FOR INTRODUCTION

Rumi’s Masnevi

بشنو این تی چون شکایت می‌کند
ار جذابیت حکایت می‌کند
کر نیستان تا مرا بیریدهند
در تغییر مرد و زن تالیدهند

"Ever since they tore me from my osier bed,
My plaintive notes have moved men and women to tears.

I burst my breast, striving to give vent to sighs,
And to express the pangs of my yearning for my home.

He who abides far away from his home
Is ever longing for the day he shall return.

My wailing is heard in every throng,
In concert with them that rejoice and them that weep.

Each interprets my notes in harmony with his own feelings,
But not one fathoms the secrets of my heart.

My secrets are not alien from my plaintive notes,
Yet they are not manifest to the sensual eye and ear.

Body is not veiled from soul, neither soul from body,
Yet no man hath ever seen a soul."

This plaint of the flute is fire, not mere air.
Let him who lacks this fire be accounted dead!

'Tis the fire of love that inspires the flute,
'Tis the ferment of love that possesses the wine.

The flute is the confidant of all unhappy lovers;
Yea, its strains lay bare my inmost secrets.

Did my Beloved only touch me with his lips,
I too, like the flute, would burst out in melody.
The Beloved is all that lives, the lover a dead thing.

When the rose has faded and the garden is withered,
The song of the nightingale is no longer to be heard.

But he who is parted from them that speak his tongue,
Though he possess a hundred voices, is perforce dumb.

The Beloved is all in all, the lover only veils Him;
1- To what land shall I go to flee, whither to flee? From nobles and from my peers they sever me, nor are the people pleased with me [......], nor the Liar rulers of the land. How am I to please thee, Mazda Ahura?

2- I know wherefore, O Mazda, I have been unable (to achieve) anything. Only a few herds are mine (and therefore it is so) and because I have got but few people. I cry unto thee, see thou to it, O Ahura, granting me support a friend gives to friend. Teach me through the Right what the acquisition of Good Thought is.

3- When, Mazda, shall the sunrisings come forth for the worlds winning of Right, through the powerful teachings of the wisdom of the future Deliverers? Who are they to whose help Good Thought shall come? I have faith that thou wilt thyself fulfill this for me, O Ahura.
There was a Door to which I found no Key

Omar Khayyam

There was a Door to which I found no Key:

There was a Veil past which I could not see:

Some little Talk awhile of me and thee

There seemed--and then no more of thee and me.

Here with a loaf of bread beneath the bough

Omar Khayyam

Here with a loaf of bread beneath the bough,

A flask of wine, a book of verse and thou,

Beside me singing in the wilderness,

And wilderness in paradise now.

Ah, Love!

Omar Khayyam

Ah, Love! could thou and I with Fate conspire

To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire!

Would not we shatter it to bits-and then

Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire
Why think thus O men of piety

Jalal al-Din Rumi

I have returned to sobriety
I am neither a Muslim nor a Hindu
I am not Christian, Zoroastrian, nor Jew
I am neither of the West nor the East
Not of the ocean, nor an earthly beast
I am neither a natural wonder
Nor from the stars yonder
Not of ancient promises, nor of future prophecy
Not of hellish anguish, nor of paradisaic ecstasy
Neither the progeny of Adam, nor Eve
Nor of the world of heavenly make-believe
My place is the no-place
My image is without face
Neither of body nor the soul
I am of the Divine Whole.
I eliminated duality with joyous laughter
Saw the unity of here and the hereafter
Unity is what I sing, unity is what I speak
Unity is what I know, unity is what I seek
I am drunk and you are mad

Jalal al-Din Rumi

I am drunk and you are mad
Who'll take us home and make us glad?
Said a hundred times, if you had
Two or three cups less, won’t be bad.

In this town I do complain
Every person seems insane
In this place madness like rain
Washes wisdom down the drain.

In the tavern of my soul
Carpet of joy will unroll
My soul is out of control
When trapped in a soulless hole

Gypsy minstrel who must play
More drunk than me as I lay
Beside such drunk, I dare say
Legend is the story of my day.

I left my home in that state
My drunken ways could not wait
Every place I looked, looked great
Saw my beloved, my soul mate.

I asked "where is thy land?"
With laughter and a cold hand
"Half from the Arabian sand
And half a heavenly strand.

"Half made of water and clay
Half soul and half solar ray
Half on the shallow beaches lay
Half from the oyster’s pearly play."

I asked Thee to be my friend
And change this dividing trend
Replied that "I transcend,
All divisions in me end."

I am without head or hand
I am of this drunken band
All things I understand
Describe or silently stand.
Rose inside, wine in hand

Hafez

Rose inside, wine in hand, and Beloved to my wish is;
King of the world is my slave on such a day as this.

Tonight please don’t bring a candle into our gathering:
for tonight, on moon of Friend’s face full emphasis is.

In our belief the winecup is lawful; but, O my cypress,
rose of form, to be without Your face, this, amiss is.

In our gathering do not mix rose perfume: our soul
each moment inhales scent Your hair’s ambergris is.

My ear’s full of voice of reed and melody of the harp,
my eye upon Your ruby lip and circling cup’s bliss, is.

Don’t talk about the sweetness of sugar or of candy,
for my desire, that sweetness of Your lip to kiss, is.

Since treasure of grief for you filled my ruined heart,
corner of Winehouse, always now my house this is.

You tell me about shame? Shame gave me my name!
You ask about fame? Fame to me shame’s edifice is!

I am a winedrinker, head spinning, looking for love;
in this city, is there a one who also not like this is?

Don’t inform the censor of my error, because he too
like me, always desiring a drink of the wine’s bliss is.

Hafiz, never sit a moment without wine and Beloved;
season of rose, jasmine and of a celebration, this is.
For years my heart was in search of the grail

_Hafez_

For years my heart was in search of the Grail

_Hafez_

For years my heart was in search of the grail

_Hafez_

For years my heart was in search of the Grail

One glance solved the riddles that I Braille

I asked, "when did God give you this Holy Grail?"

Said, "on the day He hammered the world’s first nail!"

Even the unbeliever had the support of God

Though he could not see, God’s name would always hail.

All the tricks of the mind would make God seem like fraud

Yet the Golden Calf beside Moses’ rod would just pale.

And the one put on the cross by his race

His crime, secrets of God would unveil

Anyone who is touched by God’s grace

Can do what Christ did, without fail.

And what of this curly lock that’s my jail

Said this is for Hafiz to tell his tale.
POETRY NIGHT: 3 Tongues of the Muses

April 27th 2006

Moonlight
Nima Youshij

I Keep Waiting For You
Nima Youshij

I Keep Waiting For You
Nima Youshij

Moonlight oozes
Glow worms shine
No one is to crack the sleep in eyes of any and yet,
worry over this long asleep lot
cracks sleep in my tearful eyes.

Dawn stands worried at my side
morning urges me to announce
its arrival to the lot.
alas! a thorn inside,
stops me in my tracks.

A delicate rose stem
which I planted with my hands
and watered with my life
its thorns break inside me.
I fumble about to open a door
uselessly expecting someone to meet
a jumble of walls and doors
crumbles over my head.

The moon beams
the glow-worm glows
blisters marking a distant road

Standing before the village
a single man
knapsack on his back, hand on the knocker, murmurs
"Worry over this long asleep lot
cracks sleep in my tearful eyes."

At nightfall
I keep waiting for you.

At nightfall
While shadows are thickening
In the branches of “Talagen”
Making lamplit lovers gloomy
I keep waiting for you.

At nightfall
While still valleys
Are sleeping as dead serpents
While ivy twines about
Jupiter’s foot
Whether or not you remember me
I will never cease to remember you
I keep waiting for you.

* Talagen: a kind of forestal tree in the north of Iran.
POETRY NIGHT: 3 Tongues of the Muses

It Is Only Sound That Remains

Forough Farrokhzad

Why should I stop, why?
The birds have gone in search of the blue direction.
The horizon is vertical, vertical and movement fountain-like; and at the limits of vision shining planets spin.

Why should I stop? Why?
In the chemical space after sunrise There is only sound, Sound that will attract the particles of time.
Why should I stop? Why?

the unmanly one has hidden his lack of manliness in blackness, cooperation of lead letters is futile, it will not save the lowly thought. I am a descendant of the house of trees. breathing stale air depresses me. a bird which died advised me to commit flight to memory.

sound, sound, only sound, the sound of the limpid wishes of water to flow, the sound of the falling of star light on the wall of earth's femininity the sound of the binding of meaning's sperm and the expansion of the shared mind of love.
sound, sound, sound, only sound remains.

in the land of dwarfs, the criteria of comparison have always traveled in the orbit of zero.
why should I stop?

Forough Farrokhzad

Why should I stop, why?
In the chemical space after sunrise There is only sound, Sound that will attract the particles of time.

Why should I stop? Why?
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sound, sound, sound, only sound remains.

in the land of dwarfs, the criteria of comparison have always traveled in the orbit of zero.
why should I stop?
**Gift**

Forough Farrokhzad

I speak out of the deep of night
out of the deep of darkness
and out of the deep of night I speak.

if you come to my house, friend
bring me a lamp and a window I can look through
at the crowd in the happy alley.

**Oppression (Delam Gerefteh Ast)**

Forough Farrokhzad

My heart is loaded, loaded.

I walk to the veranda, my fingers scale
the taut skin of the night.
The lights of communication are out,
the lights of communication are out.

No one will take me to the sun
or introduce me to the sparrows' carnival.

Remember the flight:
the bird itself is mortal.
Zemestan
Mehdi Akhavan Saless

سلامت را نمی‌خواهد پاسخ گفت، سرها در گریبان است
کمی سر برنارد کرد پاسخ گفت و دیدار یاران را
نگه جز یکی پا را دید، نتواند،
که ره تاریک و لرزان است
و گر دست محبت سوی کس یازی
به اکراه آورد دست از بغل پیرون
که سرما سخت سوزران است
نفس کر گر گر ماه سینه می‌آید برون ابری شود تاریک
جو دوبار استند در یک چشمانت
نفس کنست، پس دبیر چه داری چشم
ز چشم دولستان دور یا نزدیک؟

مسيحی جوان‌مرد من! ای ترسای بیر پیره چرکین!
هو باس ناجو نم‌دانه سرد است... آی ...
دمت گرم و سرت خوش باشد
سلام رو تو پاسخ گوی، در یک چشای
منم، من، می‌همان درشت، لولی وش مغموم
منم، من، سنگ نیبا خورد رنجور
منم، دشنام پست‌ای فریش، نغمه ناجور

نهم روهم، بخته از زنگم، همان بیرنگ بیرنگ
بیا بیشای در، بیشای، دلتانگم
حریفای! می‌زیانا! می‌همان سال و ماهم پست در چون موج
می‌لرزد
تگرگی نیست، مرگی نیست
صدای گر شنیدی، صحت سرما و دندان است

من امشب آمدست وام بی‌گذارم
حسایت را کنار چم بگذارم
چه می‌کوئی که بی‌بیه شد، سحر شد، بامداد آمد؟
فریبیت می‌دهد، بر آسان این سرخی بعد از سحرگه نیست
حریفایا! گوش سرما برده است، این پادگار سبیلی سرد
زمستان است
There is no hail.
You may have heard a tale,
There exists no death,
Only chattering teeth and a short breath.

Tonight I intend to pay back
The account for which I lack
It is not too late
It is not midnight
There is no morning
Don't be fooled by the dawn's false trap.

My frozen red ears
Bespeak winter's harsh slap.
And your universal sun
At the mercy of each breath,
Rather than your coffin
Brightens the hidden cave of death.

Dear friend, with wine,
Illumine the sight;
Night is day
Day is night.

They'll ignore your greeting
Amid this depressing weather
Doors are shut
Heads on chests
Hands hidden,
Hopes are cruelly cut.

Trees are but
Crystalline skeletons,
The sky's moved closer;
The land is devoid of life,
Dimmed are the sun and the moon
Winter is rife.
دوست
*Sohrab Sepehri*

در برگ بود
و از اهالی امور بود
و با تمام افق هایی باز نسبت داشت
و لحن آب و زمین را چه خون می فهمید.

صداس
به چشل خون پریشان واقعیت بود.
و یک هاش
مسیر نیب عنصر را
به ما نشان داد.
و دست هاش
هوای صاف سخاوت را
ورق رنگ
و مهربانی را
به سمت ما کوچاند.

به شکل خلوت خود بود
و عاشقانه تنین انداز وقت خود را
برای آینه تفسیر کرد.
و یا به شاهد باران بر از طراوت تکرار بود.
و یا به سبک درخت
میان عاشقی بود منتشر می شد.
همیشه همواره باد را صدا می کرد.
به چفت اب گره می زد.
برای ما، یک شب
سجد سبز میخیت را
چنان صرع، ادای کرد
که ما به عاطفه سطح خاک دست کشدیم.
و مثل لهجه یک سطل آب تازه شدیم.

و ابرها دینم
که یا چقدر سید
برای جنین یک خوشه بشارت رفت.

ولی نشد
که روی‌پوش کوتاه بنشیند
و رفت تا لب هشیج
و پشت حوصله توره‌ها دراز کشید
و هشیج فکر نکرد
که ما میان پریشان تلفظ درها
برای خوردن یک سپی
چقدر تنها ماندیم.

Friend
*Sohrab Sepehri*

‘I should be glad of another death’
-T.S. Eliot

Grand was she
And native of today
She was related to all the open vistas
And how well she understood the tone of water and
earth

Her voice
Sounded like the scattered melancholy of reality and her
eyelids
Pointed out to us
The direction of the pulse of elements
And her hands
Leaved through
The clear air of benevolence
And caused kindness
To migrate towards us

She resembled her own solitary self
And she interpreted for her mirror
The most affectionate curve of her time
And like rain she was full of freshness of repetition
And like the style of trees
She spread out into healthiness of light
She always called to the wind’s infancy
And she always tied the conversation
To the hasp in water

One night
She performed for us
Love’ green prostration so candidly
That we rubbed the sympathy of earth’s surface
And became refreshed like the accent of a pail of water

And often we saw
With how a large basket
She would set forth to pick grapes of tidings

But alas
She wouldn’t sit in front of the ablution of pigeons
And she went to the bring of naught
And lay down beyond the patience of lights
And she didn’t think at all
How lonely we were
To eat apples
Amid disturbed enunciation
نشانی
Sohrab Sepehri

"Where is the friend’s house?"
Horseman asked by twilight and,
The sky paused.

The passerby presented sands, the branch of light that he had in mouth
And pointed to a poplar tree and said:

"Before reaching the tree,
There is a garden alley that is greener than God’s sleep
And in it, love is as blue as the feathers of honesty.
Go to the end of the alley which stops at the back of adolescence.
Then turn to the flower of loneliness,
Two steps short of reaching the flower,
Stay by the fountain of eternal myth of earth
And you feel a transparent fear.
And in the fluid sincerity of the air, you will hear a scratch:
You will see a child
Who has gone up the pine tree, to grab a bird from the nest of light
And you ask him
Where the friend’s house is.”

Song of the Greatest Wish
Ahmad Shamlu

Ah, if liberty sang a song
little
as the larynx of a bird
nowhere would there remain a tumbling wall.
It would not take years
to learn
that every ruin signifies man's absence
for the presence of man
is restoration and renewal.
Like a wound
a lifelong
bleeding
like a wound
a lifelong
with pain beating
eyes opening on the world in a cry
in rancor disappearing
thus was the great absence
thus was the story of the ruin.
Ah, if liberty sang a song
little
littler even than the larynx of a bird.
در فراشته‌های مرزهای تنم تو را دوست دارم

این و شب بر هیای مشتاق را به من بده
روشی شربت را
آسمان بلند و کمان گشاده ی مل را
بردیده و فوس و فرح را به من بده
و راه اخیر را
در برده ای که می زنی مکرر کن

***

در فراشته‌های مرزهای تنم تو را دوست دارم

در آن دور دست بعید
که رسالت اندام‌ها ی پایان می پیدارد
و شعله و شور تنش‌ها و حواشی‌ها
به تمامی
فرود می‌نشیند
و هر معتا قابل لحظه را قیم می‌گذارد
چنان چون مشیت
که حسید را می‌پایان سفر
تا به همین گرکش‌های نهانش وا نهد
در فراشته‌های عشق
تو را دوست می‌دارم
در فراشته‌های پرده و رنگ

I love you beyond the frontiers of your body
grant me mirrors and eager fireflies
luminescence and wine
exalted skies and the spacious arch of the bridge
grant me birds and rainbows
and repeat the abundance of the absolute melody
in the music you bedeck

* ***

I love you beyond
the borders of my body

upon that distant vista
where the prophesy of bodies ends
and the blaze and fervor of throbings and desires
repose entirely
and meaning abandons
the cast of form
as if a soul,
its carrion at the end of its excursion,
forsaken to the vultures of finalities...
beyond love
I love you
beyond the curtains and colors
grant me the promise of an encounter
beyond the borders of our bodies

From Aida in the Mirror