

from: The Essential Kumi tr.

That dervish got a sniff of reality.
Now he weaves baskets of pure vision.

Lovers pitch tents on a field of nowhere.
They are all one color like that field.

A nursing baby does not know the taste of roasted meat.
To a spirit the foodless scent is food.

To an Egyptian, the Nile looks bloody.
To an Israelite, clear.

What is a highway to one is disaster to the other.

Coleman Barks
w/ John
Moyné

THE NIGHT AIR

A man on his deathbed left instructions
for dividing up his goods among his three sons.
He had devoted his entire spirit to those sons.
They stood like cypress trees around him,
quiet and strong.

He told the town judge,
"Whichever of my sons is *laziest*,
give him *all* the inheritance."

Then he died, and the judge turned to the three,
"Each of you must give some account of your laziness,
so I can understand just *how* you are lazy."

Mystics are experts in laziness. They rely on it,
because they continuously see God working all around them.
The harvest keeps coming in, yet they
never even did the plowing!

"Come on. Say something about the ways you are lazy."

Every spoken word is a covering for the inner self.
A little curtain-flick no wider than a slice
of roast meat can reveal hundreds of exploding suns.
Even if what is being said is trivial and wrong,
the listener hears the source. One breeze comes

from across a garden. Another from across the ash-heap.
Think how different the voices of the fox
and the lion, and what they tell you!

Hearing someone is lifting the lid off the cooking pot.
You learn what's for supper. Though some people
can know just by the smell, a sweet stew
from a sour soup cooked with vinegar.

A man taps a clay pot before he buys it
to know by the sound if it has a crack.

The eldest of the three brothers told the judge,
"I can know a man by his voice,

and if he won't speak,
I wait three days, and then I know him intuitively."

The second brother, "I know him when he speaks,
and if he won't talk, I strike up a conversation."

"But what if he knows that trick?" asked the judge.

Which reminds me of the mother who tells her child,
"When you're walking through the graveyard at night
and you see a boogeyman, run *at* it,
and it will go away."

"But what," replies the child, "if the boogeyman's
mother has told it to do the same thing?
Boogeymen have mothers too."

The second brother had no answer.

The judge then asked the youngest brother,
"What if a man cannot be made to say anything?
How do you learn his hidden nature?"

"I sit in front of him in silence,
and set up a ladder made of patience,
and if in his presence a language from beyond joy
and beyond grief begins to pour from *my* chest,
I know that his soul is as deep and bright
as the star Canopus rising over Yemen.

And so when I start speaking a powerful right arm
of words sweeping down, I know *him* from what I say,
and how I say it, because there's a window open
between us, mixing the night air of our beings."

The youngest was, obviously,
the laziest. He won.

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 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.

There is a way between voice and presence
where information flows.

In disciplined silence it opens.
With wandering talk it closes.

4 ~ Spring Giddiness:

Stand in the Wake of This Chattering and Grow Airy

ON SPRING GIDDINESS

*Springtime—when ecstasy seems the natural way to be and any other
out of tune with the season of soul growth. Song, airy silence, a lively
conversation between plants. No urgency about what gets said or not
said. We feel part of some hilarious nub pulling up through the sur-
face into light or lying back in a wagon going who knows where. The
weather of Spring in Persia and Turkey and in the southeastern
United States is all one long extravagant absorption with ground and
sky, the fragrances and what unfolds from within. In lucky places
such as these, Spring is not so much a metaphor for a state of attune-
ment as it is that attunement. Or say it this way: for a mystic, the
inner world is a weather that contains the universe and uses it as
symbolic language.*

SPRING

Again, the violet bows to the lily.
Again, the rose is tearing off her gown!

The green ones have come from the other world,
tipsy like the breeze up to some new foolishness.

Again, near the top of the mountain
the anemone's sweet features appear.

The hyacinth speaks formally to the jasmine,
"Peace be with you." "And peace to you, lad!
Come walk with me in this meadow."

Muhammad said, *A faithful believer is a good camel,
always looking to its master, who takes perfect care.*

He brands the flank.

He sets out hay.

He binds the knees with reasonable rules,
and now he loosens all bindings and lets his camel dance,
tearing the bridle and ripping the blankets.

The field itself sprouts new forms,
while the camel dances over them, imaginary
plants no one has thought of,
but all these new seeds, no matter how they try,
do not reveal the other sun.

They hide it.

Still, the effort is joy,
one by one to keep uncovering
pearls in oyster shells.

UNFOLD YOUR OWN MYTH

Who gets up early to discover the moment light begins?

Who finds us here circling, bewildered, like atoms?

Who comes to a spring thirsty
and sees the moon reflected in it?

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.

Chase a deer and end up everywhere!

An oyster opens his mouth to swallow one drop.

Now there's a pearl.

A vagrant wanders empty ruins.

Suddenly he's wealthy.

But don't be satisfied with stories, how things
have gone with others. Unfold
your own myth, without complicated explanation,
so everyone will understand the passage,
We have opened you.

Start walking toward Shams. Your legs will get heavy
and tired. Then comes a moment
of feeling the wings you've grown,
lifting.

NOT A DAY ON ANY CALENDAR

Spring, and everything outside is growing,
even the tall cypress tree.

We must not leave this place.

Around the lip of the cup we share, these words,

My Life Is Not Mine.

If someone were to play music, it would have to be very sweet.

We're drinking wine, but not through lips.

We're sleeping it off, but not in bed.

Rub the cup across your forehead.

This day is outside living and dying.

Give up wanting what other people have.

That way you're safe.

"Where, where can I be safe?" you ask.

This is not a day for asking questions,
not a day on any calendar.

This day is conscious of itself.

This day is a lover, bread, and gentleness,
more manifest than saying can say.

Thoughts take form with words,
but this daylight is beyond and before
thinking and imagining. Those two,

THE PHRASING MUST CHANGE

Learn about your inner self from those who know such things,
but don't repeat verbatim what they say.
Zuleikha let everything be the name of Joseph, from celery seed
to aloes wood. She loved him so much she concealed his name
in many different phrases, the inner meanings
known only to her. When she said, *The wax is softening
near the fire*, she meant, My love is wanting me.
Or if she said, *Look, the moon is up* or *The willow has new leaves*
or *The branches are trembling* or *The coriander seeds
have caught fire* or *The roses are opening*
or *The king is in a good mood today* or *Isn't that lucky?*
or *The furniture needs dusting* or
The water carrier is here or *It's almost daylight* or
These vegetables are perfect or *The bread needs more salt*
or *The clouds seem to be moving against the wind*
or *My head hurts* or *My headache's better*,
anything she praises, it's Joseph's touch she means,
any complaint, it's his being away.
When she's hungry, it's for him. Thirsty, his name is a sherbet.
Cold, he's a fur. This is what the Friend can do
when one is in such love. Sensual people use the holy names
often, but they don't work for them.
The miracle Jesus did by being the name of God,
Zuleikha felt in the name of *Joseph*.

When one is united to the core of another, to speak of that
is to breathe the name *Hu*, empty of self and filled
with love. As the saying goes, *The pot drips what is in it*.
The saffron spice of connecting, laughter.
The onion smell of separation, crying.
Others have many things and people they love.
This is not the way of Friend and friend.

THE GUEST HOUSE

This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still, treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
meet them at the door laughing,
and invite them in.

Be grateful for whoever comes,
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

Wind destroys, and wind protects.

There is no reality but God,
says the completely surrendered sheikh,
who is an ocean for all beings.

The levels of creation are straws in that ocean.
The movement of the straws comes from an agitation
in the water. When the ocean wants the straws calm,
it sends them close to shore. When it wants them
back in the deep surge, it does with them
as the wind does with the grasses.

This never ends.

THE SHEIKH WHO PLAYED WITH CHILDREN

A certain young man was asking around,
"I need to find a wise person. I have a problem."

A bystander said, "There's no one with intelligence
in our town except that man over there
playing with the children,
the one riding the stick-horse.

He has keen, fiery insight and vast dignity
like the night sky, but he conceals it
in the madness of child's play."

The young seeker approached the children, "Dear father,
you who have become as a child, tell me a secret."

"Go away. This is not a day
for secrets."

"But please! Ride your horse this way,
just for a minute."

The sheikh play-galloped over.
"Speak quickly. I can't hold this one still for long.
Whoops. Don't let him kick you.

This is a wild one!"

The young man felt he couldn't ask his serious question
in the crazy atmosphere, so he joked,

"I need to get married.

Is there someone suitable on this street?"

"There are three kinds of women in the world.
Two are griefs, and one is a treasure to the soul.
The first, when you marry her, is all yours.
The second is half-yours, and the third
is not yours at all.

Now get out of here,
before this horse kicks you in the head! Easy now!"

The sheikh rode off among the children.
The young man shouted, "Tell me more about the kinds of
women!"

The sheikh, on his cane horsie, came closer,
"The virgin of your first love is all yours.
She will make you feel happy and free. A childless widow
is the second. She will be half-yours. The third,
who is nothing to you, is a married woman with a child.
By her first husband she had a child, and all her love
goes into that child. She will have no connection with you.
Now watch out.

Back away.

I'm going to turn this rascal around!"

He gave a loud whoop and rode back,
calling the children around him.

"One more question, Master!"

The sheikh circled,
"What is it? Quickly! That rider over there needs me.
I think I'm in love."

"What is this playing that you do?
Why do you hide your intelligence so?"

"The people here
want to put me in charge. They want me to be
judge, magistrate, and interpreter of all the texts.

The knowing I have doesn't want that. It wants to enjoy itself.
I am a plantation of sugarcane, and at the same time
I'm eating the sweetness."

Knowledge that is acquired
is not like this. Those who have it worry if
audiences like it or not.

It's a bait for popularity.

Disputational knowing wants customers.
It has no soul.

Robust and energetic
before a responsive crowd, it slumps when no one is there.
The only real customer is God.

Chew quietly
your sweet sugarcane God-Love, and stay
playfully childish.

Your face
will turn rosy with illumination
like the redbud flowers.

Let the lover be disgraceful, crazy,
absentminded. Someone sober
will worry about things going badly.
Let the lover be.

All day and night, music,
a quiet, bright
reedsong. If it
fades, we fade.

5 Feeling Separation: Don't Come Near Me

ON SEPARATION

We know separation so well because we've tasted the union. The reed flute makes music because it has already experienced changing mud and rain and light into sugarcane. Longing becomes more poignant if in the distance you can't tell whether your friend is going away or coming back. The pushing away pulls you in.

SOMETIMES I FORGET COMPLETELY

Sometimes I forget completely
what companionship is.
Unconscious and insane, I spill sad
energy everywhere. My story
gets told in various ways: a romance,
a dirty joke, a war, a vacancy.

Divide up my forgetfulness to any number,
it will go around.

These dark suggestions that I follow,
are they part of some plan?
Friends, be careful. Don't come near me
out of curiosity, or sympathy.

A MAN AND A WOMAN ARGUING

One night in the desert
a poor Bedouin woman has this to say
to her husband,

Your pure sadness
that wants help
is the secret cup.

Listen to the moan of a dog for its master.
That whining is the connection.

There are love dogs
no one knows the names of.

Give your life
to be one of them.

CRY OUT IN YOUR WEAKNESS

A dragon was pulling a bear into its terrible mouth.

A courageous man went and rescued the bear.
There are such helpers in the world, who rush to save
anyone who cries out. Like Mercy itself,
they run toward the screaming.

And they can't be bought off.
If you were to ask one of those, "Why did you come
so quickly?" he or she would say, "Because I heard
your helplessness."

Where lowland is,
that's where water goes. All medicine wants
is pain to cure.

And don't just ask for one mercy.
Let them flood in. Let the sky open under your feet.
Take the cotton out of your ears, the cotton
of consolations, so you can hear the sphere-music.

Push the hair out of your eyes.
Blow the phlegm from your nose,
and from your brain.

Let the wind breeze through.
Leave no residue in yourself from that bilious fever.
Take the cure for impotence,

that your manhood may shoot forth,
and a hundred new beings come of your coming.

Tear the binding from around the foot
of your soul, and let it race around the track
in front of the crowd. Loosen the knot of greed
so tight on your neck. Accept your new good luck.

Give your weakness
to one who helps.

Crying out loud and weeping are great resources.
A nursing mother, all she does
is wait to hear her child.

Just a little beginning-whimper,
and she's there.

God created the child, that is, your wanting,
so that it might cry out, so that milk might come.

Cry out! Don't be stolid and silent
with your pain. Lament! And let the milk
of loving flow into you.

The hard rain and wind
are ways the cloud has
to take care of us.

Be patient.
Respond to every call
that excites your spirit.

Ignore those that make you fearful
and sad, that degrade you
back toward disease and death.

THE DEBTOR SHEIKH

Sheikh Ahmad was continually in debt.
He borrowed great sums from the wealthy
and gave it out to the poor dervishes of the world.
He built a sufi monastery by borrowing,

and God was always paying his debts, turning sand into flour for this generous friend.

The Prophet said that there were always two angels praying in the market. One said, "Lord, give the poor wanderer help." The other, "Lord, give the miser a poison." Especially loud is the former prayer when the wanderer is a prodigal like Sheikh Ahmad, the debtor sheikh.

For years, until his death, he scattered seed profusely. Even very near his death, with the signs of death clear, he sat surrounded by creditors. The creditors in a circle, and the great sheikh in the center gently melting into himself like a candle.

The creditors were so sour-faced with worry that they could hardly breathe.

"Look at these despairing men," thought the sheikh. "Do they think God does not have four hundred gold dinars?" Just at that moment a boy outside called,

"Halvah, a sixth of a dirhem for a piece! Fresh halvah!"

Sheikh Ahmad, with a nod of his head, directed the famulus to go and buy the whole tray of halvah.

"Maybe if these creditors eat a little sweetness, they won't look so bitterly on me."

The servant went to the boy, "How much for the whole lump of halvah?"

"Half a dinar, and some change."

"Don't ask too much from sufis, my son. Half a dinar is enough."

The boy handed over the tray, and the servant brought it to the sheikh, who passed it among his creditor guests. "Please, eat, and be happy."

The tray was quickly emptied, and the boy asked the sheikh for his half a gold dinar.

"Where would I find such money? These men can tell you how in debt I am, and besides, I am fast on my way into non-existence."

The boy threw the tray on the floor and started weeping loud and yelling,

"I wish I had broken my legs before I came in here!"

I wish I'd stayed in the bathhouse today. You gluttonous, plate-licking sufis, washing your faces like cats!"

A crowd gathered. The boy continued, "O sheikh, my master will beat me if I come back without anything."

The creditors joined in, "How could you do this? You've devoured our properties, and now you add this one last debt before you die.

Why?"

The sheikh closes his eyes and does not answer. The boy weeps until afternoon prayers. The sheikh withdraws underneath his coverlet,

pleased with everything, pleased with eternity, pleased with death, and totally unconcerned with all the reviling talk around him.

On a bright-moon night, do you think the moon, cruising through the tenth house, can hear the dogs barking down here?

But the dogs are doing what they're supposed to do. Water does not lose its purity because of a bit of weed floating in it.

That king drinks wine on the riverbank until dawn, listening to the water music, not hearing the frog talk.

The money due the boy would have been just a few pennies from each of his creditors, but the sheikh's spiritual power prevents that from happening. No one gives the boy anything.

At afternoon prayers a servant comes with a tray
from Hatim, a friend of Ahmad's, and a man
of great property. A covered tray.

The sheikh uncovers the face of the tray, and on it
there are four hundred gold dinars, and in one corner,
another half a dinar wrapped in a piece of paper.

Immediately the cries of abasement, "O king of sheikhs,
lord of the lords of mystery! Forgive us.
We were bumbling and crazed. We were knocking lamps over.
We were . . ."

"It's all right. You will not be held
responsible for what you've said or done. The secret here
is that I asked God and the way was shown
that until the boy's weeping, God's merciful generosity
was not loosened.

Let the boy be like the pupil of your eye.
If you want to wear a robe of spiritual sovereignty,
let your eyes weep with the wanting."

~

You that come to birth and bring the mysteries,
your voice-thunder makes us very happy.

Roar, lion of the heart,
and tear me open!

15 ~ Teaching Stories:

How the Unseen World Works

ON THE UNSEEN

Ibn Khafif Shirazi tells this story: "I heard that there were two great masters in Egypt, so I hurried to reach their presence. When I arrived, I saw two magnificent teachers meditating. I greeted them three times, but they did not answer. I meditated with them for four days. Each day I begged them to talk with me, since I had come such a long way. Finally the younger one opened his eyes. 'Ibn Khafif, life is short. Use the portion that's left to deepen yourself. Don't waste time greeting people!' I asked him to give me some advice. 'Stay in the presence of those who remind you of your lord, who not only speak wisdom, but are that.' Then he went back into meditation." Ibn Khafif was being taught the importance of having his own experience of the unseen, and not to fret so much about the forms of greeting people, hearing wisdom, and about what we should be doing.

There is a South Indian story about soap. Soap is the dirt we buy. We introduce it to the dirt we have, and the two dirt is so glad to see each other they come out and mix! They swim together in the warm pleasurable water and, at just the right moment, the washer lifts the cloth of our true being free of both soap and dirt. Mystical poetry and other practices may function this way, as soap that dances with what disturbs our clarity. Then at some moment they drop away and leave us clean, ready to be worn again.

NASUH

Some time ago there was a man named Nasuh.
He made his living shampooing women in a bathhouse.
He had a face like a woman, but he was not effeminate,
though he disguised his virility, so as to keep his job.

Then a shout from one of the women, "Here it is!"
The bathhouse fills with clapping.
Nasuh sees his new life sparkling out before him.

The women come to apologize, "We're so sorry
we didn't trust you. We just knew
that you'd taken that pearl."

They kept talking about how they'd suspected him,
and begging his forgiveness.

Finally he replies,

"I am much more guilty
than anyone has thought or said. I am the worst person
in the world. What you have said is only a hundredth
of what I've actually done. Don't ask my pardon!"

You don't know me. No one knows me.
God has hidden my sneakiness. Satan taught me tricks,
but after a time, those became easy, and I taught Satan
some new variations. God saw what I did, but chose
not to publicly reveal my sin.

And now, I am sewn back into wholeness!
Whatever I've done,

now was not done.

Whatever obedience I didn't do,

now I did!

Pure, noble, free, like a cypress,

like a lily,

is how I suddenly am. I said,

Oh no!

Help me!

And that *Oh no!* became a rope
let down in my well. I've climbed out to stand here
in the sun. One moment I was at the bottom
of a dank, fearful narrowness, and the next,

I am not contained by this universe.

If every tip of every hair on me could speak,
I still couldn't say my gratitude.

In the middle of these streets and gardens, I stand and say
and say again, and it's all I say,
*I wish everyone
could know what I know."*

MOSES AND THE SHEPHERD

Moses heard a shepherd on the road praying,
"God,
where are you? I want to help you, to fix your shoes
and comb your hair. I want to wash your clothes
and pick the lice off. I want to bring you milk
to kiss your little hands and feet when it's time
for you to go to bed. I want to sweep your room
and keep it neat. God, my sheep and goats
are yours. All I can say, remembering you,
is *ayyyy* and *ahhhhhhhhh*."

Moses could stand it no longer.

"Who are you talking to?"

"The one who made us,
and made the earth and made the sky."

"Don't talk about shoes
and socks with God! And what's this with *your little hands
and feet*? Such blasphemous familiarity sounds like
you're chatting with your uncles.

Only something that grows
needs milk. Only someone with feet needs shoes. Not God!
Even if you meant God's human representatives,
as when God said, 'I was sick, and you did not visit me,'
even then this tone would be foolish and irreverent.

Use appropriate terms. *Fatima* is a fine name
for a woman, but if you call a man *Fatima*,
it's an insult. Body-and-birth language
are right for us on this side of the river,
but not for addressing the origin,
not for Allah."

The shepherd repented and tore his clothes and sighed
and wandered out into the desert.

A sudden revelation
came then to Moses. God's voice:

*You have separated me
from one of my own. Did you come as a Prophet to unite,
or to sever?*

*I have given each being a separate and unique way
of seeing and knowing and saying that knowledge.*

*What seems wrong to you is right for him.
What is poison to one is honey to someone else.*

*Purity and impurity, sloth and diligence in worship,
these mean nothing to me.*

*I am apart from all that.
Ways of worshiping are not to be ranked as better
or worse than one another.*

*Hindus do Hindu things.
The Dravidian Muslims in India do what they do.
It's all praise, and it's all right.*

*It's not me that's glorified in acts of worship.
It's the worshipers! I don't hear the words
they say. I look inside at the humility.*

*That broken-open lowliness is the reality,
not the language! Forget phraseology.
I want burning, burning.*

*Be friends
with your burning. Burn up your thinking
and your forms of expression!*

*Moses,
those who pay attention to ways of behaving
and speaking are one sort.*

*Lovers who burn
are another.*

*Don't impose a property tax
on a burned-out village. Don't scold the Lover.
The "wrong" way he talks is better than a hundred*

"right" ways of others.

Inside the Kaaba
it doesn't matter which direction you point
your prayer rug!

The ocean diver doesn't need snowshoes!
The love-religion has no code or doctrine.

Only God.
So the ruby has nothing engraved on it!
It doesn't need markings.

God began speaking
deeper mysteries to Moses. Vision and words,
which cannot be recorded here, poured into
and through him. He left himself and came back.
He went to eternity and came back here.
Many times this happened.

It's foolish of me
to try and say this. If I did say it,
it would uproot our human intelligences.
It would shatter all writing pens.

Moses ran after the shepherd.
He followed the bewildered footprints,
in one place moving straight like a castle
across a chessboard. In another, sideways,
like a bishop.

Now surging like a wave cresting,
now sliding down like a fish,
with always his feet
making geomancy symbols in the sand,
recording
his wandering state.

Moses finally caught up
with him.

"I was wrong. God has revealed to me
that there are no rules for worship.

Say whatever
and however your loving tells you to. Your sweet blasphemy
is the truest devotion. Through you a whole world
is freed.

Loosen your tongue and don't worry what comes out.
It's all the light of the spirit."

The shepherd replied,
"Moses, Moses,
I've gone beyond even that.
You applied the whip and my horse shied and jumped
out of itself. The divine nature and my human nature
came together.

Bless your scolding hand and your arm.
I can't say what has happened.

What I'm saying now
is not my real condition. It can't be said."

The shepherd grew quiet.

When you look in a mirror,
you see yourself, not the state of the mirror.
The flute player puts breath into a flute,
and who makes the music? Not the flute.
The flute player!

Whenever you speak praise
or thanksgiving to God, it's always like
this dear shepherd's simplicity.

When you eventually see
through the veils to how things really are,
you will keep saying again
and again,

"This is certainly not like
we thought it was!"

JOY AT SUDDEN DISAPPOINTMENT

Whatever comes, comes from a need,
a sore distress, a hurting want.

Mary's pain made the baby Jesus.
Her womb opened its lips
and spoke the Word.

Every part of you has a secret language.
Your hands and your feet say what you've done.

And every need brings in what's needed.
Pain bears its cure like a child.

Having nothing produces provisions.
Ask a difficult question,
and the marvelous answer appears.

Build a ship, and there'll be water
to float it. The tender-throated
infant cries and milk drips
from the mother's breast.

Be thirsty for the ultimate water,
and then be ready for what will
come pouring from the spring.

A village woman once was walking by Muhammad.
She thought he was just an ordinary illiterate.
She didn't believe that he was a prophet.

She was carrying a two-month-old baby.
As she came near Muhammad, the baby turned
and said, "Peace be with you, Messenger of God."

The mother cried out, surprised and angry,
"What are you saying,
and how can you suddenly talk!"

The child replied, "God taught me first,
and then Gabriel."

"Who is this Gabriel?
I don't see anyone."

"He is above your head,
Mother. Turn around. He has been telling me
many things."

"Do you really see him?"
"Yes.

He is continually delivering me from this
degraded state into sublimity."