

## Dying and Laughing



When light returns to its Source.

“A lover was telling his Beloved  
how much he loved her, how faithful  
he had been, how self-sacrificing, getting up  
at dawn every morning, fasting, giving up  
wealth and strength and fame,  
all for her.

There was a fire in him,  
He didn't know where it came from,  
but it made him weep and melt like a candle.

‘You’ve done well,’ she said, ‘but listen to me.



All this is the décor of love, the branches  
and leaves and blossoms. You must live  
at the root to be a True Lover.'

'Where is that!

Tell me!'

'You've done the outward acts,  
but you haven't died, You must die.'

When he heard that, he lay back on the ground  
laughing, and died. He opened like a rose  
that drops to the ground and died laughing.

That laughter was his freedom,  
and his gift to the Eternal.

As moonlight shines back at the sun,  
he heard the call to come home, and went.

When light returns to its Source,  
it takes nothing  
of what it has illuminated.

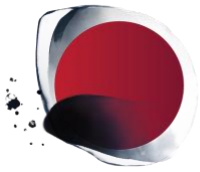
It may have shone on a garbage dump, or a garden,  
or in the center of a human eye. No matter.

It goes, and when it does,  
the open plain becomes passionately desolate,  
wanting it back." (Mathnawi, V, 1242-1264)

## References

Rumi, Jelaluddin. 1990. Versions by Coleman Barks. *Delicious laughter: Rambunctious teaching stories from the Mathnawi of Jelaluddin Rumi*. Athens, GA: Maypop Books.

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DR. TIMOTHY DUKES

DrTimothyDukes.com | Sanctuary | Poetry | Dying and Laughing| 20231001

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