

## The Servant who Loved his Prayers

At dawn a certain rich man  
wanted to go to the steambaths.  
He woke his servant, Sunqur,  
                                  "Ho! Get moving! Get the basin  
and the towels and the clay for washing  
and let's go to the baths."

Sunqur immediately collected what was needed,  
and they set out side by side along the road.

As they passed the mosque, the call to prayer sounded.  
Sunqur loved his five-times prayer.

                                  "Please, master,  
rest on this bench for a while that I may recite sur 98,  
which begins,  
                                  'You who treat your slave with kindness.' "

The master sat on the bench outside while Sunqur went in.  
When prayers were over, and the priest and all the worshipers  
had left, still Sunqur remained inside. The master waited  
and waited. Finally he yelled into the mosque,

                                  "Sunqur,  
why don't you come out?"  
                                  "I can't. This clever one  
won't let me. Have a little more patience.  
I hear you out there."

                                  Seven times the master waited,  
and then shouted. Sunqur's reply was always the same,  
"Not yet. He won't let me come out yet."

                                  "But there's no one  
in there but you. Everyone else has left.  
Who makes you sit still so long?"

"The one who keeps me in here is the one  
who keep you out there.  
The same who will not let you in will not let me out."

The ocean will not allow its fish out of itself.  
Nor does it let land animals in  
where the subtle and delicate fish move.

The land creatures lumber along on the ground.  
No cleverness can change this. There's only one  
opener for the lock of these matters.

Forget your figuring. Forget your self. Listen to your Friend.  
When you become totally obedient to that one,  
you'll be free.

Jelaluddin Rumi