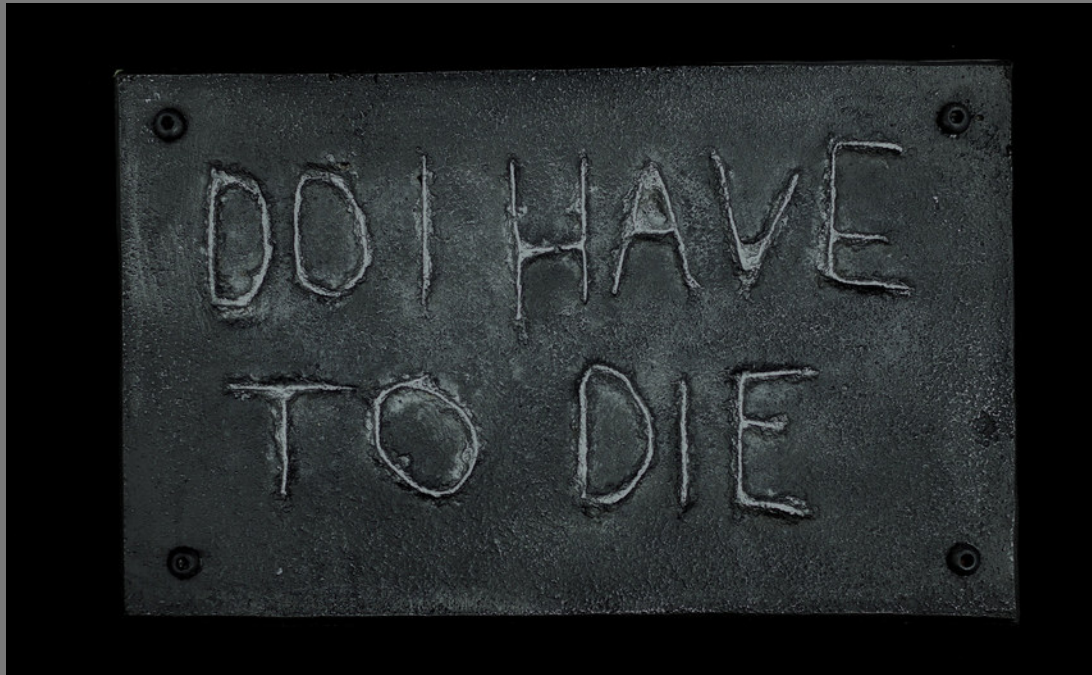
*Will the falling out of life*

We had the loving care of Hospice for the last week of her life

She finally gave up her will to live

*rub the the traces of my days?*

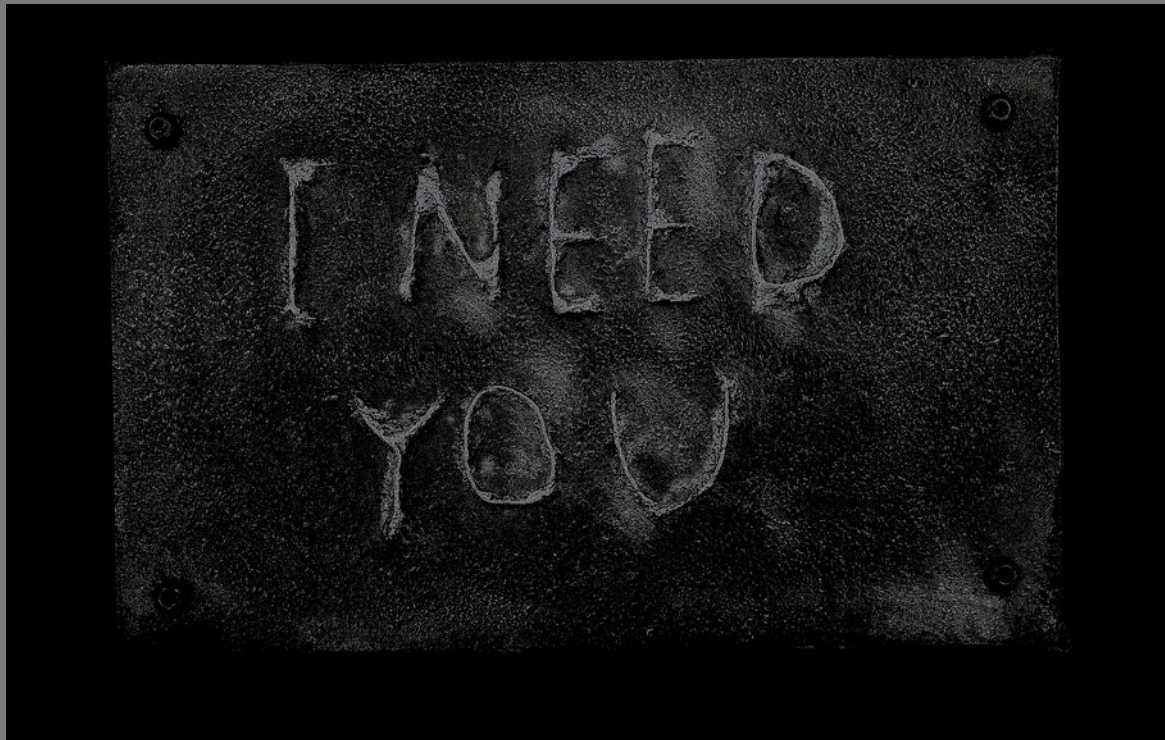
2 or 3 days before she passed she asked me if she had to die.  
I said "no, not if you would start eating, get some strength  
back.



We might not have the life we used to but we could still  
have a life together"

*when my things are put away*

Love was emptying her commode, helping her to change her adult  
diapers.



*most to trash. some to treasure.*

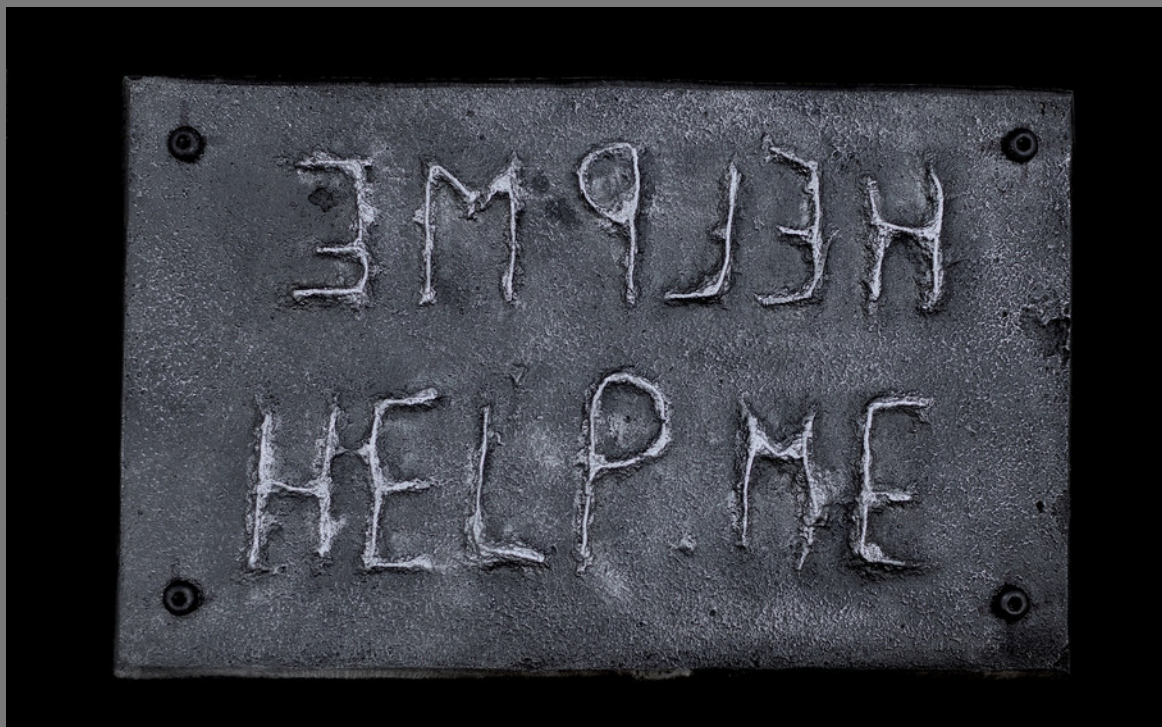
Love was tenderly wrapping ace bandages around her swollen feet  
and legs caused by a lack of protein.



*will you hold them in your places?*

Love was washing the blood stains from her pajamas that resulted  
from her scratching herself.

*it troubles me anon, not a bit,*



Love was helping her to stand and walk.

*not a title*

Love was helping her into  
a wheelchair..

She was so weak she could no longer stand or walk

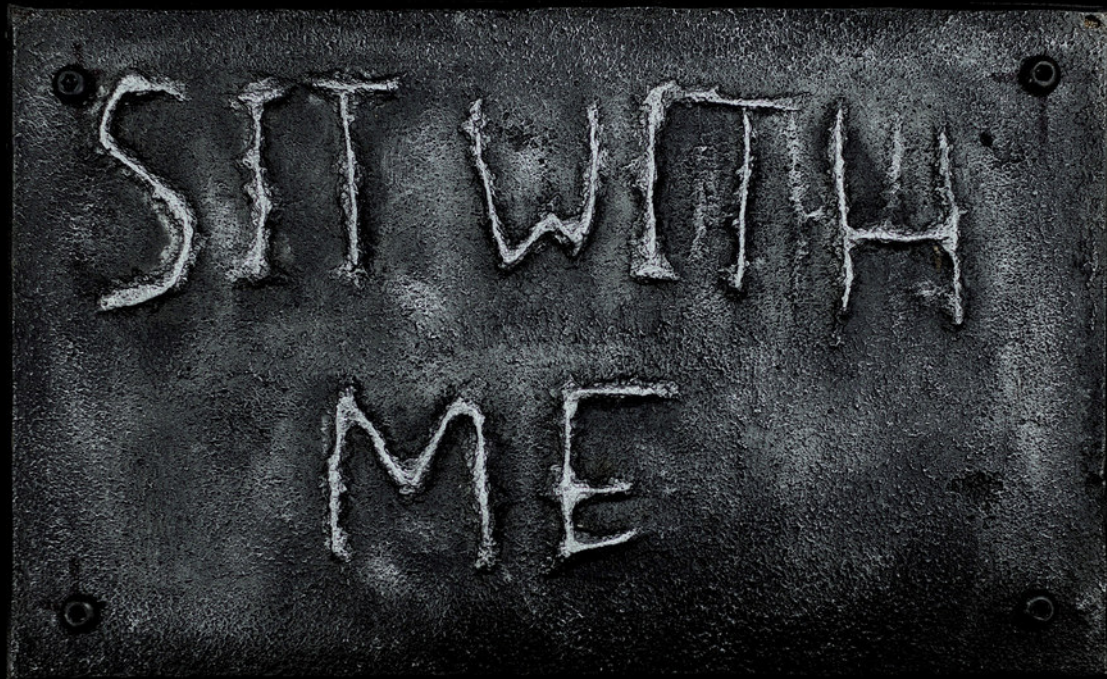
*Dump it all if you like*

Love was bringing her home from a nursing home and  
saying never again will i let you be in one.



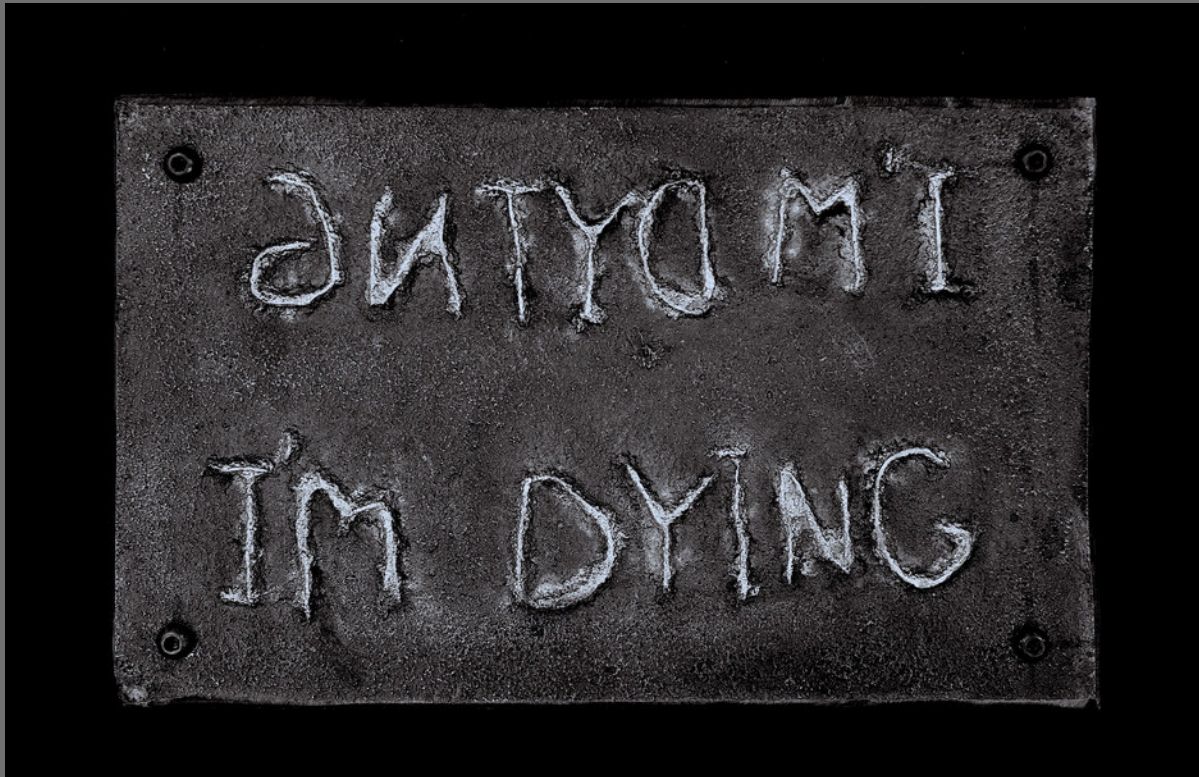
*They are things and matter little*

Love was being there



*Hold a crumb of me in mind*

*Love was listening to her voice become frail to  
a whisper*



*but carry on, live at life*

*Love was shooting morphine into her mouth*

Until her heart stopped beating

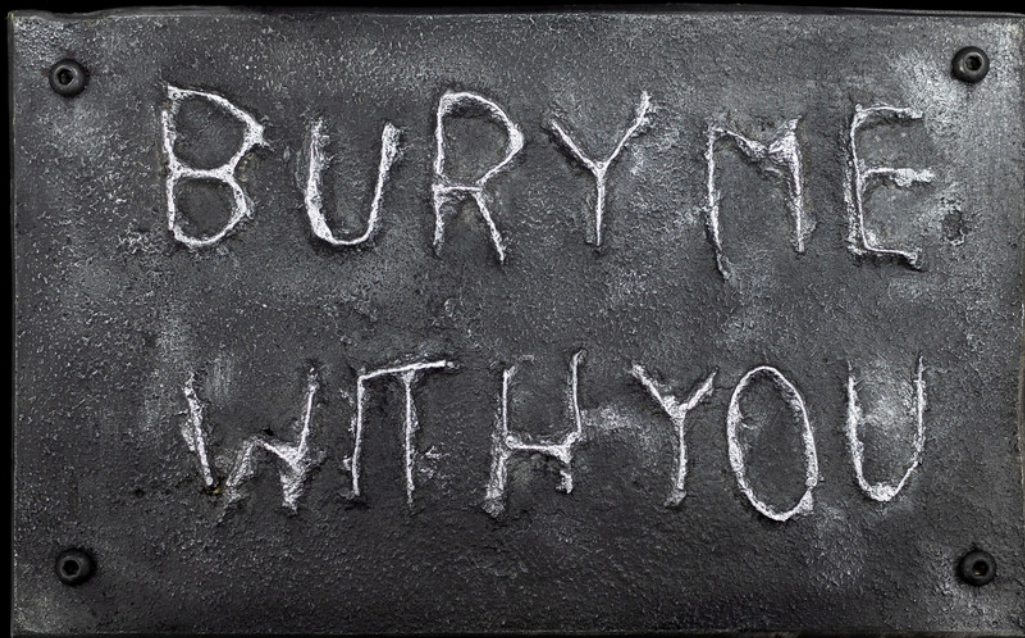
*I will help you if you need it.*

There is an overwhelming chasm between dying and being dead.

The distance should be as long as the earth's  
orbit.

from the watch of afterlife

Love is so many things I never knew before.



I Miss her so.

People say she is at peace now. That God wipes away all our tears. I don't  
know. I'll tell you when I see her.

*"I'm dying, give me a fucking drink!!"*

Jim Henderson  
Sand cast aluminum  
Photo credits: Sean Goss

*I am your woman  
my darling James.*

*I am yours when the nights are long and disjointed  
and when the nights are smooth as glass.*

*I am yours when the conversation is quick and smart  
and when the words are coming out all wrong.*

*I am yours when the vision is mine and sensible  
and when it is yours and beyond my understanding.*

*I am yours when the day is bright and clear  
and when it is stark blackness and difficult to see.*

*I am yours when you are upstairs breathing  
the rhythm of who you are apart from me,  
and when I am down here trying to tell you  
that I am your women.*

