

Classic Poetry Series

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

- poems -

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Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi(1321 - 1389)

Very little is known about Hafiz of Shiraz, particularly his early life. His primary medium of expression was the ghazal, a Persian poetic form which, like the English sonnet, has been widely used since the early middle ages. Hafiz is considered an incomparable master of the form. His works comprise 500 ghazals, 42 Rubaiyyes, and a few Ghaseedehs, composed over a period of 50 years. Hafiz did not compile his own poetry. Mohammad Golandaam, who also wrote a preface to his compilation, completed it in 813 A.H or 1410 a.d, some 21-22 years after Hafiz's death.

Immediately after Hafiz' death, many stories -some of mythical proportion- were woven around it; the air of mystery has lingered to this day.

He was born in the central Iranian city of Isfahan, somewhere between 1317 and 1326 CE. His father, who was a coal merchant, moved the family to Shiraz while Hafiz was still a child and died early in the boy's life. The family was left in serious debt; he and his mother went to live with an uncle. Despite leaving day school at one point, Hafiz managed to become quite well educated; fluent in both Arabic and Persian, he memorized the Qur'an at an early age ('Hafiz' or 'Hafez' is a title given to those who have memorized the Qur'an). He is said to have worked as a copyist, in a drapery shop, and in a bakery, where he delivered bread to the wealthy quarter of town (where tradition suggests that he met Shakh-e Nabat (the name means 'Branch of Sugar-cane'), a young woman to whom many of his poems are addressed to her).

In his twenties, he married and fathered one child. According to tradition, in pursuit of his beloved, he kept a forty day and night vigil at the tomb of Baba Kuhi. After completing this, he met his spiritual master, Attar of Shiraz, and became his disciple. From his early twenties to early thirties, he acquired the support of courtly patrons and became a poet of the court of Abu Ishak, gaining subsequent fame and influence in Shiraz. This has been called the phase of "Spiritual Romanticism" in his poetry. Later in life, he became professor of Koranic studies at a college in Shiraz.

When Mubarez Muzaffar captured Shiraz, he ousted Hafiz from his teaching position. At this time he wrote protest poems. In the events that followed, Shah Shuja took Muzaffar (who was his father) as prisoner, and re-instated Hafiz. He began his phase of subtle spirituality in his poetry. Around the age of 48, Hafiz fell out favour with Shuja, and fled Shiraz for his safety, going into self-imposed exile in Isfahan. Poems of this time speak of his longing for Shiraz, for

Shakh-e Nabat, and for his spiritual Master, Attar.

By invitation of Shah Shuja, he ended his exile and returned to Shiraz, where he was again re-instated to his post at the College.

Age 60 Longing to be united with his Creator, he began a forty day and night vigil by sitting in a circle that he had drawn himself.

Age 60 On the morn of the fortieth day of his vigil, which was also on the fortieth anniversary of meeting his Master Attar, he went to his Master, and upon drinking a cup of wine that Attar gave him, he attained Cosmic Consciousness or God-Realization.

In his sixties, Hafiz composed more than half of his ghazals, and taught a small circle of disciples. As tradition states, he began a forty day and night vigil at the age of thirty, longing to be united with his creator; upon completion of the vigil, he met his Master Attar, who gave him a cup of wine to drink. Having drunk the wine, Hafiz attained 'Cosmic Consciousness' or 'God-Realization' His poetry at this time talks with the authority of a Master who is united with God.

Hafiz is said to have died sometime between 1389 and 1390, reputedly at the age of 69. He was buried in the Musalla Gardens of Shiraz, on the banks of his beloved Ruknabad river.

Hafiz only composed when he was divinely inspired, and therefore he averaged only about 10 Ghazals per year. His focus was to write poetry worthy of the Beloved.

To this day, Hafiz's Divan (Poetry) is used by many as for guidance and direction. Over the centuries, there have been many attempts to translate the subtleties of Hafiz's Persian verse into English. By all accounts even the best translations have been only partially successful; some translators have translated Hafiz directly from the Persian, others have adapted their poetry from the work of other translators.

Quotes, on Hafiz' poetry:

"In his poetry Hafiz has inscribed undeniable truth indelibly ... Hafiz has no peer!" Goethe

"You may remember the old Persian saying, 'There is danger for him who taketh the tiger cub, and danger also for whosoever snatches a delusion from a woman.'

There is as much sense in Hafiz as in Horace, and as much knowledge of the world" Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

"... Hafiz is as highly esteemed by his countrymen as Shakespeare by us, and deserves as serious consideration" A. J. Arberry

"Hafiz defies you to show him or put him in a condition inopportune or ignoble ... He fears nothing. He sees too far; he sees throughout; such is the only man I wish to see or be." Emerson

Absolutely Clear

Don't surrender your loneliness
So quickly.
Let it cut more deep.

Let it ferment and season you
As few human
Or even divine ingredients can.

Something missing in my heart tonight
Has made my eyes so soft,
My voice
So tender,

My need of God
Absolutely
Clear.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Arise And Fill A Golden Goblet

Arise! and fill a golden goblet up
Until the wine of pleasure overflow,
Before into thy skull's pale empty cup
A grimmer Cup-bearer the dust shall throw.
Yea, to the Vale of Silence we must come;
Yet shall the flagon laugh and Heaven's dome
Thrill with an answering echo ere we go!
Thou knowest that the riches of this field
Make no abiding, let the goblet's fire
Consume the fleeting harvest Earth may yield!
Oh Cypress-tree! green home of Love's sweet choir,
When I unto the dust I am have passed,
Forget thy former wantonness, and cast
Thy shadow o'er the dust of my desire.
Flow, bitter tears, and wash me clean! for they
Whose feet are set upon the road that lies
'Twixt Earth and Heaven Thou shalt be pure,' they say,
'Before unto the pure thou lift thine eyes.'
Seeing but himself, the Zealot sees but sin;
Grief to the mirror of his soul let in,
Oh Lord, and cloud it with the breath of sighs!
No tainted eye shall gaze upon her face,
No glass but that of an unsullied heart
Shall dare reflect my Lady's perfect grace.
Though like to snakes that from the herbage start,
Thy curling locks have wounded me full sore,
Thy red lips hold the power of the bezoar-
Ah, touch and heat me where I lie apart!
And when from her the wind blows perfume sweet,
Tear, Hafiz, like the rose, thy robe in two,
And cast thy rags beneath her flying feet,
To deck the place thy mistress passes through.

Translated by: Gertrude Bell

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Arise O Cup- Bearer

ARISE, oh Cup-bearer, rise! and bring
To lips that are thirsting the bowl they praise,
For it seemed that love was an easy thing,
But my feet have fallen on difficult ways.
I have prayed the wind o'er my heart to fling
The fragrance of musk in her hair that sleeps
In the night of her hair-yet no fragrance stays
The tears of my heart's blood my sad heart weeps.

Hear the Tavern-keeper who counsels you:
'With wine, with red wine your prayer carpet dye! '
There was never a traveller like him but knew
The ways of the road and the hostelry.
Where shall I rest, when the still night through,
Beyond thy gateway, oh Heart of my heart,
The bells of the camels lament and cry:
'Bind up thy burden again and depart! '

The waves run high, night is clouded with fears,
And eddying whirlpools clash and roar;
How shall my drowning voice strike their ears
Whose light-freighted vessels have reached the shore?
I sought mine own; the unsparing years
Have brought me mine own, a dishonoured name.
What cloak shall cover my misery o'er
When each jesting mouth has rehearsed my shame!
Oh Hafiz, seeking an end to strife,
Hold fast in thy mind what the wise have writ:
'If at last thou attain the desire of thy life,
Cast the world aside, yea, abandon it! '

Translated by: Gertrude Bell

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Bitter Dolor

In its beak, a nightingale had a roseleaf of exquisite color
And on that pleasant food, it nourished on some bitter dolor
I asked, 'Wherefore lament and cry despite this union fair? '
He said, 'In this, the beauty of the Beloved do I share.'
If the true Beloved sat not with us, there is no room for grievance
A prosperous King was He; and the beggars He held in abhorrence.
Our pleas and cries affect not the Friend endowed with beauty rare
Happy he who for the beloved and the fortune of prosperity doth care.
Arise! So that to the reed of the painter, we may give away our all
This wonderful picture, in the revolution of the compass, doth fall
If thou seek the path of love, think not of ill reputation
San'an his religious garment pawned at the tavern sans disputation.
Happy the time of that gentle kalander who on the path
The rosary of the King, in the (zunnar) 172 Christian girdle hath.
Behold in HAFIZ's eyes which wait
His huri's palace-roof below,
A figure of the 'garden-grove,
'The streams of which beneath it flow.'

(Translated by Ismail Salami)

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Bold Souls

O nightingale! Bewail if my love thou desire.
For, we are weeping lovers; yet, tear is our task dire.
Where bloweth a perfumed breeze from the Friend's hair,
The Tartary musk-pods lose the aroma once so rare.
Give wine so we may the robe of hypocrisy dye;
For we are intoxicated with pride; yet, sober are we, aye.
To devise a fancy for Thy tress, fools do not care
To get into the chains of love is what the bold souls dare.
'Tis a deep charm which wakes the lover's flame
Not ruby lip, nor verdant down its name
Beauty is not the eye, lock, cheek and mole
A thousand subtle points the heart control.
The wayfarers purchase not for half a corn,
The satin coat that void of skill is born.
Difficult it seemeth to reach the Threshold of Thy Love:
Aye, difficult as ascending to the rooftop of the heaven above
At dawn, in a dream, to the abode of the Beloved did I wend:
Oh happy the dream in which one mayest see the Darling Friend.
HAFIZ! Wound not His heart with tears, and end:
For, eternal salvation in love doth bend

(Translated by Ismail Salami)

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Bring Perfumes Sweet To Me

FROM out the street of So-and-So,
Oh wind, bring perfumes sweet to me
For I am sick and pale with woe;
Oh bring me rest from misery!
The dust that lies before her door,
Love's long desired elixir, pour
Upon this wasted heart of mine--
Bring me a promise and a sign!

Between the ambush of mine eyes
And my heart's fort there's enmity--
Her eye-brow's bow, the dart that flies,
Beneath her lashes, bring to me!
Sorrow and absence, glances cold,
Before my time have made me old;
A wine-cup from the hand of Youth
Bring me for pity and for ruth!

Then shall all unbelievers taste
A draught or two of that same wine;
But if they like it not, oh haste!
And let joy's flowing cup be mine.
Cup-bearer, seize to-day, nor wait
Until to-morrow!--or from Fate
Some passport to felicity,
Some written surety bring to me!

My heart threw back the veil of woe,
Consoled by Hafiz melody:
From out the street of So-and-So,
Oh wind, bring perfumes sweet to me!

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Brings Me Hope

WHAT drunkenness is this that brings me hope--
Who was the Cup-bearer, and whence the wine?
That minstrel singing with full voice divine,
What lay was his? for 'mid the woven rope
Of song, he brought word from my Friend to me
Set to his melody.

The wind itself bore joy to Solomon;
The Lapwing flew from Sheba's garden close,
Bringing good tidings of its queen and rose.
Take thou the cup and go where meadows span
The plain, whither the bird with tuneful throat
Has brought Spring's sweeter note.

Welcome, oh rose, and full-blown eglantine!
The violets their scented gladness fling,
Jasmin breathes purity-art sorrowing
Like an unopened bud, oh heart of mine?
The wind of dawn that sets closed blossoms free
Brings its warm airs to thee.

Saki, thy kiss shall still my bitter cry!
Lift up your grief-bowed heads, all ye that weep,
The Healer brings joy's wine-cup--oh, drink deep!
Disciple of the Tavern-priest am I;
The pious Sheikh may promise future bliss,
He brings me where joy is.

The greedy glances of a Tartar horde
To me seemed kind--my foeman spared me not
Though one poor robe was all that I had got.
But Heaven served Hafiz, as a slave his lord,
And when he fled through regions desolate,
Heaven brought him to thy gate.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Cypress And Tulip

Cypress and Tulip and sweet Eglantine,
Of these the tale from lip to lip is sent;
Washed by three cups, oh Saki, of thy wine,
My song shall turn upon this argument.
Spring, bride of all the meadows, rises up,
Clothed in her ripest beauty: fill the cup!
Of Spring's handmaidens runs this song of mine.

The sugar-loving birds of distant Ind,
Except a Persian sweetmeat that was brought
To fair Bengal, have found nought to their mind.
See how my song, that in one night was wrought,
Defies the limits set by space and time!
O'er plains and mountain-tops my fearless rhyme,
Child of a night, its year-long road shall find.

And thou whose sense is dimmed with piety,
Thou too shalt learn the magic of her eyes;
Forth comes the caravan of sorcery
When from those gates the blue-veined curtains rise.
And when she walks the flowery meadows through,
Upon the jasmine's shamèd cheek the dew
Gathers like sweat, she is so fair to see!

Ah, swerve not from the path of righteousness
Though the world lure thee! like a wrinkled crone,
Hiding beneath her robe lasciviousness,
She plunders them that pause and heed her moan.
From Sinai Moses brings thee wealth untold;
Bow not thine head before the calf of gold
Like Samir, following after wickedness.

From the Shah's garden blows the wind of Spring,
The tulip in her lifted chalice bears
A dewy wine of Heaven's minist'ring
Until Ghiyasuddin, the Sultan, hears,
Sing, Hafiz, of thy longing for his face.
The breezes whispering round thy dwelling-place
Shall carry thy lament unto the King.

Translated by: Gertrude Bell

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Drops Of His Heart's Blood

THE nightingale with drops of his heart's blood
Had nourished the red rose, then came a wind,
And catching at the boughs in envious mood,
A hundred thorns about his heart entwined.
Like to the parrot crunching sugar, good
Seemed the world to me who could not stay
The wind of Death that swept my hopes away.

Light of mine eyes and harvest of my heart,
And mine at least in changeless memory!
Ah, when he found it easy to depart,
He left the harder pilgrimage to me!
Oh Camel-driver, though the cordage start,
For God's sake help me lift my fallen load,
And Pity be my comrade of the road!

My face is seamed with dust, mine eyes are wet.
Of dust and tears the turquoise firmament
Kneadeth the bricks for joy's abode; and yet . . .
Alas, and weeping yet I make lament!
Because the moon her jealous glances set
Upon the bow-bent eyebrows of my moon,
He sought a lodging in the grave-too soon!

I had not castled, and the time is gone.
What shall I play? Upon the chequered floor
Of Night and Day, Death won the game-forlorn
And careless now, Hafiz can lose no more.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

From The Garden Of Heaven

FROM the garden of Heaven a western breeze
Blows through the leaves of my garden of earth;
With a love like a huri I'd take mine ease,
And wine! bring me wine, the giver of mirth!
To-day the beggar may boast him a king,
His banqueting-hall is the ripening field,
And his tent the shadow that soft clouds fling.

A tale of April the meadows unfold--
Ah, foolish for future credit to slave,
And to leave the cash of the present untold!
Build a fort with wine where thy heart may brave
The assault of the world; when thy fortress falls,
The relentless victor shall knead from thy dust
The bricks that repair its crumbling walls.

Trust not the word of that foe in the fight!
Shall the lamp of the synagogue lend its flame
To set thy monastic torches alight?
Drunken am I, yet place not my name
In the Book of Doom, nor pass judgment on it;
Who knows what the secret finger of Fate
Upon his own white forehead has writ!

And when the spirit of Hafiz has fled,
Follow his bier with a tribute of sighs;
Though the ocean of sin has closed o'er his head,
He may find a place in God's Paradise.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Ghazal 01

O beautiful wine-bearer, bring forth the cup and put it to my lips
Path of love seemed easy at first, what came was many hardships.
With its perfume, the morning breeze unlocks those beautiful locks
The curl of those dark ringlets, many hearts to shreds strips.
In the house of my Beloved, how can I enjoy the feast
Since the church bells call the call that for pilgrimage equips.
With wine color your robe, one of the old Magi's best tips
Trust in this traveler's tips, who knows of many paths and trips.
The dark midnight, fearful waves, and the tempestuous whirlpool
How can he know of our state, while ports house his unladen ships.
I followed my own path of love, and now I am in bad repute
How can a secret remain veiled, if from every tongue it drips?
If His presence you seek, Hafiz, then why yourself eclipse?
Stick to the One you know, let go of imaginary trips.

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Los Angeles, Ca
April 9, 1999

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Ghazal 02

Where is sensible action, & my insanity whence?
See the difference, it is from where to whence.
From the church & hypocritical vestments, I take offence
Where is the abode of the Magi, & sweet wine whence?
For dervishes, piety and sensibility make no sense
Where is sermon and hymn, & the violin's music whence.
Upon seeing our friend, our foes put up their defense
Where is a dead lantern, & the candle of the sun whence?
My eye-liner is the dust of your door and fence
Where shall I go, tell me, you command me whence?
Take your focus from your chin to the trap on the path hence,
Where to O heart, in such hurry you go whence?
May his memory of union be happy and intense
Where are your amorous gestures, & your reproach whence?
Make not restlessness & insomnia, Hafiz's sentence
What is rest, which is patience, and sleep whence?

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Los Angeles, Ca
Februaru 1, 2000

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Ghazal 03

That beautiful Shirazi Turk, took control and my heart stole,
I'll give Samarkand & Bukhara, for her Hindu beauty mole.
O wine-bearer bring me wine, such wine not found in Heavens
By running brooks, in flowery fields, spend your days and stroll.
Alas, these sweet gypsy clowns, these agitators of our town
Took the patience of my heart, like looting Turks take their toll.
Such unfinished love as ours, the Beloved has no need,
For the Perfect Beauty, frills and adornments play no role.
I came to know Joseph's goodness, that daily would increase
Even the chaste Mistress succumbed to the love she would extol.
Whether profane or even cursed, I'll reply only in praise
Sweetness of tongue and the lips, even bitterness would enthrall.
Heed the advice of the wise, make your most endeared goal,
The fortunate blessed youth, listen to the old wise soul.
Tell tales of song and wine, seek not secrets of the world,
None has found and no-one will, knowledge leaves this riddle whole.
You composed poems and sang, Hafiz, you spent your days well
Venus wedded to your songs, in the firmaments' inverted bowl.

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Los Angeles, Ca
October 18, 1999

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Ghazal 12

The bright moon reflects your radiant face
Your snowcapped cheekbones supply water of grace
My heavy heart desires an audience with your face
Come forward or must return, your command I will embrace.
Nobody for good measures girded your fields
Such trades no one in their right mind would chase.
Our dormant fate will never awake, unless
You wash its face and shout brace, brace!
Send a bouquet of your face with morning breeze
Perhaps inhaling your scent, your fields we envision & trace.
May you live fulfilled and long, O wine-bearer of this feast
Though our cup was never filled from your jug or your vase.
My heart is reckless, please, let Beloved know
Beware my friend, my soul your soul replace.

O God, when will my fate and desires hand in hand
Bring me to my Beloved hair, in one place?
Step above the ground, when you decide to pass us by
On this path lie bloody, the martyrs of human race.
Hafiz says a prayer, listen, and say amen
May your sweet wine daily pour upon my lips and my face.
O breeze tell us about the inhabitants of city of Yazd
May the heads of unworthy roll as a ball in your polo race.
Though we are far from friends, kinship is near
We praise your goodness and majestic mace.
O Majesty, may we be touched by your grace
I kiss and touch the ground that is your base.

Translated by: Shahriar Shahriari

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Ghazal 22

When you hear the lovers' words, think them not a mistake
You don't recognize these words, the error must be your take.
The here and hereafter cannot tame my spirit and soul
Praise God for all the intrigue in my mind that is at stake.
I know not who resides within my heart
Though I am silent, he must shake and quake.
My heart went through the veil, play a song
Hark, my fate, this music I must make.
I paid no heed, worldly affairs I forsake
It is for your beauty, beauty of the world I partake.
My heart is on fire, I am restless and awake
To the tavern to cure my hundred day headache.
My bleeding heart has left its mark in the temple
You have every right to wash my body in a wine lake.
In the abode of the Magi, I am welcome because
The fire that never dies, in my heart is awake.
What was the song the minstrel played?
My life is gone, but breathing, I still fake!
Within me last night, the voice of your love did break
Hafiz's breast still quivers and shakes for your sake.

Traslated by: Shahriar Shahriari

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Ghazal 35

Keep to your own affairs, why do you fault me?
My heart has fallen in love, what has befallen thee?
In the center of he, whom God made from nothing
There is a subtle point that no creature can see.
Until His lips fulfill my lips like a reed
From all the worldly advice I must flee.
The beggar of your home, of the eight heavens has no need
The prisoner of your love, from both worlds is thus free.
Though my drunkenness has brought forth my ruin
My essence is flourished by paying that ruinous fee.
O heart for the pain and injustice of love do not plead
For this is your lot from the justice of eternity.
Hafiz don't help magic and fantasy further breed
The world is filled with such, from sea to sea.

Translated by: Shahriar Shahriari

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Ghazal 41

Though the wine is joyous, and the wind, flowers sorts
Harp music and scent of wine, the officer reports.
If you face an adversary and a jug of wine
Choose the wine because, fate cheats and extorts.
Up your ragged, patched sleeves, hide & keep your cup
Like this flask of wine, fate too bleeds and distorts.
With my teary eyes, I cleanse my robe with wine
Self-restraint and piety is what everyone exhorts.
Seek not your joy in the turn of the firmaments
Even my filtered clear red fluid, dregs sports.
This earth and sky is no more than a bleeding sieve
That sifts and sorts kingly crowns and courts.
Hafiz, your poems invaded Fars and Iraqi ports
It is now the turn of Baghdad and Tabrizi forts.

Translated by: Shahriar Shahriari

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Ghazal 42

I long to open up my heart
For my heart do my part.
My story was yesterday's news
From rivals cannot keep apart.
On this holy night stay with me
Till the morning, do not depart.
On a night so dark as this,
My course, how can I chart?
O breath of life, help me tonight
That in the morn I make a start.
In my love for you, I will
My self and ego thwart.
Like Hafiz, being love smart;
I long to master that art.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Ghazal 47

Whoever had found his way to the tavern's block
Would have to be insane if on another door knock
Fate never crowned any with drunkenness, except
The one who considered this the highest luck.
Whoever finds his way into the tavern
From the bounty of the wine, temple's secrets unlock.
He who read the secrets of this wine,
Found the secrets in the dust upon which we walk.
Only seek the obedience of the insane
In our creed, logic and sanity we mock.
My heart asked not for longevity of beauty
Because sadly this is the way of the clock.
From the pain of the fading morning star at dawn
I cried so much that I saw the moon, though Venus my eyes struck.
Who talks about the story of Hafiz and his cup?
Why would the king know where the policemen flock?
Praise the King who considers the nine heavens
A mere crevice in His courtly block.

Translated by: Shahriar Shahriari

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Ghazal 51

My eyes drown in tears, yet thirst for but one chance
I'll give away my whole life, for Beloved, but one glance.
Be ashamed of Beloved's beautiful eyes and long lashes
If you have seen what I have, and still deny me my trance.
O traveler, leave these city gates behind and go back
Tread the same path, and towards my Beloved you'll advance.
With such shortage of love, I submit to my fate
That drunken gypsy's love is now my circumstance.

The aromatic flowers, the perfume of that hair
Is only a sample from my Perfumer's fragrance.
O gardener, like the breeze, do not drive me away,
You water your flowers with my tears' assistance.
Ordered me to drink much from my lover's sweet lips
And healed my sickened heart by taking such joyous stance.
The one who taught Hafiz, how his ghazals enhance,
Is none but my silent friend, with a sweet parlance.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Ghazal 53

The corner of the tavern is my altar, where I pray
At dawn, the mantra of the Old Magi, I say.
Fear not if the harp plays not at sun's morning ascent
My morning cry of repentance is the music I play.
Thank God, free from beggars and kings, away, I stay;
Homage, to the beggar at the door of the Beloved, I pay.
For Thee, in the mosque and the tavern, my time, I spent;
By God, from this intent, I never ran nor walked astray.

Only, Angel of Death's blade can uproot my tent
Running from love and grace has never been my way.
From the time that I made my search for Thee my intent
I lean upon the throne on which the sun may lay.
Not your fault was the sins that were put into your clay
Nonetheless accept them, Hafiz, and good taste display.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Ghazal 62

Well done O messenger, bring a message from my friend
Willingly I'll give my own life for the sake of my friend.
Like a nightingale in cage, being love-sick is my trend
A singing parrot in love with nuts and sweets of my friend.
My trap is her hair, her mole is the seed, and I
In search of those seeds have been trapped by my friend.
Will remain always drunk, until resurrection is nigh
Whoever, like me, drank from the cup poured by my friend.
I will speak no more of my elation, I trust
Focusing on me diverts me from my friend.
I'd use as eye-liner, if I could, the very dust
Upon which, once or twice walked my friend.
I long for union, while my friend away will turn,
I give up my desires to fulfill those of my friend.
In this your incurable fever, Hafiz, calmly burn
None can heal the pain of longing, my friend.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Ghazal 71

Falsely pious, of our state are unaware
No offence if their words our hearts tear.
On the path, whatever you meet is for your good
On the straight and the narrow, can't be lost there.
Whatever the rook may play, we'll knock it down
On the chessboard of lovers, Kings won't dare.
What is this multi-patterned, tall, simple dome?
Who is wise to this riddle? Show me where?
Is this your grace, O Lord, powerful, wise?
Too many hidden wounds; no time to catch a breath of air.
It's as if the Judge of our Court is not fair.
This Royal Seal, sign of God does not bear
Whoever wishes may come, and whatever, may declare.
No guards, no grandeur, this hall is bare
Those who enter the tavern, openly share.
Those who sell themselves, meet the wine-seller's glare
Whatever befalls us is the doing of our own affair.
Your grace is not rare, and there's no one you'd spare
I serve the Tavern-Master, with his endless love and care.
Piety, sometimes is cold, sometimes will flare.
Hafiz gracefully declines from taking the head chair
Lovers are free from fortune and fame's snare.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Ghazal 79

The heavenly breeze comes to this estate,
I sit with the wine and a lovely mate.
Why can't the beggar play the king's role?
The sky is the dome, the earth is my state.
The green grass feels like Paradise;
Why would I trade this for the garden gate?
With bricks of wine build towers of love,
Being bricks of clay is our final fate.
Seek no kindness of those full of hate,
People of the mosque with the church debate.
Don't badmouth me, don't blacken my name;
Only God can, my story narrate.
Neither Hafiz's corps, nor his life negate,
With all his misdeeds, heavens for him wait.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Here Will I Take My Rest

My lady, that did change this house of mine
Into a heaven when that she dwelt therein,
From head to foot an angel's grace divine
Enwrapped her; pure she was, spotless of sin;
Fair as the moon her countenance, and wise;
Lords of the kind and tender glance, her eyes
With an abounding loveliness did shine.

Then said my heart: Here will I take my rest!
This city breathes her love in every part.
But to a distant bourne was she addressed,
Alas! he knew it not, alas, poor heart!
The influence of some cold malignant star
Has loosed my hand that held her, lone and far
She journeyeth that lay upon my breast.

Not only did she lift my bosom's veil,
Reveal its inmost secret, but her grace
Drew back the curtain from Heaven's mansions pale,
And gave her there an eternal dwelling-place.
The flower-strewn river lip and meadows fair,
The rose herself but fleeting treasures were,
Regret and Winter follow in their trail.

Dear were the days which perished with my friend--
Ah, what is left of life, now she is dead,
All wisdomless and profitless I spend!
The nightingale his own life's blood doth shed,
When, to the kisses of the wind, the morn
Unveils the rose's splendour-with his torn
And jealous breast he dyes her petals red.

Yet pardon her, oh Heart, for poor wert thou,
A humble dervish on the dusty way;
Crowned with the crown of empire was her brow,
And in the realms of beauty she bore sway.
But all the joy that Hafiz' hand might hold,
Lay in the beads that morn and eve he told,
Worn with God's praise; and see! he holds it now.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

If God Invited You To A Party

If God
Invited you to a party
And said,

'Everyone
In the ballroom tonight
Will be my special
Guest...'

How would you then treat them
When you
Arrived?

Indeed, indeed!

And I know
There is no one in this world

Who
Is not upon
His Jeweled Dance
Floor

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Lady That Hast My Heart

LADY that hast my heart within thy hand,
Thou heed'st me not; and if thou turn thine ear
Unto the wise, thou shalt not understand--
Behold the fault is thine, our words were clear.
For all the tumult in my drunken brain
Praise God! who trieth not His slave in vain;
Nor this world nor the next shall make me fear!

My weary heart eternal silence keeps--
I know not who has slipped into my heart;
Though I am silent, one within me weeps.
My soul shall rend the painted veil apart.
Where art thou, Minstrel! touch thy saddest strings
Till clothed in music such as sorrow sings,
My mournful story from thy zither sweeps.

Lo, not at any time I lent mine ear
To hearken to the glories of the earth;
Only thy beauty to mine eyes was dear.
Sleep has forsaken me, and from the birth
Of night till day I weave bright dreams of thee;
Drunk with a hundred nights of revelry,
Where is the tavern that sets forth such cheer!

My heart, sad hermit, stains the cloister floor
With drops of blood, the sweat of anguish dire;
Ah, wash me clean, and o'er my body pour
Love's generous wine! the worshippers of fire
Have bowed them down and magnified my name,
For in my heart there burns a living flame,
Transpiercing Death's impenetrable door.

What instrument through last night's silence rang?
My life into his lay the minstrel wove,
And filled my brain with the sweet song he sang.
It was the proclamation of thy love
That shook the strings of Life's most secret lyre,
And still my breast heaves with last night's desire,
For countless echoes from that music sprang.

And ever, since the time that Hafiz heard
His Lady's voice, as from a rocky hill
Reverberates the softly spoken word,
So echoes of desire his bosom fill.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Languishing Eyes

With the point of thy glance, do not hit my heart;
For, before Thy languishing eyes, I will depart
In excellence and beauty thou art rich and without peer.
Give me alms; for a miserable mendicant am I here.
Such a bird am I that every even and morn,
From the heaven above, my cry is born.
Fill up the goblet; for in the country of Love
Though old I may seem, I am a full-fledged dove.
Heart and mind so overflowed with memory of friend boon,
That, from my mind, departed the thought of self soon.
Be naught but of the minstrel and of wine:
If a word the reed of my angel design.
In the tumult of resurrection, when nobody's nobody's mate,
From the Magian Pir, I would fain accept all favors he'd donate.
Zealot! Like little boys, how long will you me deceive
With apple, milk and honey that in paradise I may receive?
With the wine-sellers, I have made an oath with heart and lip,
That, on the day of grief, naught but the cup of love, I sip.
O happy the moment of intoxication,
One is free from men of lofty station!
In my heart, do I hold treasures great and enow
Though an indigent, may I be called by my foe.
Of HAFIZ's health, I forsook hope
When his Saki came to see me tope.

(Translated by Ismail Salami)

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Lay Not Reproach At The Drunkard's Door

LAY not reproach at the drunkard's door
Oh Fanatic, thou that art pure of soul;
Not thine on the page of life to enrol
The faults of others! Or less or more
I have swerved from my path--keep thou to thine own
For every man when he reaches the goal
Shall reap the harvest his hands have sown.

Leave me the hope of a former grace--
Till the curtain is lifted none can tell
Whether in Heaven or deepest Hell,
Fair or vile, shall appear his face.
Alike the drunk and the strict of fare
For his mistress yearns--in the mosque Love doth dwell
And the church, for his lodging is everywhere.

If without the house of devotion I stand,
I am not the first to throw wide the door
My father opened it long before,
The eternal Paradise slipped from his hand.
All you that misconstrue my words' intent,
I lie on the bricks of the tavern floor,
And a brick shall serve me for argument.

Heaven's garden future treasures may yield--
Ah, make the most of earth's treasury!
The flickering shade of the willow-tree,
And the grass-grown lip of the fruitful field.
Trust not in deeds--the Eternal Day
Shall reveal the Creator's sentence on thee;
But till then, what His finger has writ, who can say.

Bring the cup in thine hand to the Judgment-seat;
Thou shalt rise, oh Hafiz, to Heaven's gate
From the tavern where thou hast tarried late.
And if thou hast worshipped wine, thou shalt meet
The reward that the Faithful attain;
If such thy life, then fear not thy fate,
Thou shalt not have lived and worshipped in vain.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Life's Mighty Flood

WHAT is wrought in the forge of the living and life--
All things are nought! Ho! fill me the bowl,
For nought is the gear of the world and the strife!
One passion has quickened the heart and the soul,
The Beloved's presence alone they have sought--
Love at least exists; yet if Love were not,
Heart and soul would sink to the common lot--
All things are nought!

Like an empty cup is the fate of each,
That each must fill from Life's mighty flood;
Nought thy toil, though to Paradise gate thou reach,
If Another has filled up thy cup with blood;
Neither shade from the sweet-fruited trees could be bought
By thy praying-oh Cypress of Truth, dost not see
That Sidreh and Tuba were nought, and to thee
All then were nought!

The span of thy life is as five little days,
Brief hours and swift in this halting-place;
Rest softly, ah rest! while the Shadow delays,
For Time's self is nought and the dial's face.
On the lip of Oblivion we linger, and short
Is the way from the Lip to the Mouth where we pass
While the moment is thine, fill, oh Saki, the glass
Ere all is nought!

Consider the rose that breaks into flower,
Neither repines though she fade and die--
The powers of the world endure for an hour,
But nought shall remain of their majesty.
Be not too sure of your crown, you who thought
That virtue was easy and recompense yours;
From the monastery to the wine-tavern doors
The way is nought

What though I, too, have tasted the salt of my tears,
Though I, too, have burnt in the fires of grief,
Shall I cry aloud to unheeding ears?

Mourn and be silent! nought brings relief.
Thou, Hafiz, art praised for the songs thou hast wrought,
But bearing a stained or an honoured name,
The lovers of wine shall make light of thy fame--
All things are nought!

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

My Friend Has Fled

My friend has fled! alas, my friend has fled,
And left me nought but tears and pain behind!
Like smoke above a flame caught by the wind,
So rose she from my breast and forth she sped.
Drunk with desire, I seized Love's cup divine,
But she that held it poured the bitter wine
Of Separation into it and fled.

The hunter she, and I the helpless prey;
Wounded and sick, round me her toils she drew,
My heart into a sea of sorrow threw,
Bound up her camel loads and fled away.
Fain had I laid an ambush for her soul,
She saw and vanished, and the timid foal,
Good Fortune, slipped the rein and would not stay.

My heart was all too narrow for my woe,
And tears of blood my weeping eyes have shed,
A crimson stream across the desert sped,
Rising from out my sad heart's overflow.
She knew not what Love's meanest slave can tell:
'Tis sweet to serve!' but threw me a Farewell,
Kissing my threshold, turned, and cried 'I go!'

In the clear dawn, before the east was red,
Before the rose had torn her veil in two,
A nightingale through Hafiz' garden flew,
Stayed but to fill its song with tears, and fled.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Not Worth The Toil!

NOT all the sum of earthly happiness
Is worth the bowed head of a moment's pain,
And if I sell for wine my dervish dress,
Worth more than what I sell is what I gain!
Land where my Lady dwells, thou holdest me
Enchained; else Fars were but a barren soil,
Not worth the journey over land and sea,
Not worth the toil!

Down in the quarter where they sell red wine,
My holy carpet scarce would fetch a cup
How brave a pledge of piety is mine,
Which is not worth a goblet foaming up!
Mine enemy heaped scorn on me and said
'Forth from the tavern gate!' Why am I thrust
From off the threshold? is my fallen head
Not worth the dust?

Wash white that travel-stained sad robe of thine!
Where word and deed alike one colour bear,
The grape's fair purple garment shall outshine
Thy many-coloured rags and tattered gear.
Full easy seemed the sorrow of the sea
Lightened by hope of gain--hope flew too fast
A hundred pearls were poor indemnity,
Not worth the blast.

The Sultan's crown, with priceless jewels set,
Encircles fear of death and constant dread
It is a head-dress much desired--and yet
Art sure 'tis worth the danger to the head?
'Twere best for thee to hide thy face from those
That long for thee; the Conqueror's reward
Is never worth the army's long-drawn woes,
Worth fire and sword.

Ah, seek the treasure of a mind at rest
And store it in the treasury of Ease;
Not worth a loyal heart, a tranquil breast,

Were all the riches of thy lands and seas!
Ah, scorn, like Hafiz, the delights of earth,
Ask not one grain of favour from the base,
Two hundred sacks of jewels were not worth
Thy soul's disgrace

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

O Cup Bearer

OH Cup-bearer, set my glass afire
With the light of wine! oh minstrel, sing:
The world fulfilleth my heart's desire!
Reflected within the goblet's ring
I see the glow of my Love's red cheek,
And scant of wit, ye who fail to seek
The pleasures that wine alone can bring!

Let not the blandishments be checked
That slender beauties lavish on me,
Until in the grace of the cypress decked,
My Love shall come like a ruddy pine-tree
He cannot perish whose heart doth hold
The life love breathes-though my days are told,
In the Book of the World lives my constancy.

But when the Day of Reckoning is here,
I fancy little will be the gain
That accrues to the Sheikh for his lawful cheer,
Or to me for the draught forbidden I drain.
The drunken eyes of my comrades shine,
And I too, stretching my hand to the wine,
On the neck of drunkenness loosen the rein.

Oh wind, if thou passest the garden close
Of my heart's dear master, carry for me
The message I send to him, wind that blows!
'Why hast thou thrust from thy memory
My hapless name?' breathe low in his ear;
'Knowest thou not that the day is near
When nor thou nor any shall think on me?'

If with tears, oh Hafiz, thine eyes are wet,
Scatter them round thee like grain, and snare
The Bird of joy when it comes to thy net.
As the tulip shrinks from the cold night air,
So shrank my heart and quailed in the shade
Oh Song-bird Fortune, the toils are laid,
When shall thy bright wings lie pinioned there?

The heavens' green sea and the bark therein,
The slender bark of the crescent moon,
Are lost in thy bounty's radiant noon,
Vizir and pilgrim, Kawameddin!

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Return! That To A Heart

RETURN! that to a heart wounded full sore
Valiance and strength may enter in; return!
And Life shall pause at the deserted door,
The cold dead body breathe again and burn.
Oh come! and touch mine eyes, of thy sweet grace,
For I am blind to all but to thy face.
Open the gates and bid me see once more!

Like to a cruel Ethiopian band,
Sorrow despoiled the kingdom of my heart
Return! glad Lord of Rome, and free the land;
Before thine arms the foe shall break and part.
See now, I hold a mirror to mine eyes,
And nought but thy reflection therein lies;
The glass speaks truth to them that understand.

Night is with child, hast thou not heard men say?
'Night is with child! what will she bring to birth?'
I sit and ask the stars when thou'rt away.
Oh come! and when the nightingale of mirth
Pipes in the Spring-awakened garden ground,
In Hafiz' heart shall ring a sweeter sound,
Diviner nightingales attune their lay.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 01

The only vision I have is your sight
The only thing I follow is your light.
Everyone finds his repose in sleep,
Sleep from my eyes has taken flight.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 02

Pick up the joy giving wine and come hither.
Temptations of mean foes decline and come hither.
Don't listen to the one who says sit down and stay;
Listen to me, pick up the line and come hither.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 03

I said, your lips said, your lips we revive;
I said, your mouth said, sweetness we derive;
I said your words, he said, Hafiz said;
May all sweet lips be joyous and alive.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 04

One, beautiful and full of grace
Mirror in hand, grooming her face
My handkerchief I offered, she smiled,
Is this gift also part of the chase?

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 05

I put my arms around your waist,
A lover's embrace to taste.
From your resolve it's obvious
All my efforts will go to waste.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 06

You are the moon and the sun is your slave;
As your slave, it like you must behave.
It is only your luminosity and light
That light of sun and moon can save.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 07

A new challenge everyday
You keep away and delay;
When I act to close the gap
Fate says there is a bigger play.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 08

My beloved is brighter than the sun,
Put in the heavens, my only one.
Placed the hearts upon the earth
To watch the sun's daily run.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 09

My broken heart's sorrows are deep.
Painful, disturbed, broken my sleep.
If you don't believe, send me your thoughts
And you will see how in sleep I weep.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 10

Candle's story how can I tell?
Of the broken heart's living hell?
My sorrow is in how I can find
Another who knows these sorrows well.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 12

All treasures ain't worth this oppression.
All pleasures ain't worth one transgression.
Not even seven thousand years of joy
Is worth seven days of depression.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 13

Every friend who talked of love, became a foe.
Every eagle shifted its shape to a crow.
They say the night is pregnant, and I say,
Who is the father? And how do you know?

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 14

Since the flower withers in the dark,
The bud blooms to leave its mark,
Happy is the heart, light as a bubble,
At the tavern is naked, stark.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 15

Spend time with wine by a stream,
And let sorrows away stream.
My life, like a rose, is but few days;
Youthful and joyous live this dream.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 16

This rose is from the dust of one like me.
His joy within the rose, thus I can see.
My companion and confidant it is, because
The colorful rose brings the sweet scent of he.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 17

With fate you still hope to trade;
Passage of time should make you afraid.
You said no color comes after black,
I said my black hair to white degrade.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 18

In times of youth, drinking is better.
With the joyful, linking is better.
The world is a mere temporal inn;
With the shipwrecked, sinking is better.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 19

You can buy everyone with gold;
Either in one shot, or slowly are sold.
Even the narcissus, pride of the world,
Sold itself, why, its crown of gold behold.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 20

This tired life is the flood of age,
With a full cup began this outrage.
Wake up, and see the carrier of time
Slowly carries you along life's passage.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 21

Don't make me fall in love with that face
Don't let the drunk the wine seller embrace.
Sufi, you know the pace of this path,
The lovers and drunks don't disgrace.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 22

I needed to hang on to her curly ring,
Help me please, let my affairs take wing.
Said, release my hair, instead take my lips,
Let go of long life, with good times swing.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 23

From warriors learn courage,
And wisdom from the sage.
If you truly seek God's grace,
Ride with the heavenly carriage.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 24

At dawn your eyes from Jupiter learn
O God, may fantasies of my mind burn.
The ear adorned with that elegant ring
Gems of Hafiz's poems may earn.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 25

O friend, from your foes your heart release,
In pleasant company drink the good wine with ease.
Confer with those who know, open your heart
And from the ignorant fleas flee like the breeze.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 26

One with such beauty none will make.
When her garments off we take
You can see her heart in her fragile breast,
Like a hard rock in a clear lake.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 27

The morning breeze tended to the rose,
A maid-in-waiting, as the flower grows.
If in the sun you have a shady refuge,
Seek the shade of a rose, and one who glows.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 28

Don't let go of the cup's lips
Till you receive your worldly tips.
Bittersweet is the world's cup
From lover's lips and the cup sips.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 29

I long for your hug and kiss,
I want the wine that will bliss.
Let me cut the story short,
Please return, cause you I miss.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 30

I spent my life chasing my wishes
What benefits fate furnishes?
Whomever to I said I loved you,
Turned to my foe, why my luck ravishes?

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 31

My life has only brought me sorrow;
Love's good and bad only taught me sorrow.
My constant companion is only pain,
My lover has only bought me sorrow.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 32

When there is wine, no need to cry;
Army of sorrows, no need to defy.
Your lips are green, bring forth the wine.
Drinking at the green, everyone must try.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 33

Beauty of the rose you eclipse,
Every bud quietly away slips.
How can the rose compete with you?
Rose shines in moonlight, moon in your grips.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 34

Your eyes enrapture, and colors pour,
Alas, your love's arrows score.
Too soon you gave up on the lovers,
Alas, your heart has rocks in store.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 35

O breeze, my story quietly share,
My heart's secrets, to whoever you care.
Tell not to upset or bring sorrow,
Share them with a heart that's aware.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 36

Every flower its beauty bestows,
Your lips the dearest gems dispose.
May your lips nurture our souls
With the wine that every spirit knows.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 37

Let not your thoughts constantly be fought,
Let thoughts in patience and joy be caught.
What patience? Cause what they call the heart
Is a drop of blood, and a thousand thought.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 38

Bring me the cup that preys on joy;
Bring me a lover who is shy and coy.
The wine that twists and turns like a chain
Bring me to enslave and destroy.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 39

With good company and harp and reed
In a corner, jug of wine and time to heed,
The warmth of wine runs through my veins,
Why should I succumb to my greed?

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 40

O divider of heaven and hell bring relief,
Don't let us give in to our grief.
How long upon our lives you prey?
Why don't you hunt our lives' thief?

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 41

I wish that fate would cease this carnage,
And to the lovers give their due wage.
In times of youth the rein in my hands,
Now on the saddle, I ride in old age.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Rubaiyat 42

If like me, you too fall in this trap,
Hold the wine and cup upon your lap.
We are the lovers, burning our tracks,
Join us, if you can put up with the crap.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Ruby's Heart

The bulbul's care is naught but the rose is his mate dear
The rose's care is naught but to bring grace to her cheer
Not all lure is what brings the lover's heart to its fall
Master is he who bears compassion to his thrall.
Now comes the time when blood gushes into the ruby's heart
For the shard hath shattered its value and worth in the mart.
The bulbul's power of speech came from the rose's boon
Or his beak would be devoid of all this song and tune
O thou who in the street of our Love tread
Be careful; or his wall may shatter thy head
The traveler is accompanied by a hundredfold soul
Wherever he is, health and well-being be his dole
O heart! Though the dice of health to thee was cast
Sweet is the lot of Love. Cling to it hard and fast
Intoxicated, the Sufi wore his hat askew
Two more goglets, aslant his turban flew
To the sight of thee the heart of Hafiz had been inclined
It is now cherished with union. Put this torment behind.

(Translated by Ismail Salami)

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Saghi Nameh

O Bearer, bring the wine that brings joy
To increase generosity, & let perfection buoy
Give me some, for I have lost my heart
Both traits from me have kept apart
Bring the wine whose reflection in the cup
Signals to all the kings whose times are up
Give me wine, and with the reed-flute I will sing
When was Jamshid, and when Kavoos was king
Bring me the elixir whose grace and alchemy
Bestows treasures, from bonds of time sets free
Give me so they'll open the doors once again
Of long life and the bliss that will remain
Bearer give the wine that the Holy Grail
Will make claims of sight in the Void and thus fail
Give me so that I, with the help of the Grail
All secrets, like Jamshid, themselves avail
Speak of the tale of the wheel of fate
proclaim to the kings and heroes of late
This broken world is in the same state
As seen by Afrasiab, the mighty, the great
Whence his mobilizing army generals
Whence cunning heroes' war cries and calls
Not only his palace has gone to the dust
Even his tomb is destroyed and long lost
This barren desert is in the same stage
As the armies of Salm & Toor were lost in its rage

Bring the wine whose reflection in the cup
Signals to all the kings whose times are up
Well said Jamshid, the old majestic king
Worthless is this transient stage and ring
Come Bearer, that fire, radiant, bright
Zarathushtra, beneath the earth, seeks so right
Give me wine, in the creed of the drunk
Whether fire-worshipper or worldly monk
Come Bearer, that wholesome drunk
Who is forever in the tavern sunk
Give me, ill repute bring to my name
The cup and the wine I shall only blame

Bring Bearer, the water that burns the mind
If lion drinks, forest will burn and grind
Courageous, I'll go hunting lions of fate
Mess up this old wolf's trap and bait
Bring Bearer, that high heavenly wine
That angels with their scent would entwine
Give me wine, I'll burn it like sweet incense
Its wise aroma I will sense now and hence
Bearer, give me the wine that makes kings
Witnessing its virtues, my heart sings
Give me wine to wash away all my flaws
Joyous rise above this rut's deadly claws
When the spiritual garden is my abode
Why have me bound to a board on this road
Give me wine and then see the Ruler's face
Ruin me & see treasures of wisdom and grace
And when I hold the cup in my hand
In the mirror everything I understand
In my drunken state, kingship proclaim
A monarch, when I am drunken and lame

Drunken, pearls of wisdom unveil
In hiding secrets, the selfless fail
Hafiz, drunken, songs will compose
From its melody Venus' song flows
O singer, with the sound of the stream
Of that majestic song muse and dream
Till I make my work joy and ecstasy
I will dance and play with robe of piety
Given a crown and throne by his fate
The fruit of the kingly tree of this estate
Ruler of the land, and Lord of the time
The grand and fortunate King of the clime
He is the greatness vested in the Throne
comfort of bird and fish from Him alone
For the blessed, he is light of the eyes
Yet he is the gift of the soul of the wise
Behold, O, auspicious bird
The happy inspiration to be heard
The world has no pearls in its shells like Thee
Fereydoon and Jamshid had no heirs like Thee
Instead of Alexander, be here many a year

Know thy heart and discover joy is near
But seditious fate many plans may devise
Me and my drunkenness troubled by Beloved's eyes
One, for his work, may pick up the sword
Another's business only deals with the word

O Player, play the song of the new creed
To music of the stream tell to my rival breed
Finally with my enemy I have a chance
At victory, in the skies I can glance
O Player, play something pleasing to the ear
With a song and a Gahzal begin a story, dear
My sorrows have tied me to the ground
Raise me with my principles that are sound
O singer, with the sound of the stream
Play and sing that majestic song I dream
Make the great souls happy with you
Parviz and Barbad remember too
O Player, paint a picture of the veil
Listen, inside, they tell a tale
Sing a minstrel's song, such
That Venus' harp dances with her touch
Play so the Sufi goes into a trance
Drunken, in Union, leaves his stance

O Player, tambourine and harp play
With a lovely tune, sing and sway
Deceptions of the world make a vivid tale
The night is pregnant, what will it entail
O Player, I'm sad, play one or two
In his Oneness, as long as you can, play too
I am astounded by the revolving fate
I don't know who will next degenerate
And if the Magi set one on fire
Don't know whose light will then expire
In this bloody resurrection field
Let the cup and jug their blood yield
To the drunk, of a good song, give a sign
To friends bygone, a salutation divine.

Translated by: Gertrude Bell

Slaves Of Thy Shining Eyes

SLAVES of thy shining eyes are even those
That diadems of might and empire bear;
Drunk with the wine that from thy red lip flows,
Are they that e'en the grape's delight forswear.
Drift, like the wind across a violet bed,
Before thy many lovers, weeping low,
And clad like violets in blue robes of woe,
Who feel thy wind-blown hair and bow the head.

Thy messenger the breath of dawn, and mine
A stream of tears, since lover and beloved
Keep not their secret; through my verses shine,
Though other lays my flower's grace have proved
And countless nightingales have sung thy praise.
When veiled beneath thy curls thou passest, see,
To right and leftward those that welcome thee
Have bartered peace and rest on thee to gaze!

But thou that knowest God by heart, away!
Wine-drunk, love-drunk, we inherit Paradise,
His mercy is for sinners; hence and pray
Where wine thy cheek red as red erghwan dyes,
And leave the cell to faces sinister.
Oh Khizr, whose happy feet bathed in life's fount,
Help one who toils afoot-the horsemen mount
And hasten on their way; I scarce can stir.

Ah, loose me not! ah, set not Hafiz free
From out the bondage of thy gleaming hair!
Safe only those, safe, and at liberty,
That fast enchained in thy linked ringlets are.
But from the image of his dusty cheek
Learn this from Hafiz: proudest heads shall bend,
And dwellers on the threshold of a friend
Be crownèd with the dust that crowns the meek.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Stop Being So Religious

What do sad people have in common?

It seems they have all built a shrine to the past, And often they go there and do a strange wail and worship.

What is the beginning of happiness?

It is to stop
being so religious

Like

That.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Sweet Melody

Come so the rose we may spread, and, let wine into the goblet flow.
The roof of the sky we may cleave; and a new way seek more aglow.
If an army, the shedder of lovers' blood, raise sorrow
The Saki and I may join and its foundation pull thorough.
The rose water we pour into the goblet of ruddy wine:
Into the censer of the wind, the sugar and perfume, we cast in twine.
Minstrel! In thy hand resteth a merry instrument, a sweet melody play:
So we may sing a love-song, and dance to the merry note sans delay.
O breeze! To the abode of the Beloved, the soul of ours take;
That the Monarch of the lovely mayest deign our glance's sake
Of reason, one boasteth; another idle talk doth weave:
Come and to the just Umpire these disputes leave.
Come with us to the tavern if the Garden of Eden thou pine for;
So thee, we may cast at once into the pool of abundance galore.
In Shiraz, the verse, and eloquence, they do not know:
HAFIZ! Come so to another Land, we may go.

(Translated by Ismail Salami)

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

The Bird Of Gardens

The bird of gardens sang unto the rose,
New blown in the clear dawn: 'Bow down thy head!
As fair as thou within this garden close,
Many have bloomed and died.' She laughed and said
'That I am born to fade grieves not my heart
But never was it a true lover's part
To vex with bitter words his love's repose.'

The tavern step shall be thy hostelry,
For Love's diviner breath comes but to those
That suppliant on the dusty threshold lie.
And thou, if thou would'st drink the wine that flows
From Life's bejewelled goblet, ruby red,
Upon thine eyelashes thine eyes shall thread
A thousand tears for this temerity.
Last night when Irem's magic garden slept,
Stirring the hyacinth's purple tresses curled,
The wind of morning through the alleys stepped.
'Where is thy cup, the mirror of the world?
Ah, where is Love, thou Throne of Djem?' I cried.
The breezes knew not; but 'Alas,' they sighed,
'That happiness should sleep so long!' and wept.
Not on the lips of men Love's secret lies,
Remote and unrevealed his dwelling-place.
Oh Saki, come! the idle laughter dies
When thou the feast with heavenly wine dost grace.
Patience and wisdom, Hafiz, in a sea
Of thine own tears are drowned; thy misery
They could not still nor hide from curious eyes.

Translated by: Gertrude Bell

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

The Day Of Hope

THE days of absence and the bitter nights
Of separation, all are at an end!
Where is the influence of the star that blights
My hope? The omen answers: At an end!
Autumn's abundance, creeping Autumn's mirth,
Are ended and forgot when o'er the earth
The wind of Spring with soft warm feet doth wend.

The Day of Hope, hid beneath Sorrow's veil,
Has shown its face--ah, cry that all may hear:
Come forth! the powers of night no more prevail!
Praise be to God, now that the rose is near
With long-desired and flaming coronet,
The cruel stinging thorns all men forget,
The wind of Winter ends its proud career.

The long confusion of the nights that were,
Anguish that dwelt within my heart, is o'er;
'Neath the protection of my lady's hair
Grief nor disquiet come to me no more.
What though her curls wrought all my misery,
My lady's gracious face can comfort me,
And at the end give what I sorrow for.

Light-hearted to the tavern let me go,
Where laughs the pipe, the merry cymbals kiss;
Under the history of all my woe,
My mistress sets her hand and writes: Finis.
Oh, linger not, nor trust the inconstant days
That promised: Where thou art thy lady stays--
The tale of separation ends with this!

Joy's certain path, oh Saki, thou hast shown--
Long may thy cup be full, thy days be fair!
Trouble and sickness from my breast have flown,
Order and health thy wisdom marshals there.
Not one that numbered Hafiz' name among
The great-unnumbered were his tears, unsung;
Praise him that sets an end to endless care!

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

The Days Of Spring

THE days of Spring are here! the eglantine,
The rose, the tulip from the dust have risen-
And thou, why liest thou beneath the dust?
Like the full clouds of Spring, these eyes of mine
Shall scatter tears upon the grave thy prison,
Till thou too from the earth thine head shalt thrust.

Translated by: Gertrude Bell

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

The Lute Will Beg

You need to become a pen
In the Sun 's hand.
We need for the earth to sing
Through our pores and eyes.
The body will again become restless
Until your soul paints all its beauty
Upon the sky.
Don 't tell me, dear ones,
That what Hafiz says is not true,
For when the heart tastes its glorious destiny
And you awake to our constant need
for your love
God 's lute will beg
For your hands.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

The Margin Of A Stream

The margin of a stream, the willow's shade,
A mind inclined to song, a mistress sweet,
A Cup-bearer whose cheek outshines the rose,
A friend upon whose heart thy heart is laid:
Oh Happy-starred! let not thine hours fleet
Unvalued; may each minute as it goes
Lay tribute of enjoyment at thy feet,
That thou may'st live and know thy life is sweet.

Let every one upon whose heart desire
For a fair face lies like a burden sore,
That all his hopes may reach their goal unchecked,
Throw branches of wild rue upon his fire.
My soul is like a bride, with a rich store
Of maiden thoughts and jewelled fancies decked,
And in Time's gallery I yet may meet
Some picture meant for me, some image sweet.
Give thanks for nights spent in good company,
And take the gifts a tranquil mind may bring;
No heart is dark when the kind moon doth shine,
And grass-grown river-banks are fair to see.
The Saki's radiant eyes, God favouring,
Are like a wine-cup brimming o'er with wine,
And him my drunken sense goes out to greet,
For e'en the pain he leaves behind is sweet.
Hafiz, thy life has sped untouched by care,
With me towards the tavern turn thy feet!
The fairest robbers thou'lt encounter there,
And they will teach thee what to learn is sweet.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

The Rose Has Flushed Red

The rose has flushed red, the bud has burst,
And drunk with joy is the nightingale
Hail, Sufis! lovers of wine, all hail!
For wine is proclaimed to a world athirst.
Like a rock your repentance seemed to you;
Behold the marvel! of what avail
Was your rock, for a goblet has cleft it in two!

Bring wine for the king and the slave at the gate
Alike for all is the banquet spread,
And drunk and sober are warmed and fed.
When the feast is done and the night grows late,
And the second door of the tavern gapes wide,
The low and the mighty must bow the head
'Neath the archway of Life, to meet what . . . outside?

Except thy road through affliction pass,
None may reach the halting-station of mirth
God's treaty: Am I not Lord of the earth?
Man sealed with a sigh: Ah yes, alas!
Nor with Is nor Is Not let thy mind contend
Rest assured all perfection of mortal birth
In the great Is Not at the last shall end.

For Assaf's pomp, and the steeds of the wind,
And the speech of birds, down the wind have fled,
And he that was lord of them all is dead;
Of his mastery nothing remains behind.
Shoot not thy feathered arrow astray!
A bow-shot's length through the air it has sped,
And then . . . dropped down in the dusty way.

But to thee, oh Hafiz, to thee, oh Tongue
That speaks through the mouth of the slender reed,
What thanks to thee when thy verses speed
From lip to lip, and the song thou hast sung?

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

The Rose Is Not Fair

THE rose is not fair without the beloved's face,
Nor merry the Spring without the sweet laughter of wine;
The path through the fields, and winds from a flower strewn place,
Without her bright cheek, which glows like a tulip fine,
Nor winds softly blowing, fields deep in corn, are fair.

And lips like to sugar, grace like a flower that sways,
Are nought without kisses many and dalliance sweet;
If thousands of voices sang not the rose's praise,
The joy of the cypress her opening bud to greet,
Nor dancing of boughs nor blossoming rose were fair.

Though limned by most skilful fingers, no pictures please
Unless the beloved's image is drawn therein;
The garden and flowers, and hair flowing loose on the breeze,
Unless to my Lady's side I may strive and win,
Nor garden, nor flowers, nor loose flying curls are fair.

Hast seen at a marriage-feast, when the mirth runs high,
The revellers scatter gold with a careless hand?
The gold of thy heart, oh Hafiz, despised doth lie,
Not worthy thy love to be cast by a drunken band
At the feet of her who is fairer than all that's fair.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

The Secret Draught Of Wine

THE secret draught of wine and love repressed
Are joys foundationless--then come whate'er
May come, slave to the grape I stand confessed!
Unloose, oh friend, the knot of thy heart's care,
Despite the warning that the Heavens reveal!
For all his thought, never astronomer
That loosed the knot of Fate those Heavens conceal!

Not all the changes that thy days unfold
Shall rouse thy wonder; Time's revolving sphere
Over a thousand lives like thine has rolled.
That cup within thy fingers, dost not hear
The voices of dead kings speak through the clay
Kobad, Bahman, Djemshid, their dust is here,
'Gently upon me set thy lips!' they say.

What man can tell where Kaus and Kai have gone?
Who knows where even now the restless wind
Scatters the dust of Djem's imperial throne?
And where the tulip, following close behind
The feet of Spring, her scarlet chalice rears,
There Ferhad for the love of Shirin pined,
Dyeing the desert red with his heart's tears.

Bring, bring the cup! drink we while yet we may
To our soul's ruin the forbidden draught
Perhaps a treasure-trove is hid away
Among those ruins where the wine has laughed!--
Perhaps the tulip knows the fickleness
Of Fortune's smile, for on her stalk's green shaft
She bears a wine-cup through the wilderness.

The murmuring stream of Ruknabad, the breeze
That blows from out Mosalla's fair pleasaunce,
Summon me back when I would seek heart's ease,
Travelling afar; what though Love's countenance
Be turned full harsh and sorrowful on me,
I care not so that Time's unfriendly glance
Still from my Lady's beauty turned be.

Like Hafiz, drain the goblet cheerfully
While minstrels touch the lute and sweetly sing,
For all that makes thy heart rejoice in thee
Hangs of Life's single, slender, silken string.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

The Tulip

Perhaps the tulip know the fickleness
Of Fortune's smile, for on her stalk's green shaft
She bears a wine cup through the wilderness

Translated by: Gertrude Bell

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Tidings Of Union

Where are the tidings of union? that I may arise-
Forth from the dust I will rise up to welcome thee!
My soul, like a homing bird, yearning for Paradise,
Shall arise and soar, from the snares of the world set free.
When the voice of thy love shall call me to be thy slave,
I shall rise to a greater far than the mastery
Of life and the living, time and the mortal span:
Pour down, oh Lord! from the clouds of thy guiding grace.
The rain of a mercy that quickeneth on my grave,
Before, like dust that the wind bears from place to place,
I arise and flee beyond the knowledge of man.
When to my grave thou turnest thy blessed feet,
Wine and the lute thou shalt bring in thine hand to me,
Thy voice shall ring through the folds of my winding-sheet,
And I will arise and dance to thy minstrelsy.
Though I be old, clasp me one night to thy breast,
And I, when the dawn shall come to awaken me,
With the flush of youth on my cheek from thy bosom will rise.
Rise up! let mine eyes delight in thy stately grace!
Thou art the goal to which all men's endeavour has pressed,
And thou the idol of Hafiz' worship; thy face
From the world and life shall bid him come forth and arise!

- Translated by: Gertrude Bell

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

To Linger In A Garden Fair

MIRTH, Spring, to linger in a garden fair,
What more has earth to give? All ye that wait,
Where is the Cup-bearer, the flagon where?
When pleasant hours slip from the hand of Fate,
Reckon each hour as a certain gain;
Who seeks to know the end of mortal care
Shall question his experience in vain.

Thy fettered life hangs on a single thread--
Some comfort for thy present ills devise,
But those that time may bring thou shalt not dread.
Waters of Life and Irem's Paradise--
What meaning do our dreams and pomp convey,
Save that beside a mighty stream, wide-fed,
We sit and sing of wine and go our way!

The modest and the merry shall be seen
To boast their kinship with a single voice;
There are no differences to choose between,
Thou art but flattering thy soul with choice!
Who knows the Curtain's secret? . . . Heaven is mute
And yet with Him who holds the Curtain, e'en
With Him, oh Braggart, thou would'st raise dispute!

Although His thrall shall miss the road and err,
'Tis but to teach him wisdom through distress,
Else Pardon and Compassionate Mercy were
But empty syllables and meaningless.
The Zealot thirsts for draughts of Kausar's wine,
And Hafiz doth an earthly cup prefer--
But what, between the two, is God's design?

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

True Love

TRUE love has vanished from every heart;
What has befallen all lovers fair?
When did the bonds of friendship part?-
What has befallen the friends that were?
Ah, why are the feet of Khizr lingering?-
The waters of life are no longer clear,
The purple rose has turned pale with fear,
And what has befallen the wind of Spring?
None now sayeth: 'A love was mine,
Loyal and wise, to dispel my care.'
None remembers love's right divine;
What has befallen all lovers fair?
In the midst of the field, to the players' feet,
The ball of God's favour and mercy came,
But none has leapt forth to renew the game-
What has befallen the horsemen fleet?
Roses have bloomed, yet no bird rejoiced,
No vibrating throat has rung with the tale;
What can have silenced the hundred-voiced?
What has befallen the nightingale?
Heaven's music is hushed, and the planets roll
In silence; has Zohra broken her lute?
There is none to press out the vine's ripe fruit,
And what has befallen the foaming bowl?

A city where kings are but lovers crowned,
A land from the dust of which friendship springs-
Who has laid waste that enchanted ground?
What has befallen the city of kings?
Years have passed since a ruby was won
From the mine of manhood; they labour in vain,
The fleet-footed wind and the quickening rain,
And what has befallen the light of the sun?
Hafiz, the secret of God's dread task
No man knoweth, in youth or prime
Or in wisest age; of whom would'st thou ask:
What has befallen the wheels of Time?

Translated by: Gertrude Bell

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Where Is My Ruined Life ?

WHERE is my ruined life, and where the fame
Of noble deeds?
Look on my long-drawn road, and whence it came,
And where it leads!

Can drunkenness be linked to piety
And good repute?
Where is the preacher's holy monody,
Where is the lute?

From monkish cell and lying garb released,
Oh heart of mine,
Where is the Tavern fane, the Tavern priest,
Where is the wine?

Past days of meeting, let the memory
Of you be sweet!
Where are those glances fled, and where for me
Reproaches meet?

His friend's bright face warms not the enemy
When love is done--
Where is the extinguished lamp that made night day,
Where is the sun?

Balm to mine eyes the dust, my head I bow
Upon thy stair.
Where shall I go, where from thy presence? thou
Art everywhere.

Look not upon the dimple of her chin,
Danger lurks there!
Where wilt thou hide, oh trembling heart, fleeing in
Such mad haste--where?

To steadfastness and patience, friend, ask not
If Hafiz keep--
Patience and steadfastness I have forgot,
And where is sleep?

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Wild Deer.

Where are you O Wild Deer?
I have known you for a while, here.

Both loners, both lost, both forsaken
The wild beast, for ambush, have all waken

Let us inquire of each other's state
If we can, each other's wishes consummate

I can see this chaotic field
Joy and peace sometimes won't yield

O friends, tell me who braves the danger
To befriend the forsaken, behold the stranger

Unless blessed Elias may come one day
And with his good office open the way

It is time to cultivate love
Individually decreed from above

Thus I remember the wise old man
Forgetting such a one, I never can

That one day, a seeker in a land
A wise one helped him understand

Seeker, what do you keep in your bag
Set up a trap, if bait you drag

In reply said I keep a snare
But for the phoenix I shall dare

Asked how will you find its sign
We can't help you with your design

Like the spruce become so wise
Rise to the heights, open your eyes

Don't lose sight of the rose and wine
But beware of your fate's design

At the fountainhead, by the riverside
Shed some tears, in your heart confide

This instrument won't tune to my needs
The generous sun, our wants exceeds

In memory of friends bygone
with spring showers hide the golden sun

With such cruelty cleaved with a sword
As if with friendship was in full discord

When flows forth the crying river
With your own tears help it deliver

My old companion was so unkind
O Pious Men, keep God in mind

Unless blessed Elias may come one day
Help one loner to another make way

Look at the gem and let go of the stone
Do it in a way that keeps you unknown

As my hand moves the pen to write
Ask the main writer to shed His light

I entwined mind and soul indeed
Then planted the resulting seed

In this marriage the outcome is joy
Beauty and soulfulness employ

With hope's fragrant perfume
Let eternal soul rapture assume

This perfume comes from angel's sides
Not from the doe whom men derides

Friends, to friends' worth be smart
When obvious, don't read it by heart

This is the end of tales of advice
Lie in ambush, fate's cunning and vice.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

Will Beat You Up

Jealousy
And most all of your sufferings
Are from believing
You know better than God.
Of course,
Such a special brand of arrogance as that
Always proves disastrous,
And will rip the seams
In your caravan tent,
Then cordially invite in many species
Of mean biting flies and
Strange thoughts-
That will
Beat you
Up.

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi

With Madness Like To Mine

NOT one is filled with madness like to mine
In all the taverns! my soiled robe lies here,
There my neglected book, both pledged for wine.
With dust my heart is thick, that should be clear,
A glass to mirror forth the Great King's face;
One ray of light from out Thy dwelling-place
To pierce my night, oh God! and draw me near.

From out mine eyes unto my garment's hem
A river flows; perchance my cypress-tree
Beside that stream may rear her lofty stem,
Watering her roots with tears. Ah, bring to me
The wine vessel! since my Love's cheek is hid,
A flood of grief comes from my heart unbid,
And turns mine eyes into a bitter sea!

Nay, by the hand that sells me wine, I vow
No more the brimming cup shall touch my lips,
Until my mistress with her radiant brow
Adorns my feast-until Love's secret slips
From her, as from the candle's tongue of flame,
Though I, the singèd moth, for very shame,
Dare not extol Love's light without eclipse.

Red wine I worship, and I worship her--
Speak not to me of anything beside,
For nought but these on earth or heaven I care.
What though the proud narcissus flowers defied
Thy shining eyes to prove themselves more bright,
Yet heed them not! those that are clear of sight
Follow not them to whom all light's denied.

Before the tavern door a Christian sang
To sound of pipe and drum, what time the earth
Awaited the white dawn, and gaily rang
Upon mine ear those harbingers of mirth:
'If the True Faith be such as thou dost say,
Alas! my Hafiz, that this sweet To-day
Should bring unknown To-morrow to the birth!'

Shams al-Din Hafiz Shirazi