

From "Dying"

by Rumi, tr. by Coleman Barks

...The prophet Muhammed was asked, "*How long*
does it take to be born again?"

He would answer without speaking,
with the eloquence of his inner state,
Die before you die.

Until you become a rebirth,
you won't know what that is.

It is the same with anything.
You don't understand until you are
what you are trying to understand.

Become reason and you'll know its perfectly.
Become love and be a burning wick
at the center of yourself.

...Everybody in the world is dying.
Everybody is in a death agony.

Listen to what anyone says
as though it were the last words
of a father to his son.

Listen with that much compassion,
and you'll never feel jealousy
or anger again.

They say, "Everything that's coming will come."
Understand, its here right now!

The friend you're talking to is speaking
through his death-rattle, this moment.

If you're too self-absorbed for this kind of listening,
remember there is a Great Incapacitator.

God gave you this inability for some reason.
Ask why. Say, "I have tried,
but I'm in a losing business.

I did what you warned me not to.
I claimed not to love the world's images,
but I've been worshipping them.

Should I think more about death
than about God?"

In autumn, the source of the dead leaves
is the buried, live root.