

Κένosis [Κένοση]

by [Scott Cairns](#) in the [January 2023](#) issue

—ΕΑΥΤΟΝ ΕΚΕΩΩΣΕΝ

Even now, as prelude to

for—what is yet to come,

beneath the din and clatter

the heart's, even the *heart's*,

unto that stillness dwelling

It's a little dark, and yes,

bleak. Within that dim arena

a measure of despair.

attains a strange and

as if the ache itself becomes

that hollow might obtain

Many years ago, I chanced

—as preparation

the pilgrim must descend

of the mind, beneath

manifold distractions

solely in the *nous*.

not just a little

one also meets

Here, this ache, familiar,

a curious agency,

the tool by which

a nascent hallowing.

upon the ruins

of *Phílippi*, accompanied
who led me to that void
spoke quietly, or not at all
as we wound amid
debris, the fallen

The effect was efficacious
an answering emptiness,

George was two years past
diagnosis, a fate to which
with a swim of more
Beach to Thasos, which
emptying of mind,
of energy. Thus emptied,
the Thasos shore for days
continued, and he sank
himself. Today, he walks
ruins, and so today
of what a dread despair

by George Kaltsás
of marbled rubble. We
as we wended,
discrete lacunae, amid
artifacts of erstwhile lives.
producing in the gut
and surprising calm.

what had been a terminal
he had responded
than twenty miles, Kavala
he found to be profoundly
of heart, of every ounce
he lay still upon
as his dire emptying
beneath all consciousness,
with me within the ancient
he shares with me a glimpse

for one whose solitude
solitude. The God,
but he has had a taste
came to offer . . . what?
it proved more than that,
expectation, the trembling
drawing near, meeting

can serve, facilitate
opens to an answering
he says, remains quite hidden,
of how his own erasure
Comfort? Consolation? No,
more a deep tremor of sudden
thrill of a fullness
one's own becoming emptiness.

—for George Kaltsás