



# **THE DIWAN OF ZEB-UN-NISSA**

**ZEB-UN-NISSA**

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# **THE DIWAN OF ZEB-UN-NISSA**

**THE FIRST FIFTY GHAZALS  
RENDERED FROM THE PERSIAN**

**BY**

**MAGAN LAL**

**AND**

**JESSIE DUNCAN WESTBROOK**

**WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES**

**THE WISDOM OF THE EAST SERIES**

The Diwan of Zeb-un-Nissa by Magan Lal and Jessie Duncan Westbrook.

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beaten hound,  
 I crouch and fawn for crumbs of love from Thee.  
 O Makhfi, if thy sighs could reach the bosom of  
 the sea,  
 Even within the cold and lightless deep  
 Caught from thy heart a quenchless flame should  
 leap.

### XVI

O Love, I am thy thrall.  
 As on the tulip's burning petal glows  
 A spot yet more intense, of deeper dye,  
 So in my heart a flower of passion blows;  
 See the dark stain of its intensity,  
 Deeper than all.

This is my pride—  
 That I the rose of all the world have sought,  
 And, still unwearied in the eager quest,  
 Fainted nor failed have I, and murmured not;  
 Thus is my head exalted o'er the rest,  
 My turban glorified.

O blessèd pain,  
 O precious grief I keep, and sweet unrest,  
 Desire that dies not, longing past control!  
 My heart is torn to pieces in my breast,  
 And for the shining diamond of the soul  
 I pine in vain.

Behold the light  
 That from Thy torch of mercy comes to bless  
 The garden of my heart, Beloved One,  
 With the white radiance of its loveliness,  
 Till my wall's shadow shall outvie the sun,  
 And seem more bright.

I humbly sit apart;  
 The Kaaba courts the true believers tread,  
 I dwell outside, nor mix my praise with theirs;  
 Yet every fibre of my sacred thread  
 More precious is to God than all their prayers—  
 He sees the heart.

O Makhfi sorrowing,  
 Look from the valley of despair and pain;  
 The breath of love like morning zephyr blows,  
 Pearls from thine eyelids fall like gentle rain  
 Upon the garden, summoning the rose,  
 Calling the spring.

### XVII

The wine of my delight has lost its taste;  
 The earth of my existence turns a waste,  
 No wholesome grass grows there, but only weed;  
 My flaming spring of life has passed indeed.  
 I searched for joy, but never found the end;  
 My empty hands, outstretched, can greet no friend;  
 And if God's pardon never come to me,  
 Then less than withered grass my prayers must be.

But, Makhfi, look with a discerning eye—  
 Deeper than thy despair thy bliss may lie;  
 Though on the path of love thy feet may tire,  
 New strength shall come to thee, and new desire.

### XVIII

Tyrannical Love, that goads me and gives me no rest,  
 As proud as thine arrogant self is this heart in my breast,  
 It will keep in its pain  
 Its faithfulness, though it be trampled beneath thy disdain.

This mirror, my heart, is broken against my desire;  
 O Heaven, give me not of your pity, nay, rather admire



My soul that is proud;  
My head, though I beat it in sorrow, has never been bowed.

Think not that with joy and with ease I pursue my desire;  
With heart that is weary, with footsteps that lag and that tire,  
I follow my quest,  
To attain through the difficult way to the kingdom of rest.

Yet, Makhfi, look up from thy desolate region of night,  
And see how the army of sorrow has taken to flight;  
Dawn comes, and despair  
Has vanished before the miraculous arrows of prayer.

### XIX

Desolate one, O when  
Shalt thou the shining garden see again?  
Keep thou within thee, holy and apart,  
The garden of thy heart;

As the long-prisoned bird,  
Forgetting that it ever flew, and heard  
Songs of the wild, and pinions wide unfurled,  
Makes of the cage its world.

No fear indeed thou hast,  
O heart within the net of love held fast,  
Of separation's bitter agony—  
Thy love is one with thee.

Sadly we wait and tire,  
And sight of the Belovèd Face desire  
In vain, till in our hearts the hope is born  
Of Resurrection morn.

O heart, thine be no less  
Than the ascetic Brahman's faithfulness,  
The knotted veins his wasted body bears  
As sacred thread he wears.

What is a lover's fate?  
 What shall befall to him unfortunate?  
 The world shall cry, to please its idle whim,  
 "Crucify him!"

Why dost thou then complain  
 That on thy feet there drags this heavy chain?  
 Nay, it befits thee well such weights to wear;  
 Much hast thou learned to bear.

As, far upon the hills,  
 Despairing Ferhad, weary of life's ills,  
 Welcomed kind Death, and wept, so for relief  
 Weep thou and salve thy grief!

And see the thorny waste  
 Whereon thy bruised feet their pathway traced,  
 This wilderness, touched by thy blood that flows,  
 Blooms fragrant as the rose.

O Love, shall I repine  
 The noose of death around my neck to twine  
 At thy behest? Nay, if thy glory gain,  
 Proud am I in my pain.

O Makhfi, if thy fate  
 Be that, without the garden, desolate  
 Thou dwell—reck not of it; life is a dream,  
 And we, that seem  
 To live and move and love, no more at all  
 Than shadows on a wall.

## XX

Safely the kings had kept their regal seat,  
 Nor ever known the poison of defeat,  
 Had not the Turks the invading army led,  
 And the crown toppled from each kingly head:

So were we not, O Master, led by thee  
 Vain were our struggles, scant our victory!

How strong thou hast become, O moth, how great,  
 Worshipping thus the flame! this is thy fate—  
 Vainly to love and die, yet thou canst bear  
 The burning sparks and ever scorn despair:  
 Thou knowest, fluttering nearer to the fire,  
 In death thou shalt be one with thy desire.

O cruel Love,—when on the Judgment Day  
 Thy tyranny God shall in full repay,  
 And all the blameless blood that thou hast shed  
 Shall be revenged upon thy haughty head:  
 Black shall the place of judging be, no less  
 Than Kerbela's accursèd wilderness.

Haply indeed, O Judge, wilt thou be kind,  
 And pity in thy heart for sinners find;

Think of the memory of their disgrace,  
 How dark humiliation stains their face,  
 The shame that stings and goads them to repent—  
 Will these not be sufficient punishment?

Within the desert of the world astray,  
 How many weary wanderers lose their way!  
 But Love with beckoning hand appears, to bless,  
 Finds them a pathway through the wilderness,  
 And though, like Majnun, in the wild they roam,  
 Leads them through toils and tribulations home.

## XXI

Unto the garden of attainment ne'er  
 Our pathway led,  
 And never were our eyes anhungered fed  
 With vision of Thy blessèd countenance,

Never a glance  
Attained we of that face for ever fair.

Wherefor my tears fell down in floods like rain,  
And as I sighed  
I thought of my desires unsatisfied,  
And memory summoned up with vain regret  
The garden where we met,  
But meet no more, I tell my heart with pain.

What have I then to do with high estate?  
Fortune I lay aside  
And all wherein the world has taken pride:  
Yet in this day of my humility  
Precious to me  
As wine of kings I hold my cup of fate.

Despair not, sorrow-laden Makhfi, though  
No grass appears  
Within this desert watered by thy tears.  
Why with their arguing do learnèd men  
Question God's mercy, when  
His works His infinite compassion show!

## XXII

Green is my garden, watered by my tears,  
And through my soul the perfume of the rose  
Kindling my heart with its enchantment flows;  
O Saki, bring the cup, for there appears

Gleaming within the garden through the night  
A radiance fair our feasting to illumine;  
What is this glamour shining through the gloom?  
My heart's blood, glowing, yields the heavenly light.

O, I have drunk my cup of cherished grief,  
And love the torment of my wounded heart;

As the scars heal I tear their lips apart,  
And in my pain find rapturous relief.

Why should I then permit the winds of care  
To ruffle thus my soul, as airs of spring  
Through the Belovèd's tresses wantoning?  
For I have risen to fortune from despair.

O fear not, if within the house of prayer  
The feeble camphor candle fails and dies;  
From out the flaming furnace of my sighs  
Will rise another light, more fierce, more fair.

The perfumed winds that with the dawn arise,  
Have they not, Makhfi, caught thy soul away  
And drenched it with delight, so all the day  
There cling about thee airs of Paradise?

### XXIII

For my love's madness all the world on me  
Hath heaped its scorn; so from its ways I flee,  
To find a refuge from its cruelty.

A hermitage, with peace my soul to bless,  
Here in a corner of the wilderness,  
Unseen by secular eyes shall I possess.

Who is the man who boasts to be Love's slave,  
And yet this petty life of his would save?  
Poor Love, whose votaries are not more brave!

When I was young I asked, and Love gainsaid;  
What slips, what wanderings, on Love's road I made,  
Until I summoned Wisdom to my aid!

The mirror of my heart I burnish bright  
Until, reflected fair for my delight,  
The Self's eternal beauty greets my sight.

Like Yaqub blinded by his agony,  
 No face in all the world is aught to me;  
 What use have eyes except to look on Thee?

#### XXIV

How long, O burning heart,  
 Canst thou keep hidden! see how flames outstart,  
 And vapour from thy sighs  
 Will darken e'en the stars within the skies.

Driven by my love I must  
 Wander like Majnun, where the desert dust  
 Falls on his weary head,  
 Eternally for Leila doomed to shed  
 His unavailing tears.

The soul by Love enlightened never fears  
 The unseeing world that says  
 He must be mad who treads within Love's ways;  
 But joyful he and wise,  
 For Love has given new vision to his eyes.

See, Makhfi, cruel Love,  
 How in his haughtiness he rides above  
 The hearts of men, how red  
 His sword with lovers' blood that he has shed!

#### XXV

When I behold the garden in the spring,  
 Rejoicing like a nightingale I sing;  
 And if the cruel gardener, with his guile,  
 Try to ensnare me—like a rose I smile.

The morning breeze that from the garden flies  
 Can give no joy, no gladness, to my eyes;

For, useless breeze, never to me he brings  
The fragrance of Thy garments on his wings.

But here before the garden door I wait;  
Why should I deem myself unfortunate?  
For by Thy holy threshold shall I stay,  
And with my lashes sweep its dust away.

This bird, my heart, is taken in Thy net  
And flutters unavailingly; but yet,  
Thy captive though it be, how canst Thou keep  
Prisoned the sighs that from my bosom leap?

O rare and precious Phœnix of the soul,  
Vainly I sought for thee; beyond control  
My heart has yearned for thee; ever thy wings  
Have hung above my soul's imaginings.

Thou Enemy, that hold'st me from my quest,  
If even in the sea thou enterest  
When from my anger thou dost seek to flee,  
My burning soul will find and conquer thee.

O bulbul, glad within the garden sing,  
'Tis Makhfi who has won for thee the spring  
That blossoms in thy heart; but in her own  
The barren winds of lonely autumn moan.

## XXVI

O Love, tell me what is Thy nature, that out of  
my kingdom of pride,  
Thou canst ravish my soul and canst hold it,  
and keep it enslaved at Thy side;  
Who knows of Thy infinite wisdom, who knows  
what Thy lovers have borne  
When madmen the world has proclaimed them  
and cast them derision and scorn?

To drink of my blood I am thirsting, to shed it  
abroad like a sea,  
To sacrifice all am I seeking, to die as a victim  
for Thee.

My heart through the anguish of loving has  
swooned 'neath the load of its grief,  
Come thou with thy magic, O music, and give  
to my spirit relief.

Like Ayub I sit in the ashes o'erwhelmed by the  
wrath of the skies,  
Yet out of the night of my sorrow shall hope  
like the morning arise:

To the desolate mountains, like Ferhad, by sorrow  
and longing possessed,  
I have wandered with pain and with yearning,  
with hope and despair in my breast.

Yet, Makhfi, unveiled is thy secret, abroad all  
thy passion is told:  
Who saw not the beauty of Yusuf when he in  
the market was sold?

## XXVII

I Have no need for wine:  
To me the languorous and magic scent  
Breathed by the flowers within the garden, lent  
Intoxication that is more divine.

Forgive me then, I pray,  
That I no wine in the assembly quaffed,  
For I have drunk of a diviner draught,  
Its fragrance ever haunts me, night and day.

My heart a bird doth seem  
That never joyfully can soar and sing,



For, shut within its cage of sorrowing,  
It sees the garden only in a dream.

Shall I not then complain  
When every atom of my body cries  
Against your tyranny, O cruel skies,  
That yield me days so dark and full of pain?

Grant me, O Fate, this boon,  
Give me a little day of joy, of spring,  
When even in its cage my heart might sing  
Glad as a bird: Death comes, thou knowest, soon.

Although I seem so poor,  
Pity me not for empty-handedness;  
My haughty eagle soul I still possess,  
And I have had the courage to endure.

How many, many years  
Within the prison walls of lonely grief  
Shall I remain and never know relief,  
Like Yaqub, blinded by my useless tears?

Though my proud soul  
Torn from its saddle low into the dust  
May be by cruel hands of fate downthrust,  
I know my feet will somehow reach the goal.

As through life's desert fare  
Love's pilgrims, Makhfi, may it be thy pride  
Unto Love's realm their caravan to guide,  
Thy footsteps be the bell to lead it there.

### **XXVIII**

How uselessly and long I struggled hard  
With thee, mine Enemy, nor from the fight  
Aught have I won; my trait'rous heart I guard,  
And turn away for ever from thy sight.

What wonder if the fire within me rise  
 Into a flame outleaping fierce and swift,  
 And that the heavy vapour of my sighs  
 Unto the darkened eyes of Heaven should drift!

Think not, though at the feast no more I sit,  
 That I have done with joy: there still remains  
 The dream that once was mine—I cherish it,  
 Like wine its memory courses in my veins.

What though within this valley of Despair  
 From sorrow I can never find surcease,  
 May I be given, in answer to my prayer,  
 One day at least of rest, one night of peace!

So sad my fate that, though I long and toil  
 Until my forces flag and faint and tire,  
 I cannot burnish off the stains that soil,  
 The rust that dims my mirror of desire.

Though poor I am indeed, yet weak am I  
 And cannot dare with my irresolute will  
 The purse that holds my treasure to untie,  
 Its golden harvest in my lap to spill.

And yet, O Makhfi, if with eyes made clear,  
 Freed from the world's illusion, thou shalt see,  
 Lo, the faquir's torn garments shall appear  
 More regal than the robes of majesty.

## XXIX

Impatient were my hands, and in their haste  
 Never could they untie the knot of fate,  
 So vain it is to wail my life laid waste,  
 My hours unfortunate.

And strange it is that even in my heart  
 The sweet tormenting flame of my desire

Is quenched; impatiently I pulled apart  
The brands and killed the fire.

And never did the blossoms of success  
Within my hope's enchanted garden bloom,  
And my fair beacon-light of happiness  
Is sunk in gloom.

Faithless Belovèd, many friends are Thine;  
So many love and have been loved by Thee,  
They give their hearts, what carest Thou for mine?  
What need hast Thou of me?

**XXX**

O Rival, snatch not from my lips away  
The cup that holds the wine of my delight;  
The mirror of my joy turns cold and grey,  
Darkened before my sight.

As through the gloom the radiant sun above  
Comes brightening the world, and shades depart,  
So do I burnish with the oil of love  
The rust from off my heart.

I vainly stretch imploring hands that long  
To touch Hope's gleaming garment as she flies;  
Though my desire may fail, yet Hope is strong  
And keen, and never dies.

When on the cup that held the drink divine  
Of last night's feast the light of morning falls,  
The joy of night, the magic of the wine,  
The goblet's sight recalls.

Like thee, O Ferhad, in my loneliness  
Toiling upon the mountains I have been,  
But never drank the sherbet of success,  
Sweet as thy lips, Shirin.

Mortals we are, and, fashioned thus of earth,  
 Vain, Makhfi, is this world in which we trust,  
 Dust is the rank of kings, the pride of birth,  
 Yea, thou thyself art dust.

### XXXI

Down in the dust and sunken in disgrace  
 My honour lies for all the world to see,  
 But why should I bear shame upon my face?  
 What is the honour of the world to me?

Although the times on my unhappy head  
 Have heaped the burdens I can hardly bear,  
 I have not wept; I smile in pride instead;  
 Upon my brow are graved no lines of care.

For many years hath sorrow dwelt with me,  
 Yet I repine not, and so fiercely wage  
 My war against despair, it turns to flee—  
 I am the Rustum of this later age.

Though callous Fate upon me vengeance wreak,  
 O breezes blowing from the heavens above  
 Bring unto me what I, like Yaqub, seek—  
 The perfume of the garments of my Love.

### XXXII

Hasten, O Saki, bring  
 The wine that it may grant its quickening  
 To my dead heart; and to the withered flowers  
 Come like the showers  
 That give the resurrection of the spring.

What weary days  
 Are these, that never in the perfumed ways  
 The bulbul sings among the cypress trees;

Only the morning breeze  
Finds entrance there, and with the roses plays.

Masiha, thou canst heal,  
Thou wise Physician, hear our heart's appeal!  
Give us the bitter draught to cure our grief,  
And grant relief;  
Blame not the shrinking from thy cup we feel.

Glimmer not, pearly dawn,  
Let not the veil of night be yet withdrawn;  
I long to send, with arrows of my sighs,  
Unto the skies  
My eager prayers before the night be gone.

I craved release  
From griefs that burn and pains that never  
cease,  
But all my cries to Heaven were empty breath;  
Not even Death  
Coming at last, could give my spirit peace.

If, on the Judgment Day,  
Grieving for my transgressions, I shall pray  
For mercy for the evil I have done,  
O Self-Existent One,  
Grant that my tears shall wash the sin away.

O Makhfi, for thy fate  
Be not thou fearful nor disconsolate;  
Higher, upon the Day of Reckoning,  
Faquir than king,  
There shall be then none lowly and none great.

### XXXIII

Cast not, Beloved, on me  
Such angry looks from thy narcissus eyes,

Already conquered by their sorcery  
 Before thy feet my heart a captive lies.

Knotted within my heart,  
 The very chords that answered to thy touch,  
 My heart-strings at thy presence thrill and start,  
 For I have sighed and have lamented much.

O ye who sleep in peace,  
 You know not of the troubles Love can send,  
 The days whose tribulations never cease,  
 The weary nights that drag without an end.

Where, then, does Mecca lie?  
 Here is the Kiblah where I make my prayer:  
 Tell me the physic for my malady—  
 The anodyne for grief is everywhere.

O Love, where dost thou lead,  
 Upon what travel fares our caravan?  
 By Hedjaz desert shall thy footsteps speed,  
 The longest journey since the world began.

So poor, indeed, my fate,  
 Never to me did Love his secrets tell  
 As to those others, high and fortunate,  
 Who near his inmost shrine for ever dwell.

### XXXIV

Why should we but in the assembly pray?  
 Only when friends are gathered call for wine?  
 Lo, I have done with this hypocrisy,  
 And ever pray and drink the cup divine.

The fountain of my spirit has run dry,  
 So that in tears no more my sorrow flows,  
 Mute is the heart that wailed continually,  
 Silent the bulbul in the garden-close.

Here, as we tread the pilgrim's way, we find  
 The torch of inspiration like a fire,  
 Men see it not, so dull they are and blind,  
 They yearn not for the garments of desire.

To each was given on the Creation-day  
 His fitting portion, his appointed share,  
 Why should'st thou then demand from destiny  
 More joy than others have, less pain to bear?

O Makhfi, for thy counsel all have come,  
 Their secrets thou hast kept concealed, apart,  
 But why should'st thou, who for their sakes art  
 dumb,  
 Tell shamelessly the secrets of thy heart?

### XXXV

How long upon this soul that dwells in pain  
 Thy vengeance, O Tormentor, shalt thou pour?  
 Could I the Land of Love in peace attain,  
 Thy poisoned sting should torture me no more.

No unguent salves these wounds upon my heart,  
 The diamond lancet's healing pang I crave,  
 So keen my pain I tear my scars apart,  
 Come with thy kindly cruelty, and save!

From out my keeping has my heart been reft,  
 Why, let it go then: wherefore should I weep?  
 Over the empty hut a faquir left  
 No watchman comes his careful guard to keep.

Hearken, the time of parting sounds for thee.  
 How long, O Makhfi, wavering like the fire,  
 A Kafir shall thy restless spirit be,  
 Blown like a flame, tormented by desire?

### XXXVI

How hard to read, O Soul,  
 The riddle of life here and life beyond!  
 As hard as in the pearl to pierce a hole  
 Without the needle-point of diamond.

Chide not that 'mongst the flowers  
 The bulbul doth ecstatically sing;  
 His passion, yea and his delight, are ours,  
 Along the garden paths meandering.

We, by our pain made brave,  
 Seek not despair nor hope; neither outlast  
 Their little day. We take but what Fate gave,  
 Not as Zuleikha, brooding o'er the past.

O careless ones, in vain  
 The treasure of your life has passed away,  
 Heedless that nothing of your years remain,  
 You talk like children of another day.

How vain the tears you weep!  
 Your sorrow fruitless, your remorse too late;  
 The threshold with your lashes wherefore sweep,  
 When, Makhfi, see, the shrine is desolate?

### XXXVII

When thou unveil'st thy shining countenance,  
 Burnt are my lashes by thy lightning glance,  
 And all the night I passionately weep  
 While o'er my heart tempests of longing sweep;  
 And if I see it not, desiring it,  
 My heart is darkened like a lamp unlit.

I have no hope, no comfort, anywhere,  
 Caught by the fluttering tresses of thy hair.

No flower can open in my garden bed  
 Until my heart's blood dyes its petals red,



Sing softly of thy love, or silent be,  
 O Makhfi, lest the Hunter secretly  
 Shall come and hear thy voice, and capture thee.

### XXXVIII

The love of Thee the bulbul sings,  
 The moth that burns its silken wings  
     Thy love has drawn into the fire,  
     And, see, the wine of Thy desire—  
 On every goblet's lip it clings.

No ease, no respite anywhere  
 Is now for me, for in Thy snare  
     Blindly or willingly I fall,  
     No liberty have I at all,  
 Bound by the fetters of Thy hair.

So many tears mine eyes have shed,  
 Such streams of blood my heart has bled,  
     That now mine eyes can weep no more,  
     Nor can the failing fountains pour,  
 For dry the source from which they fed.

Thou, Makhfi, in the burning fire  
 Of love and unassuaged desire  
     Tossing in wild remorse, shalt dwell;  
     Love's secrets weakly didst thou tell,  
 So thou shalt pay with penance dire.

### XXXIX

Not fierce enough, O moth, the flame to burn  
     those yearning wings of thine,  
 Not bright enough the torch of love within our  
     palace halls to shine.  
 Mine eyes have scattered pearls of tears, no  
     consolation did they gain;  
 The matchless jewel of my soul is given away,

and all in vain;  
 Long is my bitter tale of grief, of separation  
 from my Friend,  
 Unfinished is it even yet, although my life has  
 reached its end:  
 Useless, O Saki, is thy cup, no wine of comfort  
 flows for me  
 Who drink alone the wine of blood; to others  
 give thy remedy:  
 Tale after tale of love is told, linked all together  
 like a chain.  
 The fetters hold my heavy heart, of liberty I  
 dream in vain:  
 Under the angry storms of death my boat of  
 life has foundered deep,  
 My house is fallen, round its dust winds of  
 annihilation sweep.  
 Yet, Makhfi, if within thy heart the flame of  
 heavenly love arise,  
 Thy lonely desert shall be fair as garden groves  
 of Paradise.

### XL

If from the spot upon my heart the veil  
 Should fall, and all the world should know my tale,  
 How would the roses burn with envious light  
 Knowing themselves less bright!  
 Though all the day the leaping fire of sighs  
 May from my fast-consuming heart arise,  
 Winds of mischance so blow and scatter it,  
 My torch is not yet lit.  
 I leave the world, and to the woods I fly,  
 But in the forest hunted still am I;

I seek the silence of the lake and hill,  
 But Love pursues me still.

The malady of Love has turned my brain,  
 For all my life I have abode with pain;  
 Then why should I from sorrow seek to flee?  
 Sorrow is kin to me.

Here in the dwelling of unhappiness,  
 My silent, desolate sorrow I possess;  
 For how can shining love with me remain  
 Within this house of pain?

Behold the pages of my book of life!  
 Blotted its record, black with sin and strife,  
 As if the woe of all the world should be  
 Ever pursuing me.

O Makhfi, from this goblet thou shalt gain  
 No exaltation, no surcease from pain;  
 For tears of blood that flow from eyes grown dim  
 Fill it unto the brim.

### **XLI**

Thou bringest never, long-lost happiness,  
 To still my heart's distress  
 The remedy I crave. Why to the crowd  
 Should I thus voice aloud  
 My sadness, drawing scorn upon my name,  
 Telling the world my shame?  
 If in the close-hung darkness of the night  
 There shine no thread of light,  
 What matter? Though no torches flame for me,  
 My sorrowing heart can see  
 Illumined by the fire of grief it bears.  
 Why tangled in the cares  
 Of worldly hopes, O heart unsatisfied,

Restless wilt thou abide,  
 Seeking those things that thou shalt never gain?  
 Help askest thou in vain  
 From useless friends, and far into the skies  
 Peace like the Phœnix flies.  
 Behold, no herb of sweet content has grown;  
 For we have only sown  
 In far-off springs the seeds of our disgrace.  
 How could we bear to face  
 The direful Judgment Day, did we not bring  
 Our idol, witnessing

That by this Kafir worship which we give  
 We true believers live?  
 Upon the sea of bliss our boat is set,  
 But comfort comes not yet;  
 Over the soul waves of the tempest rise  
 Menacing to the skies.

So weary, Makhfi, are thine eyes with tears,  
 Darkened the world appears,  
 Nor can they tell, by grief and watching worn,  
 The rosebud from the thorn.

## XLII

O Self-Existent, give  
 Unto Thy faithful ones their heart's desire,  
 And visit not with Thy consuming fire  
 O'er-burdened souls, too sorrowful to live.

No longer can I bear  
 The separation and the bitter grief;  
 Afflicted am I—grant my soul relief!  
 Weary and broken—look on my despair!

O Thou, whose praise we tell,  
 Sever the tyrant bonds, give to the slave

His freedom, save him, Lord, as Thou did'st save  
Yusuf, the Moon of Canaan, from the well!

My tears fail, for they must;  
The spring that fed their fountains has run dry;  
Give me Thy peace, O Lord; for what am I?  
Only a handful of afflicted dust.

But flowers of hope return  
To bloom within my garden of desire,  
For God can call even from flames of fire  
Tulips like torches to arise and burn.

### XLIII

On my tormented heart appears  
Another deep and glowing stain,  
Again there dawns my day of tears  
Of misery, of weary pain.

So much of mine own blood I shed,  
So long the journeys I have done,  
So difficult the path I tread,  
To catch the garment of the sun!

New balm within my heart is borne,  
New lightnings from my glance arise,  
Why then your anger, and the scorn  
Flashing from your narcissus eyes?

Out of my heart you reft away  
The life, my heart from out its place  
You ravished, and I can but pray—  
O lift the veil that hides your face!

### XLIV

Long, long am I denied  
The vision of thy face, for o'er it flows  
The musky darkness of thy waving hair,

As though a temple-curtain should enclose  
 The Kaaba, and our hearts, unsatisfied,  
 Could never see it there.

O Reason, that can speed  
 A runner in the valley of desire,  
 We need not strength like thine, for we possess  
 A remedy to cure us when we tire;  
 The thorns and brambles are the salves we need  
 For pain and weariness.

Night after endless night  
 I sat in lonely grief remembering thee;  
 Tears fell into my heart disconsolate.  
 How long have I, in striving to be free,  
 Broken my bleeding nails, but never quite  
 Untied the knot of fate!

Lo, where the feast was spread,  
 What better could I offer to my guest  
 Than wine and music when we revelled long?  
 Of all the wines the wine of tears was best,  
 One song of sorrow to another led,  
 Making continual song.

Thou shalt attain success,  
 O happy lover, walking on the height;  
 Thy shadow greater shall be evermore  
 Than King Jamshid's, and plumes and pinions bright  
 As hath the Phœnix, shall thy soul possess,  
 Arrogantly to soar.

By sorrow crucified,  
 A true believer lost his life for thee,  
 And yet did not attain what I attain:  
 This new delight which is bestowed on me  
 Even the friends who travelled by my side  
 Could never know nor gain.

Red with its fount of tears  
 Thy rosy face doth like a tulip show,  
 To tell what dreams within thy heart arise.  
 My tears have washed with their unceasing flow,  
 The magic cup wherein the world appears  
 Displayed before mine eyes.

Stronger my love shall grow:  
 Bearing the bonds of sorrow for thy sake,  
 More patient and more proud my heart shall be,  
 Like the imprisoned bird who tries to make  
 His cage a garden, though his wild heart know  
 He never shall be free.

Behold Love's path—it seems  
 So long, O Makhfi; but be strong to tread  
 Its toilsome way, and come, nor look behind;  
 The temple where thou canst bow down thy head,  
 The idol fairer than thy fairest dreams,  
 Thou shalt desire, and find.

#### **XLV**

No way of joy and ease is mine to tread,  
 The road of shame and madness joyfully I choose  
 instead;  
 And from my heart such streams of blood  
 shall pour  
 Upon the Day of Judgment, that the Desert  
 crimsoned o'er  
 Shall all the rosy hues of heaven outvie,  
 And Paradise be darkened, envious of its flaming  
 dye.  
 If, penitent, I shed one tear of shame,  
 Then shall be cleansed the follies and the sins that  
 stained my name;  
 For God shall show compassion in that day,



















and performed other miraculous deeds, comparable to the labours of Hercules. He is the hero of the *Shah-Nameh* of Firdausi.

*Saki*: the cupbearer.

*Shirin*: the beloved of Ferhad (*q.v.*). The name means "sweet."

*Suleiman*: King Solomon; in Musulman legend lord over angels and demons, of great wisdom and power, understanding the language, not only of all men, but of the beasts and birds. His power lay in his possessing the seal with the name of God.

*Surma*: kohl, or collyriurn, a black powder used in Egypt and the East for darkening the eyelids and thus giving lustre to the eyes.

*Turks*: the Turcomans from Turkestan, who ravaged Central Asia from Persia to India and east to China, the Great Wall of which was built as a protection against them.

*Yaqub*: Jacob, who in Musulman tradition became blind by weeping for the loss of his son Joseph, who had been sold by his brothers as a slave into Egypt; he regained his sight when he smelt the garment of his son which had been brought to him.

*Yusuf*: Joseph, who is regarded as of superhuman loveliness, surrounded by celestial light, the emblem of divine perfection. He possessed nine-tenths of the beauty allotted to the whole world.

*Zuleikha*: daughter of Taimus, King of Mauretania. In a dream she saw and fell in love with the image of Yusuf; she was not told his name, but only that his abode was Egypt. She went to Memphis to marry Asiz Potiphar, the Grand Vizier of Pharaoh, imagining her future husband was the vision of her dream. Yusuf was sold as a slave, and was purchased by her; but, being warned by the angel Gabriel in the likeness of his father Jacob, he fled from her. She is represented as always brooding over her lost happiness.

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