

## Eulogy for arati - Amara



So since Rav is not going to let me make sure my timeline is absolutely accurate, this is to the best of a not great memory.

I want to say we first talked when I offered to light a candle for her when she was having a rough time, that's when she told me she didn't know her exact birthday, that it was a guess because of the situation her family was in during her birth.

Soon after, I expressed envy in spinning because I wanted to try but my knees make a treadle wheel impossible in the long run and my shoulders make a drop spindle hard in the long run and someone, possibly her, started a conversation about supported spindles. I had no idea this would fundamentally change my life. She very casually asked for my address and a few days later, I had a spindle in my mail box along with little bits and bobs of fiber, every one of which had a hand written note inside about what the prep was and the best way to start spinning it. She sent me links to videos and offered to video chat showing me if I needed to.

I have no idea who brought it up or how, but being in south Jersey, NYC isn't a terrible hike for me. I took a bus into the city and then trains to her place, texting her at each stop. She came and got me at the door and brought me up to her apartment. I was in awe of her fiber room. You have seen pictures from different angles, but it is so different being in it... hand spun hung along one wall, shelves filled with bins...one bin is just different samples of mix ins.





OH I THINK I REMEMBER HOW I GOT INVITED OVER. I am pretty sure I offered to help prep the Jacob cause she said it would be a monumental task and skirt-ing was her least favorite part?? I think that had some-thing to do with it.

We settled in, and I cannot remember if we skirted the Jacob or played with tools first. Actually, it must have been the Jacob cause I had a batt of it. So, we started with a giant sheet on the floor and she showed me how to skirt, taking any particularly nasty parts away right away so I wouldn't have to deal with it.

She's explaining different fiber things, the idea of microns, that she has totally put some of her wool under a microscope before out of curiosity to see what it looks like, how she got some of the other fleeces she had had me pet.

Just as she is saying, "Sometimes there's bugs, oh I should have warned you..." I hold up, what I was soon informed was a tick down to the genus and species, and said, "Oh you mean like this?" It was obviously dead, but the look on her face, she apologized that she hadn't warned me sooner, I told her no way, no apologizing, you are giving me a crash course in fiber prep, and besides, it is dead!

It was a pretty big fleece but I was very dedicated to doing a good job and making sure I was helping that I got through it in a time that was apparently much less than she expected. She was helping but also collecting things from around the room to show me and explaining tons of stuff. She said something about how fast it was and I did a good job, as always, encouraging and awesome.

I am pretty sure we got lunch around this time. The only highlight was we ordered...Vietnamese I think? And I just ordered something that had stuff I like in it, so when Jay asked who got the soup, I said not me, then we got everything handed out and I was definitely the one that got the soup. In my card to Jay, I reference myself as the person who didn't realize they ordered soup haha.

Then we played with tools! Combs were by far my favorite, and we did those first. We did hand carders and I was so focused on the movements, as I had been with the combs, that I didn't realize you could over do it...I ended up kind of with the combs stuck together. "Oh, yeah, you can over comb fiber and it kind of felts." She smiled at me and said, "But it's not problem, we can rip it up for a batt later! You did really great though!" We had wayyyyy too much fun with her drum carder. We made tons of batts, some with the Jacob, some with random fiber we decided went with the felted rolag I made and so. Many. Sparkles. Because, per V, you can NEVER have too many sparkles. Tons of little mix ins. I believe we each kept one of those colorful sparkly batts.



We then settled in on the futon and she had recently started...or maybe that day while we were there opened up and started the giant sashiko panel. She said she had no idea what she was going to do with it. "You could make it into a lap quilt?" She had never quilted before, I talked her though it (Pre knitting, quilting was my first stable crafting, before that had always been random projects that interested me), "Plus with the lines between panels you could probably stabilize it quilting wise, along those lines, and it would be pretty well sealed." This inspired all the fun cat fabric she ended up getting later on and the bowl cozies and probably that confidence in sewing lead to her love of poofy shirt making! I like to think, since she was so fundamental in my crafting life, that maybe I did a little inspiring too here <3

I was spinning, very awkwardly, but spinning, and she watched. As someone mostly self taught at that point, I did it in kind of a weird way, drafting out a buuuuunch and then adding spin all at once instead of drawing from a bit of spun stuff once there is some twist to it to stabilize it, if that made sense. She said she had never seen someone spin quite like that before, but I was doing great! And she was so happy I could spin well.

I had prebought my ticket home and it was getting time to leave. V starts packing up the Jacob batts and the batt we made and also, without a word, starts grabbing random things, some I had admired early, some she just seemed to randomly decide.

Samples of nice stuff (angora), things that were pretty colors, some wool she had dyed herself, some... Cotswold, I think, that was rainbow that I later dubbed and we jokingly called 'clown pubes,' embroidery thread...just so much that it filled my back pack I had brought.

It was so full that I was now holding my knitting bag that held my beloved spindle she had given me. Wait, one more thing! You definitely need this and this! "But my bag is full. And really, you've given me so, so much already!"

She remembered tote bags (to embroider) had been in that list of things, had me dig them out of my backpack, and proceeded to make sure that tote bag was full as well.

I gave her a GIANT hug and waddled off a looooot more than I came with and a very warm heart and a huge love of fiber processing and proceeded to text her on my way home about how entirely awesome the day had been.

