Rumi Shabbat

interweaving the poems of Sufi mystic Jalal ad-Din Rumi (d. 1273) with the Shabbat morning liturgy
This liturgy was created for use at Congregation Beth Israel
(a Reform shul in North Adams, MA)
for a special Rumi Shabbat in May, 2012.

Others are welcome to use and/or adapt the service if it speaks to you!

Edited by Rabbi Rachel Barenblat
based on a service led by Rabbi Ed Stafman at Ohalah 2012.

All illustrations were borrowed from the internet
with gratitude and appreciation.
Rumi translations by Coleman Barks.

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Opening Meditation

As Much as a Pen Knows

Do you think that I know what I am doing?
That for one breath or half-breath I belong to myself?

As much as a pen knows what it's writing,
or the ball can guess where it's going next.

Mah Tovu

Mah tovu ohalecha Ya'akov,
mishkenotecha Yisrael.

Va'ani b'rov chasdecha, avo veitecha,
eshtachaveh el heichal
kodshecha b'yiratecha.

Adonai ahavi me'on beitecha,
u'mkom mishkan k'vodecha.

Va'ani eshtachaveh v'echra'ah,
ev'recha lifnei Adonai osi.

Va'ani tefilati lecha, Adonai eit ratzon,
Elohim b'rov chasdecha, aneni b'emet yishecha.

How good are your tents, O Jacob, your dwelling-places, O Israel. I, through Your abundant love, enter Your house; I bow down in awe at Your holy temple. Adonai, I love Your temple abode, the dwelling-place of Your glory. I will humbly bow down before Adonai, my Maker. As for me, may my prayer come to You, Adonai, at a favorable time; O God, in Your abundant faithfulness, answer me with your sure deliverance!
Backpain

Muhammad went to visit a sick friend. Such kindness brings more kindness, and there is no knowing the proliferation from there.

The man was about to die. Muhammad put his face close and kissed him.

His friend began to revive. Muhammad's visit re-created him. He began to feel grateful for an illness that brought such light.

And also for the backpain that wakes him in the night.

No need to snore away like a buffalo when this wonder is walking the world.

There are values in pain that are difficult to see without the presence of a guest.

Don't complain about autumn. Walk with grief like a good friend. Listen to what he says.

Sometimes the cold and dark of a cave give the opening we most want.
Elohai Neshama / Blessing for the Soul

There is some kiss we want

There is some kiss we want
with our whole lives,
the touch of spirit on the body.

Seawater begs the pearl
to break its shell.

And the lily, how passionately
it needs some wild darling.

At night, I open the window
and ask the moon to come
and press its face against mine.
Breathe into me.

Close the language-door
and open the love-window.

The moon won't use the door,
only the window.

Elohai neshama shenatata bi, tehorah hee.

My God, the soul that You have given me is pure!
Blessings for Daily Miracles

Buoyancy

I saw you and became empty.
This emptiness, more beautiful than existence,
it obliterates existence, and yet when it comes,
existence thrives and creates more existence.

To praise is to praise
how one surrenders to the emptiness.

To praise the sun is to praise your own eyes.
Praise, the ocean. What we say, a little ship.

So the sea-journey goes on, and who knows where?
Just to be held by the ocean is the best luck
we could have. It is a total waking-up.

Why should we grieve that we have been sleeping?
It does not matter how long we've been unconscious.
We are groggy, but let the guilt go.

Feel the motions of tenderness
around you, the buoyancy.
Baruch atah Adonai, eloheinu melech ha'olam...

...asher natan l'sechvi vinah, l'havchin bein yom u-vein laila.

...she'asani Yisrael.

...she'asani ben/bat chorin.

...she'asani b'tzalmo.

...poke'ach ivrim.

...malbishi arumim.

...zokef k'fufim.

...roka ha-aretz al ha-mayim.

...she'asa li kol tzorki.

...hamechin mitzadei gaver.

...ozer Yisrael bigvurah.

...oter Yisrael b'tifarah.

...ha-noten la-ya'ef ko'ach.

...hama'avir shenah me'einai u-t'numah me-afapai.

(Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Source of all Being, Who...

...gives the eyes discernment to tell day from night.

...made me a Jew.

...made me free.

...made me in Your image.

...opens the eyes of the blind.

...clothes the naked.

...raises the lowly.

...spreads out the earth over the waters.

...provides for all my needs.

...gives strength to my steps.

...girds Israel with strength.

...crows Israel with splendor.

...gives strength to the weary.

...removes sleep from my eyes, and slumber from my eyelids.)
Baruch She'amar / Blessed is the One Who Speaks

Form is Born of the World

God's Light has no opposite at all in existence, so that by means of it one could make Him manifest: of course our eyes can't perceive Him, though he perceives all -- witness Moses and Mount Sinai.

Know that form springs from spirit as a lion from the jungle, or as voice and speech take shape from thought. This speech and voice emerged from reflection. You don't know where the sea of that thought is,

but since youv'e seen the beauty of the waves of speech, you know that the sea from which they came is gracious. When waves of thought flew from the Sea of Wisdom, Wisdom bestowed upon them speech and voice.

The form was born of the Word and died again, the wave subsided into the Sea. Form emerged from Formlessness and then returned, for truly, unto Him we are returning.
Baruch she’amar v’haya ha-olam, baruch hu! Baruch oseh v’reishit, baruch omer v’oseh. Baruch gozer um’kayem, baruch m’rachem al ha-aretz. Baruch m’rachem al ha-briyot. Baruch chai l’ad v’kayam lanetzach. Baruch podeh u-matzil, baruch shemo!

Blessed is the one who speaks and the world comes into being, blessed is God! Blessed is the one who speaks and creation is, the One whose word is deed. Blessed is the One who decrees and fulfils, blessed is the One who is compassionate toward the earth; Blessed is the One who is compassionate toward all creatures. Blessed is the One who rewards the reverent, blessed is the One who exists for all time, ever-enduring. Blessed is the One who redeems and saves, blessed is the Name!
Psalm for Shabbat / Psalm 92

I was you

By day I praised you and never knew it.

By night I stayed with you and never knew it.

I always thought that I was me--but no,

I was you and never knew it.

It is good to give thanks to Adonai, to sing to the Name on high; to speak of God's mercy by morning, and God's faith by nightfall!
Ashrei

**Sometimes I do**

In your light I learn how to love.
In your beauty, how to make poems.

You dance inside my chest,
where no one sees you.

But sometimes I do,
and that light becomes this art.

*Ashrei yoshvei veitecha*

*Od y’halelucha, selah! (2x)*

Joyous! Dwelling in the One

Home is in my heart. (2x)
Psalm 150

Let the beauty we love

Today, like every other day, we wake up empty and frightened. Don't open the door to the study and begin reading. Take down a musical instrument.

Let the beauty we love be what we do.
There are hundreds of ways to kneel and kiss the ground.

Hallelu el b'kodsho, hallelu birkia uzo
Hallelu b'teka shofar, hallelu b'nevel v'chinor
Hallelu b'tof umachol, hallelu b'minim v'ugav
Hallelu b'tziltzelei shama, hallelu b'tziltzelei teruah
Kol haneshama tehallel Yah, halleluyah!

Praise God in God's sanctuary
praise God in the sky, God's stronghold.
Praise God for mighty acts;
praise God for God's exceeding greatness.
Praise God with blasts of the horn;
praise God with harp and lyre.
Praise God with resounding cymbals,
praise God with loud-clashing cymbals.
Let all that breathes praise God.
Hallelujah!
Only Breath

Not Christian or Jew or Muslim, not Hindu
Buddhist, sufi, or zen. Not any religion

or cultural system. I am not from the East
or the West, not out of the ocean or up

from the ground, not natural or ethereal, not
composed of elements at all. I do not exist,

am not an entity in this world or in the next,
did not descend from Adam and Eve or any

origin story. My place is placeless, a trace
of the traceless. Neither body or soul.

I belong to the beloved, have seen the two
worlds as one and that one call to and know,

first, last, outer, inner, only that
breath breathing human being.

Nishmat kol chai, t’varech et shimcha Adonai eloheinu.

Let the breath of all that lives
Praise Your name, Adonai our God!
O God, Your name is holy and exalted.
The psalmist has said: "Rejoice in Adonai, you righteous; praise suits the upright."
In the mouths of the upright You will be praised
and in the words of the righteous You will be blessed.
In the tongue of the faithful You will be exalted
and in the midst of the holy You will be sanctified.
Yishtabach: Blessing for the End of Psukei D’Zimrah

Birdwings

Your grief for what you've lost lifts a mirror up to where you're bravely working.

Expecting the worst, you look, and instead, here's the joyful face you've been wanting to see.

Your hand opens and closes and opens and closes.
If it were always a fist or always stretched open, you would be paralyzed.

Your deepest presence is in every small contracting and expanding, the two as beautifully balanced and coordinated as birdwings.

Yishtabach shimcha la’ad malkenu... baruch atah Adonai, el melech gadol b’tishbachot, el ha-hoda’ot, adon ha-nifla’ot, habocheh b’shirei zimrah, melech el chei ha-olamim.

You shall always be praised, great and holy God... Blessed are You, sovereign of wonders, crowned in adoration, delighting in song, sovereign God, life of all the worlds!
Unfold Your Own Myth

Who gets up early to discover the moment light begins?
Who finds us here circling, bewildered, like atoms?
Who, like Jacob blind with grief and age,
smells the shirt of his lost son
and can see again?
Who lets a bucket down and brings up
a flowing prophet? Or like Moses goes for fire
and finds what burns inside the sunrise?

Jesus slips into a house to escape enemies,
and opens a door to the other world.
Solomon cuts open a fish, and there's a gold ring.
Omar storms in to kill the prophet
and leaves with blessings.

But don't be satisfied with stories, how things
have gone with others. Unfold
your own myth, so everyone will understand
the passage, We have opened you.

Bar'chu / Call to Prayer

Bar'chu et Adonai ha-m'vorach
Baruch Adonai ha-m'vorach l'olam va'ed!

Bless God, the blessed One.
Bless God, the blessed One, now and forever!
Yotzer Or / Blessing for Light

Don't Go Back to Sleep

The breeze at dawn has secrets to tell you.
Don't go back to sleep.

You must ask for what you really want.
Don't go back to sleep.

People are going back and forth across the doorsill
where the two worlds touch.

The door is round and open.
Don't go back to sleep.

ברוך אתה ג, אלוהינו מלך העולם. נзер אור, בורא חשך, עשה שלום וברך

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu, melech ha-olam
Yotzer or u-vorei choreshech, oseh shalom u-voreh et hakol.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, source of all being, creator of light and former of
darkness, maker of peace and creator of all.
Ahavah Rabbah / Blessing for Love

How You Are With Me

God spoke to Moses,
You are the one I have chosen,
and I love you.

Moses replies, I feel the generosity,
but say what it is in me
that causes your love.

God explains, You have seen
a little child with its mother.
It does not know anyone else exists.

The mother praises or scolds,
a little slap perhaps,
but still the child reaches
to be held by her.

Disappointment, elation,
there is only one direction
that the child turns.

That is how
you are with me.
Ahavah rabbah ahavtanu, Adonai eloheinu, chemla gedolah v'yeteira chamalta aleinu. Ba'avur avoteinu v'imoteinu shebatchu v'cha v'tlamdem chukei chayyim. Ken t'chonenu utlamdenu harachem rachem aleinu. V'ten b'libenu l'havin ul'haskil lishmoa, lilmad u-l'lam, lishmor v'la-asot, ul'kayem et kol divrei talmud Toratecha b'ahava.

V'ha-er eyneynu b'Toratecha, v'dabek libenu b'mitzvotcha, v'yached levavenu l'ahava u-l'yi'arah et shmecha. V'lo nevosh l'olam va'ed. Ki b'shem kodshecha, hagadol v'hanora batachnu, nagila v'nismecha b'yeshuatecha.

Baruch atah, Adonai, habocher b'am Yisrael b'ahavah.

How deeply You have loved us, Adonai, gracing us with surprising compassion! On account of our ancestors whose trust led You to teach them the laws of life, be gracious to us, teaching us as well. O Merciful One, have mercy on us by making us able to understand and discern, to heed, learn, teach, and lovingly to observe, perform, and fulfill all that is in Your Torah.

Enlighten our eyes with Your Torah, and cause our hearts to cleave to Your mitzvot, and unify our hearts in love and awe of Your name. Then we shall never be ashamed, ever. For having trusted in Your holy, great, and awesome holiness, we will celebrate Your salvation with joy.

Blessed are You, Adonai, who chooses Your people Israel in love.
Shema / God's Oneness

One Being Inside All

Lovers, it is time
for the taste of fire.

Let sadness and your fears of death
sit in the corner and sulk.

The sky itself reels with love.
There is one being inside
all of us, one peace.

Poet, let every word tremble its wind bell.
Saddle the horse with great anticipation.

Flute notes are calling us into friendship.
Begin again. Play the melody
all the way through this time.

Sun-presence floods over.
Quietness is an empty cup.

Accept that you
must hide your secret.

Shema Yisrael, Adonai eloheinu, Adonai echad!
(Baruch shem k’vod malchuto l’olam va’ed.)

Hear, O Israel, Adonai is our God, Adonai is One!
(Through time and space, Your glory shines, Majestic One.)
V'ahavta / And You Shall Love

The You Pronoun

Someone asked once, What is love?

Be lost in me, I said. You will know love when that happens.

Love has no calculating in it. That is why it is said to be a quality of God and not of human beings. God loves you is the only possible sentence. The subject becomes the object so totally that it can't be turned around. Who will the you pronoun stand for if you say, You love God?
(Shema, continued)

If you really listen to the teachings of the Breath of Life, especially the teaching that there is Unity in the world and inter-connection among all its parts, then the rains will fall as they should, the rivers will run, the heavens will smile, and the good earth will feed you.

But if you shatter the harmony of life, if you chop the world into parts and choose a few to worship—the gods of wealth and power, greed, the addiction to Do and Make and Produce without pausing to Be—then the Breath of Life will come as a hurricane to shatter your harmony. The rain won't fall [or, it will turn to acid], the rivers won't run [or, they will overflow because you have left no earth where the rain can soak in], and the heavens themselves will become your enemy [the ozone layer will cease shielding you, the carbon dioxide you pour into the air will scorch your planet], and you will perish from the good earth that the Breath of Life gives you.

So, therefore, set these words/deeds in your heart and in every breath, carry them in every act toward which you put your hands, and make them the pattern through which you see the world. Teach them to your children, to repeat them to their children; stay aware of them when you sit in your houses, when you walk on your roads, when you lie down and when you rise up. Write them on the thresholds where you cross from world to world—the doorposts of your houses and your city-gates.

So that your days and the days of your children be expanded, upon the earth that the Breath of Life swore to your forebears to give them, so that Heavenly days can be lived upon the Earth.
And God spoke to Moses saying: tell the children of Israel to make tzitzit on the corners of their garments for all their generations, and to weave a blue thread into those tzitzit. These are reminders to do all of My mitzvot, so that you may have the discipline not to follow after your stray desires, and you can be holy for Me. I am Adonai your God. I led you out of Egypt to become your God. I am Adonai your God!
Ge'ulah / Blessing for Redemption

Remember Egypt

You that worry with travel plans, read again the place in the Qur'an where Moses is taking the Jewish nation out of slavery. You so frantic to have more money, recall what they abandoned to wander in the wilderness. You who feel hurt, remember the pavilions and houses left behind. You that lead the community through difficulties, read about the abundant fountains they walked away from to have freedom.

You who dress in clothes that appear to have elegant meaning, you with so much charm, remember how your face will decay to dirt. You with lots of property, "They left their gardens and the quietly running streams."

You who smile at funerals going by, you that love language, measure wind in stanzas and recall the exodus, the wandering forty-year sacrifice.

Who is like You, among the gods, Adonai? Who is like You, awesome and doing wonders? Your children saw your majesty, splitting the sea before Moses. “This is our God,” they cried, “Adonai will reign through all space and time!”

Mi chamocha ba’eilim Adonai, mi camocha nedar bakodesh, nora tehilot oseh feleh. Malchut’cha ra’u vanecha, bokea yam lifnei Moshe. “Zeh eli,” anu v’amru; “Adonai yimloch l’olam va’ed!”
Tzur Yisrael, kuma b'ezrat Yisrael, ufdeh chinumecha yehuda v'yisrael.
Go'alenu Adonai tzva'ot shemo, kedosh Yisrael.
Baruch atah, Adonai, ga'al Yisrael.

Rock of Israel, arise to the aid of Israel, and redeem Judah and Israel as You promised. Our redeemer; Adonai Tzva'ot is Your name! Blessed are You, Adonai, Who redeems Israel.

Meditation Before the Amidah

A Lantern

You so subtle you can slip into my soul, how would it be if you, for a time, were living visibly here?

So hidden that you are hidden from hidden things, you enter me, and my hiddenness shines like a lantern.

You Solomon, who understands bird-language and speaks it, what will you say now through my mouth?

King whose bow no one can draw, use me for an arrow.
הֵדְנֵי שְׂפָתִי תִּפְתָּח וּפִי יַגִּיד תְּהִלָּתֶךָ:

Adonai, sefatai tiftach ufi yagid tehilatecha.
Eternal God, open up my lips that my mouth may declare Your glory.

**Blessing 1. Avot / Ancestors**

**The Generations I Praise**

Yesterday the beauty of early dawn
came over me, and I wondered
who my heart would reach toward.
Then this morning again
and you. Who am I?

Wind and fire and watery ground
move me mightily because they are pregnant
with God. These are the early morning
generations I praise.

ברוך אתה ברכו אברם ושר וSidebar:

Baruch atah, Adonai, magen Avraham v’ezrat Sarah.
Blessed are You, Adonai, shield of Abraham and Sarah's help.
Blessing 2. Gevurot / Strength

The Lord of All the East

Slave, be aware that the Lord of all the East is here.

A flickering stormcloud shows his lightnings to you. Your words are guesswork. He speaks from experience. There is a huge difference.

Atah gibor l'olam Adonai, m'chayei meitim atah, rav l'hoshia.
You are forever mighty, Adonai; you give life to the dead, great is Your power to save.

V'ne'emah atah l'hachayot meitim. Baruch atah, Adonai, m'chayei hameitim.
You faithfully give life to the dead. Blessed are You, Adonai, who enlivens the deadened.

Blessing 3. Kedusha / Holiness

Water and the Moon

There is a path from me to you that I am constantly looking for, so I try to keep clear and still as water does with the moon.

Baruch atah, Adonai, ha-el ha-kadosh.
Blessed are You, Adonai, the holy God.
For the intermediate blessings of the Shabbat Amidah

take a few moments to focus on

...the gift of Shabbat rest
and the eternal covenant of Shabbat

...the desire for our rest to be a gift to God
as well as to ourselves

...the desire for God to accept
the prayers of our hearts
as once God accepted offerings on the altar

...the return of God’s holy presence to Zion
whatever that means to you

...gratitude for the miracles of each day
morning and afternoon and nightfall
Shalom: One Song

Every war and every conflict between human beings has happened because of some disagreement about names.

It is such an unnecessary foolishness, because just beyond the arguing there is a long table of companionship set and waiting for us to sit down.

What is praise is one, so the praise is one too, many jugs being poured into a huge basin. All religions, all this singing, one song.

The differences are just illusion and vanity. Sunlight looks a little different on this wall than it does on that wall and a lot different on this other one but it is still one light.

We have borrowed these clothes, these time-and-space personalities, from a light, and when we praise we are pouring them back in.

Baruch atah, Adonai, ha-m’varekh et amo Yisrael bashalom.
Blessed are You, Adonai, Who blesses Your people Israel with peace.

Oseh shalom bimromav, hu ya’aseh shalom, aleinu v’al kol Yisrael, v’al kol yoshvei tevel, v’imru Amen.
May the One who makes peace in the high heavens make peace for us, for all Israel, for all inhabitants of the earth, and let us say: Amen.
**Kri’at ha-Torah / Service for Reading from Torah**

We’ll use a simple niggun (wordless melody) to sweeten the process of removing the Torah from the ark and preparing ourselves to read its words.

**Blessing before a portion of Torah:**

ברוך אתה יְיָ את המבונך:
ברוך יְיָ המבונך לעולמים ועד:
ברוך אתה יְיָ אלוהינו מלך העולמים, אשר ברך בך ובין עמך ונתן לך את
לאнатך: ברוך אתה יְיָ, נתן התורה:

Bar’chu et Adonai ha-m’vorach!
(Cong. responds: Baruch Adonai ha-m’vorach le-olam va’ed!)

Baruch Adonai ha-m’vorach le-olam va’ed! Baruch atah, Adonai, eloheinu melech ha-olam, asher
bachar banu mikol ha-amim v’natan lanu et Torato; baruch Atah, Adonai, noten haTorah!

Blessed is Adonai, the blessed one!
(Blessed is Adonai the blessed one, forever and ever!)

Holy One of Blessing, Your presence fills creation. You have enlightened this path with
the wisdom of Torah, giving it to the Jewish people as their particular way. Blessed are
You, Merciful One, who gives this Torah to the Jewish people.

**Blessing after a portion of Torah:**

ברוך אתה יְיָ אלוהינו מלך העולמים, אשר נתן לך תורה, ו realtà עולמיםchers
בנוקי: ברוך אתה יְיָ, נתן התורה:

Baruch atah, Adonai, eloheinu melech ha-olam. Asher natan lanu Torat emet, v’chayyei olam
nata b’tocheinu. Baruch atah, Adonai, noten haTorah!

Holy One of Blessing, Your Presence fills creation. This Torah is a teaching of truth,
whole and balanced, and from it comes eternal life for the people who embrace it.
Blessed are You, Merciful One, who gives this Torah to the Jewish people.

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Mi Sheberach / prayer for healing:

The healing presence

I go to the one who can cure me and say,
I have a hundred things wrong. Can you combine them to one?

I thought you were dead.
I was, but I caught your fragrance again and came back to life.

Gently, his hand on my chest.
Which tribe are you from? This tribe.

He begins to treat my illness.
If I am angry and aggressive, he gives me wine.
I quit fighting. I take off my clothes.
I lie down. I sing in the circle of singers.
I roar and break cups, even big jars.
Some people worship golden calves.
I am the mangy calf who worships love.

The healing presence has called me from the hole I hid in.
My soul, if I am agile or stumbling, confused
or in my true being, it is all you.

Sometimes the sleek arrow.
Other times a worn leather thumbguard.
You bring me where everything circles.
Now you put the lid back on the wine vat, pure quiet.

Nafshi cholat ahavatecha, Ana El na refa na la.
Your beloved is sick; please, God, heal her.
Returning the Torah to the ark:

Ki lekach tov natati lahem: Torati, al ta-azovu.
Etz chayyim hee, l’machazikim ba
V’tom-che’ha me’ushar.
D’rache-ha darchei noam
V’chol n’tivotecha, shalom.
Hashivenu Adonai elecha v’nashuva!
Chadesh yameinu k’kedem!

(I have given you my Torah: do not forsake it. It is a tree of life to those who hold it fast. All its paths are paths of pleasantness, and its ways are ways of peace. Turn us, O God, and we will return to You! Renew, renew our days as of old!)
Whoever Brought Me Here, Will Have To Take Me Home

All day I think about it, then at night I say it.
Where did I come from, and what am I supposed to be doing?
I have no idea.
My soul is from elsewhere, I'm sure of that,
and I intend to end up there.

This drunkenness began in some other tavern.
When I get back around to that place,
I'll be completely sober. Meanwhile,
I'm like a bird from another continent, sitting in this aviary.
The day is coming when I fly off,
but who is it now in my ear who hears my voice?
Who says words with my mouth?

Who looks out with my eyes? What is the soul?
I cannot stop asking.
If I could taste one sip of an answer,
I could break out of this prison for drunks.
I didn't come here of my own accord, and I can't leave that way.
Whoever brought me here, will have to take me home.

This poetry. I never know what I'm going to say.
I don't plan it.
When I'm outside the saying of it,
I get very quiet and rarely speak at all.
The One Thing You Must Do

There is one thing in this world which you must never forget to do. If you forget everything else and not this, there is nothing to worry about, but if you remember everything else and forget this, then you will have done nothing in your life.

It is as if a king has sent you to some country to do a task, and you perform a hundred other services, but not the one he sent you to do. So human beings come to this world to do particular work. That work is the purpose, and each is specific to the person. If you don't do it, it's as though a knife of the finest tempering were nailed into the wall to hang things on. For a penny an iron nail could be bought to serve for that.

Remember the deep root of your being, the presence of your lord. Give your life to the one who already owns your breath and your moments. If you don't, you will be like the one who takes a precious dagger and hammers it into his kitchen wall for a peg to hold his dipper gourd. You will be wasting valuable keenness and foolishly ignoring your dignity and your purpose.

Aleinu l'shabe'ach la'adon hakol
Latet gedulah l'yotzer bereshit
Shelo asanu k'goyei ha-aratzot
V'lo samanu k'mishpachot ha-adamah
Shelo sam chelkenu kahem
V'goralenu k'chol hamonam.
Va-anachnu korim, u-mishtachavim u-modim
Lifnei melech, malchei hamlachim, haKadosh Baruch Hu!
It is up to us to praise the Source of all, to exalt the Molder of creation. We are made for God, like the nations of the earth; we are placed here for God, like the families of humanity. For God's own sake is our portion here and our fate here.

We bow low and prostrate in thanks before the Source of all sources, the Holy One, blessed is God.

Kakatuv b'toratecha, Adonai yimloch l'olam va'ed.

As it is written in Your Torah: God's sovereignty is forever!

V'ne'emar, v'haya Adonai, l'melech al kol ha-aretz; bayom hahu, yiyheh Adonai echad u-shmo echad!

On that day, God will be sovereign over all that is; on that day, God will One and God's name will be One.
Mourner's Kaddish

On the Day I Die

On the day I die,
when I am being carried toward the grave,
don't weep. Don't say, *He's gone. He's gone.*

Death has nothing to do with going away.
The sun sets and the moon sets,
but they're not gone.

Death is a coming together.
The tomb looks like a prison,
but it's really release into union.

The human seed goes down into the ground
like a bucket into the well where Joseph is.

It grows and comes up
full of some unimagined beauty.

Your mouth closes here
and immediately opens
with a shout of joy there.
Mourner's Kaddish / קדיש יונים


Y’hei sh’mei raba m’varakh l’olam ol’almey almaya.


Y’hei shlama raba min shemaya v’chayyim tovim aleinu v’al kol Yisrael, v’imru amen. Oseh shalom bimromav, hu ya’aseh shalom, aleinu v’al kol yisrael, v’imru Amen.

Make the God-name big. Big and holy. Do it in this world, this creation sprung from consciousness, and bring some order. Do it fast, soon, in our lives, in the days ahead, in the life of the people we call home.

Everybody join with me: May the name be blessed forever and ever!

Yes, blessed. Blessed, whispered, sung out, shouted, honored, this holy name. The name is beyond any song, poem, or comforting words we could ever speak. Everybody say: That’s the truth!

May a big peace descend from the heavens, a life-giving peace for all of us, for our beloved people. Let everybody say: May it be true!

Make that peace in the heavens, great peacemaker, great One who brings wholeness to our people.
Stop. Everybody pray: May it be true.

(creative translation courtesy of Rabbi Daniel Brenner)
All through eternity
All through eternity
Beauty unveils exquisite form
in the solitude of nothingness.
God holds a mirror up
and beholds God's own beauty.

God is the knower and the known,
the seer and the seen.
No eye but God's own
has ever looked upon this Universe.

Closing song: Adon Olam

Adon 'olam, 'asher malakh,
b'terem kol yetzir niv'ra
L'et na'asa v'heftso kol,
Azai melekh sh'mo nikra

Eternal master, who reigned supreme
Before all of creation was drawn:
When it was finished according to God's will,
Then "King" God's name was proclaimed to be

V'aḥarey kikh'lot hakol
L'vedo y'imlokh nora
V'hu hayah v'hu hoveh
V'hu yih'yeh b'tif'arah

When this our world shall be no more,
In majesty God still shall reign,
And God was, and is,
And God will be, in glory.
V’hu eḥad v’eyn sheyni
L’ham’shil lo l’haḥbirah
B’li reyshiyt b’li tah’liyt
V’lo ha’oz v’hamis’rah

Alone is God, there is no second,
Without division or ally;
Without beginning, without end,
To You are the power and sovereignty

V’hu ’Eli v’ḥay go’ali
v’tsur ḥevli b’et tsarah
V’hu nisi ’umanos li
m’nat kosi b’yom ’ekra

You are my God, my living redeemer
Rock of my affliction in day of trouble
You are my banner and refuge
Filling my cup the day I call

B’yado af’kid ruḥi
b’et ‘ishan v’a’ira
v’im ruḥi g’viyati
Adonai li v’lo ‘ira

Into Your hand I commit my spirit
When I sleep, and when I wake
And with my spirit, my body too
God is with me, I will not fear!
Closing Meditation

In your light I learn how to love.
In your beauty, how to make poems.

You dance inside my chest,
where no one sees you,

but sometimes I do,
and that sight becomes this art.

illustration by Trici Venola.