



by
Sheikh Muslih-uddin Sa'di Shirazi (1258)

Translated by
Sir Edwin Arnold (1899)



World Famous Persian Poet of 13th Century



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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

Chapter 5



On Love and Youth

Story 1

Hasan Maimundi was asked that, as the Sultan Mahmud possesses so many beautiful slaves, each of whom is a marvel in the world, how it happens that he manifests towards none of them so much inclination and love as to Iyaz, although he is not more handsome than the others.

He replied: 'Whatever descends into the heart appears good to the eye.'

هر که سلطان مرید او باشد

گر همه بد کند، نکو باشد

وآنکه را پادشه بیندازد

کسش از خیل خانه ننوازد

He whose Murid' the sultan is

If he does everything bad, it will be good.

But he whom the Padshah throws away

Will not be cared for by anyone in the household.

کسی به دیده انکار گر نگاه کند

نشان صورت یوسف دهد به ناخوبی

و گر به چشم ارادت نگه کنی در دیو

فرشته ایت نماید به چشم کروی

If anyone looks with an unfavorable eye
Even the figure of Joseph will indicate ugliness
And if he looks with the eye of desire on a demon,
He will appear an angel, a cherub in his sigh.



Story 2

It is said that a gentleman possessed a slave of exquisite beauty, whom he regarded with love and affection. He nevertheless said to a friend: 'Would that this slave of mine, with all the beauty and good qualities he possesses, had not a long and uncivil tongue!' He replied: 'Brother, do not expect service, after professing friendship; because when relations between lover and beloved come in, the relations between master and servant are superseded':

خواجه با بنده پری رخسار

چون درآمد به بازی و خنده

چه حکم کننده عجب کو چو خوا

وین کشد بار ناز چون بنده

When a master with a fairy-faced slave
Begins to play and to laugh
What wonder if the latter coquets like the master
And the gentleman bears it like a slave?

A slave is to draw water and make bricks.

A pampered slave will strike with the fist.



Story 3

I saw a religious man, who had fallen in love with a fellow to such a degree that he had neither strength to remain patient nor to bear the talk of the people but would not relinquish his attachment, despite of the reproaches he suffered and the grief he bore, saying:

کوتاه نکنم ز دامنت دست
ور خود بزنی به تیغ تیزم
بعد از تو ملاذ و ملجاء بی نیست
هم در تو گریزم ، ار گریزم

I shall not let go my hold of thy skirt
Even if thou strike me with a sharp sword.
After thee I have no refuge nor asylum.
To thee alone I shall flee if I flee.

I once reproached him, asking him what had become of his exquisite intellect so that it had been overcome by his base proclivity. He meditated a while and then said:

هر کجا سلطان عشق آمد، نماند
قوت بازوی تقوا را محل
پاکدامن چون زید بیچاره ای
تاده تا گریبان در وحل او ف

'Wherever love has become sultan
Piety's arm has no strength left.
How can a helpless fellow live purely
Who has sunk up to his neck in impurity?'



Story 4

One had lost his heart and bidden farewell to his life because the target which he aimed at was in a dangerous locality, portending destruction and no chance promising a morsel easily coming to the palate nor a bird falling into the trap.

چو در چشم شاهد نیاید زرت
زر و خاک یکسان نماید برت

When thy sweetheart's eye has no regard for gold
Mud and gold are of equal value to thee.

I once advised him to abandon his aspiration to a fancy impossible of realization because many persons are enslaved by the same passion like himself, the feet of their hearts being in chains. He lamented and said:

دوستان گو نصیحتم مکنید
که مرا دیده بر ارادت او است
جنگجویان به زور و پنجه و کتف
دشمنان را کشند و خوبان دوست

'Tell my friends not to give me advice
Because my eyes are fixed on her wishes.
By the strength of fist and shoulders warriors
Slay enemies but sweethearts a friend.'

It is against the requirements of love to renounce affection to our sweethearts for fear of losing our lives.

ی تو که در بند خویشتن باش
عشق باز دروغ زن باشی

گر نشاید به دوست ره بردن

شرط یاری است در طلب مردن

Thou who art a slave to thy selfishness

Art mendacious in the game of love.

If there be no way to reach the friend

Friendship demands to die in pursuit of it.

I rise as no other source is left to me

Though the foe may smite me with arrow and sword.

گر دست رسد که آستینش گیرم

ورنه بروم بر آستانش میرم

If chance serves me I shall take hold of her sleeve.

Or else I shall go and die on her threshold.

His friends, who considered his position, pitied his state, gave him advice and at last confined him but all to no purpose.

دردا که طیب ، صیر می فرماید

وی نفس حریص را شکر می باید

Alas, that the physician should prescribe patience,

Whereas this greedy lust requires sugar.

ی بنهفت آن شنیدی که شاهد

با دل از دست رفته ای می گفت

تا تو را قدر خویشتن باشد

پیش چشمت چه قدر من باشد؟

Hast thou heard that the mistress secretly

Told him who had lost his heart:

'As long as thou possesseth thy own dignity,

What will mine amount to in thy eyes?'

It is related that the royal prince who was the object of his affection had been informed to the effect that a good-natured and sweet-spoken youth was constantly attending on the plain, uttering graceful words; and strange tales

having been heard of him, it appeared that his heart is inflamed and that he has a touch of insanity in his head.

The boy knew that his heart had become attached to him and that he had raised this dust of calamity. Accordingly he galloped towards him. When the youth perceived the prince approaching him, he said:

آن کس که مرا بکشت باز آمد پیش
مانا که دلش بسوخت بر کشته خویش

'He who has slain me has come back again.
It seems his heart burns for him whom he has slain.'

Although he accosted the youth graciously, asking him whence he came and what his occupation was, he was so plunged in the depths of the ocean of love that he could not breathe:

اگر خود هفت سبع از بر بخوانی
چو آشفتی الف ب ت ندانی

If thou recitest the seven portions of the lesson by heart,
When thou art demented by love thou knowest not the A, B, C.

The prince said: 'Why speakest thou not to me? I also belong to the circle of dervishes; nay I am even in their service.'

In consequence of the force of the friendly advances of his beloved, he raised his head from the dashing waves of love and said:

عجب است با وجودت که وجود من بماند
تو به گفتن اندر آیی و مرا سخن بماند

'It is a marvel that with thy existence mine remains
That when thou speakest words to me remain.'

Saying these words he uttered a shout and surrendered his life.

خیمه دوست عجب از کشته نباشد به در
عجب از زنده که چون جان به در آورد سلیم؟

It would not be strange if he had been slain at his tent door
But it would be strange that if alive he should escape safe.



Story 5

A schoolboy was so perfectly beautiful and sweet-voiced that the teacher, in accordance with human nature, conceived such an affection towards him that he often recited the following verses:

نه آنچنان به تو مشغولم ای بهشتی روی
اد خویشتم در ضمیر می آیدکه ی
ز دیدنت نتوانم که دیده در بندم
و گر مقابله بینم که تیر می آید

I am not so little occupied with thee, O heavenly face,
That remembrance of myself occurs to my mind.
From thy sight I am unable to withdraw my eyes
Although when I am opposite I may see that an arrow comes.

Once the boy said to him: 'As thou strivest to direct my studies, direct also my behavior. If thou perceivest anything reprobable in my conduct, although it may seem approvable to me, inform me thereof that I may endeavor to change it.'

He replied: 'O boy, make that request to someone else because the eyes with which I look upon thee behold nothing but virtues.'

چشم بداندیش که بر کنده باد
عیب نماید هنرش در نظر
ور هنری داری و هفتاد عیب
دوست نبیند بجز آن یک هنر

The ill-wishing eye, be it torn out
Sees only defects in his virtue.
But if thou possessest one virtue and seventy faults
A friend sees nothing except that virtue.



Story 6

I remember that one night a dear friend of mine entered when I jumped up in such a heedless way that the lamp was extinguished by my sleeve.

A vision appeared in the night and by its appearance the darkness was illuminated.

شگفت آمد از بختم که این دولت از کجا؟

I was amazed at my luck exclaiming whence this felicity?

He took a seat and began reproving me saying that when I beheld him I extinguished the lamp.

I said: 'I thought the sun had risen and wits have said:

به پیش شمع آید چون گرانی
خیزش اندر میان جمع بکش
ور شکر خنده ای است شیرین لب
آستینش بگیر و شمع بکش

When an ugly person comes before the lamp
Arise to him and pull him into the assembly
But if it be a sugar-smiled, sweet-lipped one
Pull him by the sleeve and extinguish the lamp.'



Story 7

One who had for a considerable time not seen his friend asked him where he had been and said he had been longing.

He replied: 'To be longing is better than to be satisfied.'

دیر آمدی ای نگار سرمست
زودت ندهیم دامن از دست
معشوقه که دیر دیر بینند
آخر کم از آنکه سیر بینند؟

Thou hast come late, O intoxicated idol,
We shall not soon let go thy skirt from the hand.
He who sees his sweetheart at long intervals
Is after all better off than if he sees too much of her.

به يك نفس که برآمیخت یار با اغیار
بسی نماند که غیرت ، وجود من بکشد

When thou comest with friends to visit me
Although thou comest in peace thou art attacking.

If my sweetheart associates one moment with strangers
It wants but little and I die of jealousy.

به خنده گفت که من شمع جمعم ای سعدی
مرا از آن چه که پروانه خویشتن بکشد؟

She said smiling: 'I am the lamp of the assembly, O Sa'di,
What is it to me if a moth kills itself?'



Story 8

I remember how in former times I and another friend kept company with each other like two almond kernels in one skin. Suddenly a separation took place but after a time, when my companion returned, he commenced to blame me for not having sent him a messenger during it.

I replied: 'I thought it would be a pity that the eyes of a messenger should be brightened by thy beauty and I deprived thereof.'

Tell my old friend not to give me advice with the tongue
Because even a sword will not compel me to repent.
I am jealous that anyone should see thee to satiety.
Again I say that no one will be satiated.



Story 9

I knew a learned man who had fallen in love with someone but his secret having fallen from the veil of concealment into publicity, he endured abundant persecution and displayed boundless patience.

I said once to him by way of consolation: 'I know thou entertainest no worldly motive nor inclination for baseness. It is nevertheless unbecoming the dignity of a scholar to expose himself to suspicions and to bear the persecutions of manner less persons.'

He replied: 'O friend, take off the hand of reproach from my skirt because I have often meditated on the opinion which thou entertainest but have found it easier to bear persecution for his sake than not to see him; and philosophers have said that:

it is easier to accustom the heart to strife, than to turn away the eye from seeing the beloved.

Who has his heart with a heart-ravisher
Has his beard in another's hand.
A gazelle with a halter on the neck
Is not able to walk of its own accord.
If he, without whom one cannot abide,
Becomes insolent it must be endured.

I one day told him to beware of his friend
But I often asked pardon for that day.
A friend does not abandon a friend.
I submit my heart to what he wills.
Whether he kindly calls me to himself
Or drives me away in anger he knows best.



Story 10

In the exuberance of youth, as it usually happens and as thou knowest, I was on the closest terms of intimacy with a sweetheart who had a melodious voice and a form beautiful like the moon just rising.

آنکه نبات عارضش آب حیات می خورد
در شکرش نگه کند هر که نبات می خورد

He, the down of whose cheek drinks the water of immortality,
Whoever looks at his sugar lips eats sweetmeats.

I happened to notice something in his behavior which was contrary to nature and not approved of by me. Accordingly I gathered up my skirt from him and, picking up the pieces of the chess-game of friendship, recited:

برو هر چه می بایدت پیش گیر

سرمانداری سر خویش گیر

'Go and do as thou listest.

Thou hast not our head; follow thine.'

I heard him saying when he went away:

شب پره گر وصل آفتاب نخواهد

رونق بازار آفتاب نکاهد

'If the bat desires not union with the sun

The beauty of the sun will not decrease.'

Saying this, he departed and his distress took effect on me:

که پیشت مردن بازی آی و مرا بکش

خوشر که پس از تو زندگانی کردن

I lost the time of union and man is ignorant

Of the value of delightful life before adversity.

Return. Slay me. For to die in thy presence

Is more sweet than to live after thee.

Thanks be to the bounty of God, he returned some time afterwards but his melodious voice had changed, his Joseph like beauty had faded, on the apple of his skin dust had settled as upon a quince so that the splendor of his beauty had departed. He wanted me to embrace him. I complied and said:

آن روز که خط شاهدت بود

صاحب نظر از نظر براندی

امروز بیامدی به صلحش

کش ضمه و فتحه بر نشانندی

'On the day when thou hadst a beauteous incipient beard

Thou drovest him, who desired the sight, from thy sight.

Today thou camest to make peace with him

But hast exhibited Fathah and Zammah.

تازه بهار! ورقت زرد شد
دیگ منه کاتش ما سرد شد
چند خرامی و تکبر کنی
دولت پارینه تصور کنی؟
پیش کسی رو که طلبکار تو است
ناز بر آن کن که خریدار تو است

His fresh spring is gone and he has become yellow.
Bring not the kettle because our fire is extinguished.
How long wilt thou strut about, showing arrogance,
Imagining felicity which has elapsed?
Go to him who will purchase thee.
Coquet with him who asks for thee.

سبزه در باغ گفته اند خوش است
که این سخن گوید داند آن
ی نیکوان خط سبزیعنی از رو
دل عشاق بیشتر جوید
بوستان تو کند ناز ایست
بس که بر می کنی و می روید

They said: "Verdure in the garden is pleasing."
He knows it who utters these words.
Namely, heartfelt affection for that green line
Fascinates the hearts of lovers more and more.
Thy garden is a bed of leeks.
The more thou weedest it the more they grow.

گر صبر کنی و نکنی موی بناگوش
این دولت ایام نکویی به سر آید
گر دست به جان داشتی همچو تو بر ریش
نگذاشتی تا به قیامت که بر آید

Whether thou pluckest out thy beard or not
This happiness of youthful days must end.
Had I the power of life as thou of the beard
I would not let it end till resurrection-day.

سؤال کردم و گفتم : جمال روی تو را
چه شد که مورچه بر گرد ماه جوشیده است ؟

I asked and said: What has befallen the beauty of thy face
That ants are crawling round the moon?

جواب داد ندانم چه بود رویم را
مگر به ماتم حسنم سیاه پوشیده است

He replied, smiling: "I know not what is the matter with my face.
Perhaps it wears black as mourning for my beauty."



Story 11

I asked one of the people of Baghdad what he thought of beardless youths.

He replied: 'There is no good in them for when one of them is yet delicate and wanted he is insolent; but when he becomes rough and is not wanted he is affable.'

امرد آنکه که خوب و شیرین است
تلخ گفتار و تند خوی بود
چون به ریش آمد و به لعنت شد
مردم امیر و مهرجوی بود

When a beardless youth is beautiful and sweet
His speech is bitter, his temper hasty.

When his beard grows and he attains puberty
He associates with men and seeks affection.



Story 12

One of the Ulema had been asked that, supposing one sits with a moon-faced beauty in a private apartment, the doors being closed, companions asleep, passion inflamed, and lust raging, as the Arab says, the date is ripe and its guardian not forbidding, whether he thought the power of abstinence would cause the man to remain in safety.

He replied:

اگر از مه رویان بسلامت بماند از بدگویان نماند

If he remains in safety from the moon-faced one, he will not remain safe from evil speakers.'

If a man escapes from his own bad lust

He will not escape from the bad suspicions of accusers.

بنشستن شاید پس کار خویشتن

لیکن نتوان زبان مردم بستن

It is proper to sit down to one's own work
But it is impossible to bind the tongues of men.



Story 13

A parrot, having been imprisoned in a cage with a crow, was vexed by the sight and said:

'What a loathsome aspect is this! What an odious figure! What cursed object with rude habits! O crow of separation, would that the distance of the east from the west were between us.'

صبح به روی تو هر که برخیزد علی ال
صبح روز سلامت بر او مسا باشد
به اختری چو تو در صحبت بایستی
ولی چنین که تویی در جهان کجا باشد؟

Whoever beholds thee when he rises in the morning
The morn of a day of safety becomes evening to him.
An ill-omened one like thyself is fit to keep thee company
But where in the world is one like thee?

More strange still, the crow was similarly distressed by the proximity of the parrot and, having become disgusted, was shouting 'La haul', and lamenting the vicissitudes of time. He rubbed the claws of sorrow against each other and said:

'What ill-luck is this? What base destiny and chameleon like times? It was befitting my dignity to strut about on a garden-wall in the society of another crow.

پارسا را بس این قدر زندان
که بود هم طویلہ زندان

'It is sufficient imprisonment for a devote
To be in the same stable with profligates.

'What sin have I committed that I have already in this life, as a punishment for it, fallen into the bonds of this calamity in company with such a conceited, uncongenial and heedless fool?'

کس نیاید به پای دیواری
که بر آن صورتت نگار کنند

گر تو را در بهشت باشد جای

دیگران دوزخ اختیار کنند

No one will approach the foot of the wall

Upon which they paint thy portrait.

If thy place were in paradise

Others would select. hell.

I have added this parable to let thee know that no matter how much a learned man may hate an ignorant man the latter hates him equally.

زاهدی در سماع رندان بود

زان میان گفت شاهی بلخی

شینگر ملولی ز ما ترش من

که تو هم در میان ما تلخی

A hermit was among profligates

When one of them, a Balkhi beauty, said:

'If thou art tired of us sit not sour

For thou art thyself bitter in our midst.'

جمعی چو گل و لاله به هم پیوسته

تو هیزم خشک در میانی رسته

و چو سرما ناخوش چون باد مخالف

چون برف نشسته ای و چون یخ بسته

An assembly joined together like roses and tulips!

Thou art withered wood, growing in its midst,

Like a contrary wind and unpleasant frost,

Like snow inert, like ice bound fast.



Story 14

I had a companion with whom I had traveled for years and eaten salt. Boundless intimacy subsisted between us till at last he suffered my mind to be grieved for the sake of some paltry gain and our friendship closed.

Despite of all this, however, mutual attachment of heart still subsisted between us because I heard him one day reciting in an assembly the following two distiches of my composition:

نگار من چو در آید به خنده نمکین
نمک زیادہ کند بر جراحت ریشان
چه بودی ار سر زلفش به دستم افتادی
چو آستین کریمان به دست درویشان

When my sweetheart enters sweetly smiling
She adds more salt to my bleeding wound.

How would it be if the tip of her curls fell into my hand
Like the sleeve of the bountiful into the hands of dervishes?

Some friends bore witness not so much to the gracefulness of these verses as to the beauty of my conduct which they approved; and among the rest, the said friend likewise added his share of praise, regretting the loss of our former companionship and confessing his fault so that his affection became known. Accordingly I sent the following distiches and made peace:

نه ما را در میان عهد و وفا بود
جفا کردی و بد عهدی نمودی؟
به یک بار از جهان دل در تو بستم
ندانستم که برگردی به زودی
هنوز گر سر صلح است بازای
کز آن مقبولتر باشی که بودی

Was not there a covenant of friendship between us?
Thou hast been cruel and not loving.
I once tied my heart to thee, disregarding the world.
Not knowing thou wouldst turn back so soon.

If thou yet desirest conciliation, return
Because thou wilt be more beloved than before.



Story 15

The beautiful wife of a man died but her mother, a decrepit old hag, remained in the house on account of the dowry.

The man saw no means of escaping from contact with her until a company of friends paid him a visit of condolence and one of them asked him how he bore the loss of his beloved.

He replied: 'It is not as painful not to see my wife as to see the mother of my wife.'

گل به تاراج رفت و خار بماند
گنج برداشتند و مار بماند

The rose has been destroyed and the thorn remained.
The treasure has been taken and the serpent left.

دیده بر تارک سنان دیدن
خوشر از روی دشمنان دیدن
واجب است از هزار دوست برید
تا یکی دشمنت نباید دید

It is better that one's eye be fixed on a spear-head
Than that it should behold the face of an enemy.
It is incumbent to sever connection with a thousand friends
Rather than to behold a single foe.



Story 16

I remember having in the days of my youth passed through a street, intending to see a moon-faced beauty. It was in Temuz, whose heat dried up the saliva in the mouth and whose simum boiled the marrow in my bones.

My weak human nature being unable to endure the scorching sun, I took refuge in the shadow of a wall, wishing someone might relieve me from the summer heat and quench my fire with some water; and lo, all of a sudden, from the darkness of the porch of a house a light shone forth, namely a beauty, the grace of which the tongue of eloquence is unable to describe.

She came out like the rising dawn after an obscure night or the water of immortality gushing from a dark cavern, carrying in her hand a bowl of snow-water, into which sugar had been poured and essence of roses mixed. I knew not whether she had perfumed it with rose-water or whether a few drops from her rosy face had fallen into it.

In short, I took the beverage from her beautiful hands, drank it and began to live again.

The thirst of my heart cannot be quenched

By sipping limpid water even if I drink oceans of it.

خرم آن فرخنده طالع را که چشم

بر چنین روی اوفتد هر بامداد

مست بیدار گردد نیم شب

مست ساقی روز محشر بامداد

Blessed is the man of happy destiny whose eye

Alights every morning on such a countenance.

One drunk of wine awakens at midnight,
One drunk of the cupbearer on the morn of resurrection.



Story 17

In the year when Muhammad Khowarzam Shah (may mercy of Allah be on him) concluded peace with the king of Khata to suit his own purpose, I entered the cathedral mosque of Kashgar and saw an extremely handsome, graceful boy as described in the simile:

معلمت همه شوخی و دلبری آموخت
جفا و عتاب و ستمگری آموخت
من آدمی به چنین شکل و خوی و قد و روش
ندیده ام مگر این شیوه از پری آموخت

Thy master has taught thee to coquet and to ravish hearts,
Instructed thee to oppose, to dally, to blame and to be severe.
A person of such figure, temper, stature and gait
I have not seen; perhaps he learnt these tricks from a fairy.

He was holding in his hand the introduction to Zamaksharni's Arabic syntax and reciting:

Zaid struck Amru and was the injurer of Amru.

I said: 'Boy! Khowarzam and Khata have concluded peace, and the quarrel between Zaid and Amru still subsists!'

He smiled and asked for my birthplace.

I replied: 'The soil of Shiraz.'

He continued: 'What rememberest thou of the compositions of Sa'di?'

I recited:

بليت بنحوي يصول مغاضبا
علي كزيد في مقابله العمرو
علي جر ذيل يرفع راسه
و هل يستقيم الرفع من عامل الجر

'I am tired by a nahvi who makes a furious attack
Upon me, like Zaid in his opposition to Amru.
When Zaid submits he does not raise his head
And how can elevation subsist when submission is the regent?

He considered awhile and then said: 'Most of his poetry current in this country is in the Persian language. If thou wilt recite some, it will be more easily understood.'

Then I said:

حو کردطبع تو را تا هوس ن
صورت صبر از دل ما محو کرد
ای دل عشاق به دام تو صید
ما به تو مشغول تو با عمرو و زید

'When thy nature has enticed thee with syntax
It blotted out the form of intellect from our heart.
Alas, the hearts of lovers are captive in thy snare.
We are occupied with thee but thou with Amru and Zaid.'

The next morning, when I was about to depart, some people told him that I was Sa'di, whereon he came running to me and politely expressed his regret that I had not revealed my identity before so that he might have girded his loins to serve me in token of the gratitude due to the presence of a great man.

In spite of thy presence no voice came to say: I am he.

He also said: 'What would it be if thou wert to spend in this country some days in repose that we might derive advantage by serving thee?'

I replied: 'I cannot on account of the following adventure which occurred to me:

بزرگی دیدم اندر کوهساری
قناعت کرده از دنیا به غاری
چرا گفتم : به شهر اندر نیایی
که باری ، بندی از دل برگشایی

I beheld an illustrious man in a mountain region
Who had contentedly retired from the world into a cave.
Why, said I, comest thou not into the city
For once to relax the bonds of thy heart?

بگفت : آنجا پر پرویان نغزند
چو گل بسیار شد پیلان بلغزند

He replied: 'Fairy-faced maidens are there.
When clay is plentiful, elephants will stumble.'

This I said. Then we kissed each other's heads and faces and took leave of each other.

بوسه دادن به روی دوست چه سود؟
هم در این لحظه کردنش به درود
سیب گویی وداع بستان کرد
ان سو زردروی از این نیمه سرخ ، و ز

What profits it to kiss a friend's face
And at the same time to take leave of him?
Thou wouldst say that he who parts from friends is an apple.
One half of his face is red and the other yellow.

If I die not of grief on the day of separation
Reckon me not faithful in friendship.



Story 18

A man in patched garments' accompanied us in a caravan to the Hajaz and one of the Arab Amirs presented him with a hundred dinars to spend upon his family but robbers of the Kufatcha tribe suddenly fell upon the caravan and robbed it clean of everything. The merchants began to wail and to cry, uttering vain shouts and lamentations.

گر تضرع کنی و گر فریاد

پس نخواهد داد دزد، زر باز

Whether thou implorest or complainest
The robber will not return the gold again.

The dervish alone had not lost his equanimity and showed no change. I asked: 'Perhaps they have not taken thy money?'

He replied: 'Yes, they have but I was not so much accustomed to that money that separation therefrom could grieve my heart':

نباید بستن اندر چیز و کس دل

که دل برداشتن کاری است مشکل

The heart must not be tied to any thing or person
Because to take off the heart is a difficult affair.

I replied: 'What thou hast said resembles my case because, when I was young, my intimacy with a young man and my friendship for him were such that his beauty was the Qiblah of my eye and the chief joy of my life union with him':

مگر ملائکه بر آسمان، و گرنه بشر

سن صورت او در زمین نخواهد بود به ح

Perhaps an angel in heaven but no mortal
Can be on earth equal in beauty of form to him.

I swear by the amity, after which companionship is illicit,
No human sperm will ever become a man like him.

All of a sudden the foot of his life sank into the mire of non-existence. The smoke of separation arose from his family. I kept him company on his grave for many days and one of my compositions on his loss is as follows:

کاش کان روز که در پای تو شد خار اجل
بر سر دست گیتی بزدی تیغ هلاکم
تادر این روز، جهان بی تو ندیدی چشم
این منم بر سر خاک تو که خاکم بر سر

Would that on the day when the thorn of fate entered thy foot
The hand of heaven had struck a sword on my head;
So that this day my eye could not see the world without thee.
Here I am on thy grave, would that it were over my head.

آنکه قرارش نگرفتی و خواب
تا گل و نسرین نفشانندی نخست
گردش گیتی گل رویش بریخت
خار بنان بر سر خاکش برست

He who could take neither rest nor sleep
Before he had first scattered roses and narcissi.
The turns of heaven have strewn the roses of his face.
Thorns and brambles are growing on his tomb.

After separation from him I resolved and firmly determined to fold up the carpet of pleasure during the rest of my life and to retire from mixing in society:

Last night I strutted about like a peacock in the garden of union
But today, through separation from my friend, I twist my head like a snake.
The profit of the sea would be good if there were no fear of waves.
The company of the rose would be sweet if there were no pain from thorns.



Story 19

A king of the Arabs, having been informed of the relations subsisting between Laila and Majnun, with an account of the latter's insanity, to the effect that he had in spite of his great accomplishments and eloquence, chosen to roam about in the desert and to let go the reins of self-control from his hands; he ordered him to be brought to his presence, and this having been done, he began to reprove him and to ask him what defect he had discovered in the nobility of the human soul that he adopted the habits of beasts and abandoned the society of mankind. Majnun replied:

'Many friends have blamed me for loving her.

Will they not see her one day and understand my excuse?'

کاش آنانکه عیب من جستند
رویت ای دلستان ، بدیدنی
تابه جای ترنج در نظرت
بی خیر دستها بریدندی

Would that those who are reprovng me
Could see thy face, O ravisher of hearts,
That instead of a lemon in thy presence
They might heedlessly cut their hands.

That the truth may bear witness to the assertion:

This is he for whose sake ye blamed me.

The king expressed a wish to see the beauty of Laila in order to ascertain the cause of so much distress.

Accordingly he ordered her to be searched for. The encampments of various Arab families having been visited, she was found, conveyed to the king and led into the courtyard of the palace.

The king looked at her outward form for some time and she appeared despicable in his sight because the meanest handmaids of his harem excelled her in beauty and attractions.

Majnun, who shrewdly understood the thoughts of the king, said:

از دریچه چشم مجنون باید در جمال لیلی نظر کردن تا سر مشاهده او بر
تو تجلی کند

'It would have been necessary to look from the window of Majnun's eye
at the beauty of Laila when the mystery of her aspect would have been
revealed to thee.'

If the record of the glade which entered my ears

Had been heard by the leaves of the glade they would have lamented with me.

تندر ستانرا نباشد درد ریش
جز به هم دردی نگویم درد خویش
سوز من با دیگری نسبت نکن
او نمک بر دست و من بر عضو ریش

O company of friends, say to him who is unconcerned
'Would that thou knewest what is in a pining heart

Who are healthy have no pain from wounds.

I shall tell my grief to no one but a sympathizer.

گفتن از زنبور بی حاصل بود
با یکی در عمر خود ناخورده نیش
تا تورا حالی نباشد همچو ما
حال ما باشد تورا افسانه پیش

It is useless to speak of bees to one

Who never in his life felt their sting.

As long as thy state is not like mine

My state will be but an idle tale to thee.



Story 20

It is related that the Qazi of Hamdan, having conceived affection towards a Ferrier-boy and the horseshoe of his heart being on fire, he sought for some time to meet him, roaming about and seeking for opportunities, according to the saying of chroniclers:

That straight tall cypress my eyes beheld
It robbed me of my heart and threw me down.
Those wanton eyes have taken my heart with a lasso.
If thou desirest to preserve thy heart shut thy eyes.

I was informed that the boy, who had heard something of the Qazi's passion, happening to meet him in a thoroughfare, manifested immense wrath, assailed the Qazi with disrespectful and insulting words, snatched up a stone and left no injury untried. The Qazi said to an Ulema of repute who happened to be of the same opinion with him:

'Look at that sweetheart and his getting angry,
And that bitter knot of his sweet eyebrow.'

The Arab says: 'A slap from a lover is a raisin.

A blow from the hand on the mouth
Is sweeter than eating bread with one's own hand.

In the same way the boy's impudence might be indicating kindness as Padshahs utter hard words whilst they secretly wish for peace:

Grapes yet unripe are sour.
Wait two or three days, they will become sweet.

After saying these words he returned to his court of justice, where some respectable men connected with him kissed the ground of service and said:

'With thy permission we shall, doing obeisance, speak some words to thee although they may be contrary to politeness because illustrious men have said:

It is not permissible to argue on every topic.
To find fault with great men is wrong.

'But as in consequence of favors conferred by thy lordship in former times upon thy servants it would be a kind of treachery to withhold the opinion they

entertain, they inform thee that the proper way is not to yield to thy inclinations concerning this boy but to fold up the carpet of lascivious desires because thy dignity as Qazi is high and must not be polluted by a base crime. The companion thou hast seen is this, and our words thou hast heard are these:

One who has done many disreputable things
Cares nothing for the reputation of anyone.
Many a good name of fifty years
Was trodden under foot by one bad name."

The Qazi approved of the unanimous advice of his friends and appreciated their good opinion as well as their steadfast fidelity, saying that the view taken by his beloved friends on the arrangement of his case was perfectly right and their arguments admitting of no contradiction.

Nevertheless:

Although love ceases in consequence of reproof
I heard that just men sometimes concoct falsehoods.

Blame me as much as thou listest
Because blackness cannot be washed off from a negro.

Nothing can blot out my remembrance of thee.
I am a snake with broken head and cannot turn.

These words he said and sent some persons to make inquiries about him, spending boundless money because it is said that whoever has gold in his hand possesses strength of arm and he who has no worldly goods has no friends in the whole world:

Whoever has seen gold droops his head,
Although he may be hard to bend like iron-backed scales.

In short, one night he obtained privacy but during that night the police obtained information that the Qazi is spending the whole of it with wine in his hand and a sweetheart on his bosom, enjoying himself, not sleeping, and singing:

Has this cock perhaps not crowed at the proper time this night
And have the lovers not had their fill of embrace, and kiss

Whilst alas for only a moment the eye of confusion is asleep?
Remain awake that life may not elapse in vain
Till thou hearest the morning call from the Friday-mosque
Or the noise of kettle-drums on Atabek's palace-gate.
Lips against lips like the cock's eye
Are not to part at the crowing of a silly cock.

Whilst the Qazi was in this state one of his dependants entered and said:

'Arise and run as far as thy feet will carry thee because the envious have not only obtained a handle for vexation but have spoken the truth. We may, whilst the fire of confusion is yet burning low, perchance extinguish it with the water of stratagem but when it blazes up high it may destroy a world.'

The Qazi, however, replied:

'When the lion has his claws on the game
What boots it if a jackal makes his appearance?
Keep thy face on the face of the friend and leave
The foe to chew the back of his own hand in rage.'

The same night information was also brought to the king that in his realm such a wickedness had been perpetrated and he was asked what he thought of it. He replied:

'I know that he is one of the most learned men, and I account him to be the paragon of our age. As it is possible that enemies have devised a plot against him, I give no credit to this accusation unless I obtain ocular evidence because philosophers have said:

He who grasps the sword in haste
Will repenting carry the back of his hand to his teeth and bite it.'

I heard that at dawn the king with some of his courtiers arrived at the pillow of the Qazi, saw a lamp standing, the sweetheart sitting, the wine spilled, the goblet broken and the Qazi plunged in the sleep of drunkenness, unaware of the realm of existence.

The king awakened him gently and said: 'Get up for the sun has risen.'

The Qazi, who perceived the state of affairs, asked: 'From what direction?'

The sultan was astonished and replied: 'From the east as usual.'

The Qazi exclaimed:

'Praise be to Allah! The door of repentance is yet open because according to tradition the gate Of repentance will not be locked against worshippers till the sun rises in its setting place.'

These two things impelled me to sin:

My ill-luck and my imperfect understanding.

If thou givest me punishment I deserve it

And if thou forgivest pardon is better than revenge.

The king replied: 'As thou knowest that thou must suffer capital punishment, it is of no use to repent. But their faith availed them not after they had beholden our vengeance.

'What is the use to promise to forego thieving

When a lasso cannot be thrown up to the palace?

Say to the tall man: "Do not pluck the fruit",

For he who is short cannot reach the branch.

'For thee, who hast committed such wickedness, there is no way of escape.'

After the king had uttered these words, the men appointed for the execution took hold of him, whereon he said: 'I have one word more to speak in the service of the sultan.'

The king, who heard him, asked: 'What is it?'

And he recited:

'Thou who shakest the sleeve of displeasure upon me

Expect not that I shall withdraw my hand from thy skirt.

If escape be impossible from this crime which I committed

I trust to the clemency which thou possessest.'

The king replied:

Thou hast adduced this wonderful sally and hast enounced a strange maxim but it is impossible according to reason and contrary to usage that thy accomplishments and eloquence should this day save thee from the punishment which I have decreed; and I consider it proper to throw thee headlong from the castle that others may take an example.'

He continued: 'O lord of the world, I have been nourished by the bounty of this dynasty, and this crime was not committed only by me in the world. Throw another man headlong that I may take the example.'

The king burst out laughing, pardoned his crime and said to his dependents who desired the Qazi to be slain:

'Everyone of you who are bearers of your own faults
Ought not to blame others for their defects.'



Story 21

جوانی پاکباز پاکرو بود
که با پاکیزه رویی در گرو بود
چنین خواندم که در دریای اعظم
به گردابی در افتادند با هم

A virtuous and beautiful youth
Was pledged to a chaste maiden.

I read that in the great sea
They fell into a vortex together.

چو ملاح آمدش تا دست گیرد
مبادا کاندرا آن حالت بمیرد
همی گفت از میان موج و تشویر
مرا بگذار و دست یار من گیر

When a sailor came to take his hand,
Lest he might die in that condition,
He said in anguish from the waves:
'Leave me. Take the hand of my love.'

در این گفتن جهان بر وی بر آشفت
: شنیدندش که جان می داد و می گفت
حدیث عشق از آن بطلال منیوش
که در سختی کند یاری فراموش

Whilst saying this, he despaired of life.
In his agony he was heard to exclaim:
'Learn not the tale of love from the wretch
Who forgets his beloved in distress.'

چنین کردند یاران ، زندگانی
ز کار افتاده بشنو تا بدانی
که سعدی راه و رسم عشقبازی
چنان داند که در بغداد تازی

Thus the lives of the lovers terminated.
Learn from what has occurred that thou mayest know
Because Sa'di is of the ways and means of love affairs
Well aware in the Arabian city of Baghdad.

Tie thy heart to the heart-charmer thou possessest
And shut thy eye to all the rest of the world.

اگر مجنون لیلی زنده گشتی
حدیث عشق از این دفتر نبشتی

If Majnun and Laila were to come to life again
They might indite a tale of love on this occurrence.

