

for this we pray

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PRAYER FOR IMMIGRANTS

let my tongue not stumble

let there be others with clothes
and skin roughly similar to
mine, that i might not stand out

if they cannot feel pride,
keep my children free from
embarrassment

may this isolation turn
to refuge.

PRAYER BEFORE A MEAL

thank you for the organic market.

for this salmon i fished from the
refridgerated aisle, this
imported chablis.

thank you for the planes and
shipping containers that bring
this food to our table.

let me eat when i am hungry,
and not to smother boredom.

PRAYER OF GOOD INTENTIONS

if i could send fireflies via parcel post and have them blink upon arrival, i would capture several:

for my mother, and father.

for the kid who wrote "te amo Nintendo" on the Valentine's Day mural in the mall.

for my brother, far from home.

for the dead man i danced with at my wedding.

PRAYER FOR PRIVATE INTENTIONS

BUY ONE PRAYER GET MORE FREE

after growing up in the shadow
of her golden sister, i think my
mother was determined to love
us equally. thank you, mama.

* * *

next to graffiti reading:

SOCIETY ISNT REALITY

someone else had written:

I ♥ LIFE

* * *

when it's not working, and you
even tried to blow on it but it
still won't light up or whirr or do
what you want, don't cry—just
look up at the ceiling, and make
a new noise you've never made
before. softly repeat until you
calm down.

PRAYER FOR THE PARTY PEOPLE

blessed be the open heart and
tongue that gives and receives.

blessed is the knowledge of the
line that divides enough and
too much.

blessed be this wine,
that it may sing me to sleep
but not cloud the morrow.

PRAYER FOR ONE WHO HAS DIED

i didn't get to show you that i really do know the step, it's just that i was too tired for salsa after all day in those red shoes. several of my toes went on strike for weeks.

i had made an effort to learn, taking lessons a month ahead of time from a short and sweet Jamaican with liquid hips.

i wanted you to ask me to dance earlier that day, after the cake. by two in the morning my body couldn't keep a beat, we had to pause twice to pick it up where i had dropped it.

with the dance unfinished, there is for you to go in my memory.

PRAYER TO SHARE THE ROAD

hey taxi man, hey cycle kids,
pedestrians with or without
cellphones glued to skulls,
jaywalkers, out at five o'clock
crowd, delivery boy, truck
driver, bus driver, larger than
necessary vehicle driver,
policewoman, jogger,
blade runner, skip-child,
hand-held child, child on a
leash, child with double-slow
grandparents, dog-wielding
flotilla of best friends forever,
arm-in-arm lovers, homeless
man,

let's make room.

PRAYER FOR THE BODY

dear body,
it's time to smooth some
anti-bacterial cream over your
troubled relationship with my
head and observe the litany of
what-i-must:

sit up straight, knees together;
walk like i'm not afraid, like
the shoes don't hurt;
look and see without distortion;
maintain ease and grace in all
motions.

above all, not be fussy about
where my beautiful meat ends
and the world begins.

PRAYER FOR IMAGINARY BEINGS

protect the people who don't exist, who are made of nothing but words and fictional beliefs – keep them from invisible harm and threats not present, comfort them if the love they receive isn't real.

watch over all the bedtime shadows on the wall, little rabbits and dogs abandoned around the same time as “let's pretend.”

don't disappoint them, don't let them dry out until empty.

PRAYER FOR CREATIVE TYPES, I

i have an idea –

thank you

PRAYER FOR CREATIVE TYPES, II

i need inspiration—

please

PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

it was my fault. i didn't mean to. i should have _____ but i neglected to do so and you just weren't on my horizon of things to consider.

i'm not proud of it. i crossed the line, i did wrong. it was an ugly thing to do. i should have said something earlier. i can't change what happened.

i sincerely regret what happened. i know that i've hurt you from the inside out. i won't fail you again.

PRAYER AGAINST SPEED

i'd like to be aware of the moment when it's time to slow down, catch it before it plods off in the opposite direction from accelerate.

when we slow down, we will all be encouraged to stand still. slowing down will deliver us from distraction. and we will know that we may take more time than is strictly necessary.

**PRAYER FOR MY SISTER NOT TO
HATE ME NO MORE**

glory be to something we had
before.

when i turned seven you woke
up early when i did to open
the presents, and read the first
chapter of Bambi to me. it is still
my favorite book.

when i turned twenty-eight i
checked my phone every time
it beeped but the text messages
weren't from you. you never
called that day.

give me a tender conscience; let's
have a drink, open our hearts.

**PRAYER FOR THE DISPERSION
OF NEGATIVITY**

let's picture ourselves wearing a
dress or suit of mirrored tiles.
i saw a woman at an art opening
wearing a gown and shoes she
made just like this, so i know it's
possible. ok, you see it?
all the mirrors will reflect any
nasty comments, mean faces, or
vicious attitudes.
any light the mirrors pick up
will break up and scatter,
confusing those who do not love
us; we'll be like
ten thousand points of light.
radiant.

PRAYER FOR A FAVORITE THING

if anything happens to the
apartment while i'm out,
if a fire,
if a thief,
if a recreational aircraft crashes,
please make it so i am wearing
the brown leather boots (the
Italian ones my mother bought
in Rome 1981), keep those boots
safe. on my feet.

PRAYER

what does it take to be heard?