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Kadosh

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Kadosh

Beth Murch¹

Shema Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Echad.

Hear, O Israel, the L-rd your G-d, the L-rd is One.

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu Melekh Ha'Olam she'asani be'tzalmo.

Blessed are You, O L-rd our G-d, King of the Universe, who made me in His image.

Dear *HaShem*,

It's been a long time.

What was it that Kanye said? "I want to talk to G-d but I'm afraid 'cause we ain't spoke in so long?"

Yeah, that.

There was a time when you and I spoke all day, every day:

A run-on sentence of blessings and chatting and singing.

My prayerbook lived in my hand,

The pages tattered,

The ink smeared from my finger dragging along each word as I recited it faithfully.

Every time someone asked me a question, I would answer, "*Baruch HaShem*"—

"Bless G-d."

Every day, a thousand tiny prayers of thanksgiving took flight from my lips like doves bearing olive branches.

I chanted "*kadosh, kadosh, kadosh*," "holy, holy, holy," rising on my toes hoping to elevate myself to the level of the angels ...

... but as You and I both know, *HaShem*, if I am an angel, my hands and face are dirty with the kind of grime that comes from doing what needs to be done just to get by.

HaShem,

You know communication is a two-way street, right?

I've spent my lifetime calling you, but you always send me straight to voicemail, never calling me back.

How many ribs must I remove before you take notice of me?

Teach me the melody to the song I must sing for you to hear me.

So often, I've asked myself why I pray to a desert g-d when I can't stand the heat.

If I am made in Your image, why don't you recognize me?

This broken body.

This wounded heart.

This queer woman.

I am your creation, *Abba*.

¹ Beth Murch is a spoken word artist and student in the Spiritual Care and Psychotherapy Program at Martin Luther University College

Is it so very hard to look at the mess You've made?

HaShem, my father says homosexuals are stealing his language,
That "gay" and "queer" were his words first.
I wonder why those words are so important to him.
Am I a thief of lexicon?
Everyone tells me that I look just like my father,
I guess I am made in his image too, *HaShem*.
He doesn't look me in the eye, either.

I have a hard time talking to you, *HaShem*.
You have stood by silently while harm has happened to me.
You put a love in my heart that many call abhorrent.
And who are You to sit in judgment of me?
Yes, I love people regardless of their gender.
Should I repent from a sin that You Yourself fashioned in me?
Is my love really a worse crime than being a g-d who abandons their creation?

And yet, I still believe in You, *HaShem*.
Do you believe in me?

There are still days that I carry my prayerbook with me.
I turn the pages,
touch the tearstains,
whisper words that are so hard for me to say right now.

You who split the sea,
You who brought forth bread from the earth,
You who separated the night from the day,
You who carved a rainbow into the skies,
You who fashioned gay and straight,
And all the genders ...
... perform miracles so that my family will accept me.
... perform miracles so that society will accept me.
... perform miracles so that my heart will open in love to You.
... perform miracles so that all of us feel held in Your hand.

May the one who creates peace on high bring peace to us and to all Israel. And we say:
Amen.

Oseh shalom bimromav
Hu ya'aseh shalom aleinu
V'al kol Yisrael
V'imru: amen.