

Project Summary

Title: *Startled by God: A Treasury of Hafiz*

Author/Editor: Daniel Ladinsky

Manuscript Length: 300 pages (with poems paginated one to a page); available on disk

Illustrations: None

Permissions: None required; author controls all rights, even to poems previously published in book form.

Delivery Date: December 15, 1997

Rights Available: World English (no translation, audio, video, electronic; author to retain first and second serial rights to all poems; no option; author also retains right to self-publish small volumes of his versions of Hafiz, with the understanding that no volume will include any more than 10 percent of the previously unpublished poems in *Startled by God*.)

Other: *Startled by God* will contain no more than 40 poems published in *I Heard God Laughing* and *The Subject Tonight Is Love*.

Audience:

- Readers of Rumi and other spiritual poetry
- Spiritual seekers
- The Sufi market

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Startled by God

A Treasury of Hafiz

Versions by Daniel Ladinsky

1-701355

Proposal

Startled by God

Not like a lone beautiful bird

These poems now rise in great white flocks
Against the mind's vast hills—

Startled by God
Breaking a branch

When His foot
Touches earth

Near
Me.

—Hafiz

~

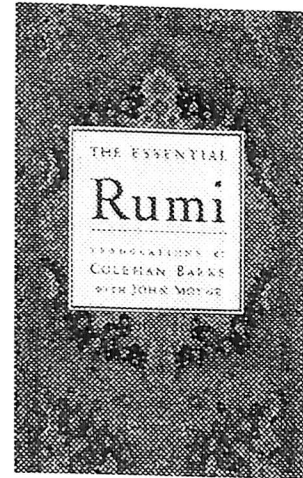
The Book

Startled by God is a collection of 250 poems by the great Sufi poet Hafiz, who lived in Persia (now Iran) in the 14th century. Organized by theme, these brilliant versions by Daniel Ladinsky, who has devoted six years of his life to this work, represent a glorious selection of the approximately 800 poems that Hafiz is thought to have composed during his lifetime. Ladinsky's volume will also include a short introduction and a brief biography of Hafiz.



The Market

Startled by God will appeal to the same readers who have made Coleman Bark's *Essential Rumi* (Harper San Francisco)—not to mention his other translations of Rumi (published by Maypop Books)—such a phenomenal success. Since 1995, the cloth edition of *The Essential Rumi* (\$20; ISBN 0-06-250958-6) has sold over 50,000 copies; the paperback edition (\$12; ISBN 0-06-250959-4), released late in 1996, has sold over 25,000.



The Life of Hafiz

Shams-ud-d-din Muhammad Hafiz (c. 1320–1389), though relatively little known in the Western world, is often considered the most beloved poet of Persia. Born in Shiraz, in southern Persia (Iran), he lived at about the same time as Chaucer in England and about one hundred years after Rumi.

Born of poor parents, Hafiz helped support his family as a baker's assistant by day, while putting himself through school at night, where he mastered the subjects of a classical medieval education: Quranic law and theology, grammar, mathematics, astronomy, and the great Persian poets, including Attar and Rumi.

Hafiz is said to have had a natural poetic gift, and even as a child he was able to improvise poems on any subject. His chosen name, "Hafiz"



knows the Quran by heart. By the time he was twenty, some of his love poems began to circulate in Shiraz, he was invited to participate in poetry gatherings at court, and he soon won the patronage of a succession of wealthy noblemen and rulers. In his middle years, as court poet and professor of poetry, he attracted a circle of students who revered him. It is thought that he produced almost 800 poems in his lifetime. When he died, at about the age of 70, he was buried in one of his favorite spots, at the foot of a cypress tree that he himself had planted in a rose garden near Shiraz. For hundreds of years following his death, devoted followers of his poetry would make pilgrimage to his tomb.

The work of Hafiz became known to the West largely through the efforts of the German writer Goethe, whose enthusiasm rubbed off on the American Ralph Waldo Emerson, who translated Hafiz in the nineteenth century. Hafiz's poems were also admired by such diverse writers as Pushkin, Turgenev, Carlyle, and Lorca; Sherlock Holmes even quoted Hafiz in one of the stories by Arthur Conan Doyle. In 1923, Hazrat Inayat Kahn, the Indian teacher often credited with bringing Sufism to the West, delivered a series of lectures in San Francisco on the mystic poets of Persia, during one of which he proclaimed that "the words of Hafiz have won every heart that listens."

~

Strange Miracle

O wondrous creatures,
By what strange miracle
Do you so often
Not smile?

—Hafiz



About Hafiz

“In his poetry Hafiz has inscribed undeniable truth indelibly.... Hafiz has no peer.”—JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

~

“The model of lyric grace and felicity,—the Aeolian harp hung in grapevines and harem windows.”—RALPH WALDO EMERSON

~

“Hafiz stands unique in his expression, in his depth of thought, in the excellence of his symbolical expression of certain thoughts and philosophy.... Hafiz ... expressed his soul in poetry. And what poetry! Poetry full of light and shade, line and color, and poetry full of feeling. No poetry in the world can be compared to that of Hafiz in its delicacy.”—HAZRAT INAYAT KAHN

~

“Hafiz was the teacher of kings and at the same time beloved of the people. His influence is still second to none in Persian literature.”—IDRIES SHAH

~

“Delicate and tough, a crafted danger, full of wit as well as abandon, Hafiz’s lyric is one of the rare mysteries of world literature.”—COLEMAN BARKS



~

Your Beautiful Parched, Holy Mouth

A poet is someone
Who can pour Light into a spoon,
Then raise it
To nourish
Your beautiful parched, holy mouth.

—Hafiz

Other Editions of Hafiz

The Green Sea of Heaven : Fifty Ghazals from the Diwan of Hafiz, translated by Elizabeth T. Gray (SCB Distributors, 1995), trade paperback, \$14.95 (ISBN 1-883-99106-4).

The Divan-I-Hafiz, translated by H. Wilberforce Clarke (Iranbooks, 1997), cloth, \$75.00 (ISBN 0-936-34780-5). A reprint of a volume first published in 1891).

The Hafez Poems of Gertrude Bell : With the Original Persian on the Facing Page, translated by Gertrude Bell (Iranbooks, 1995), trade paperback, \$15.95 (ISBN 0-936-34739-2). A reprint of Bell's 1897 translation of 43 poems of Hafiz.



About Daniel Ladinsky

Daniel Ladinsky was born in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1946 and raised in the Midwest. Since graduating from high school in the late sixties, he has attended several colleges and lived in various parts of the country and the world. In his teens he began a spiritual quest that led him around the world. For six years he made his home in a small spiritual community in western India, where for almost two years he had the very rare privilege of living among Meher Baba's intimate disciples and family. Mr. Ladinsky currently lives in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, where he continues his work with Hafiz, begun six years ago, and likes to jog along the beach at night.



Previous Publications

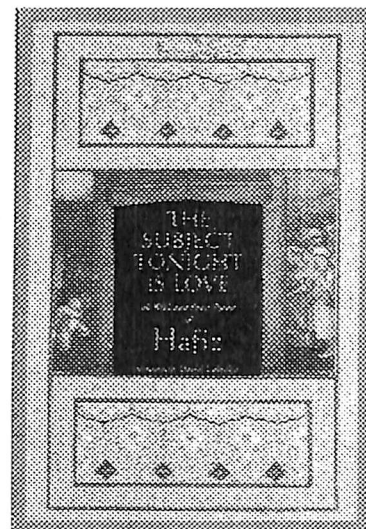


I Heard God Laughing: Renderings of Hafiz (Sufism Reoriented, 1996)—60 poems by Hafiz.

- Distributed by direct mail and through New Leaf, Bookpeople, and Omega Publications (a distributor of Sufi literature).
- 5,200 copies sold since April of 1996
- Trade paperback, \$14.00
- ISBN: 0-915828-18-9

The Subject Tonight Is Love: 60 Wild and Sweet Poems of Hafiz (Pumpkin House, 1996).

- Distributed by direct mail and through New Leaf, Bookpeople, and Omega Publications (a distributor of Sufi literature).
- 3,000 copies sold since May of 1996
- Trade paperback, \$10.00
- ISBN: 0-9657637-0-6



Praise for Daniel Ladinsky's Versions of Hafiz

“Beautifully done.... Daniel Ladinsky has done a remarkable job of putting the works of this poet [Hafiz] into a form for English readers.”—
BOOKS IN VIEW

~

“These are the poems of a man who sees God everywhere. They seek to shake us awake, at times tenderly, at time with great, loopy laughter.”—THE
BLOOMSBURY REVIEW



From Startled by God

Introduction: Releasing the Spirit of Hafiz

My work with Hafiz began on an early morning walk in the countryside of central India, on a beautiful tree-lined road that leads to a place called Meherazad. This small, private residential community near the city of Ahmednagar was the home of the great spiritual teacher Meher Baba until his passing in 1969. A small group of his companions continue to live and work there, surrounded by a remarkable atmosphere of love.

I was walking with a man whom I have come to know as a teacher, a brother, and a friend, a man who had been a member of Meher Baba's circle since the late 1930s. On this particular morning, we were talking about Hafiz, who was Baba's favorite poet. Though Hafiz lived in the fourteenth century, his verses are still immensely popular throughout the Near East and India. His insight and compassion, his subtle, expressive language, and his deep reverence for beauty in all its forms have made him a favorite poet of lovers, especially lovers of God. The Sufis say that Hafiz loved so fully and so well that he became the living embodiment of Love. Meher Baba called him "a Perfect Master and a perfect poet."

Poetry was in the air at Meherazad that week. The day before our walk, we had listened to a program of marvelous English translations of Rumi, another Persian master poet, who lived a century before Hafiz. Now, as we walked, I turned to my mentor and companion and candidly said, "Compared to those splendid versions of Rumi we heard yesterday, the poetry of Hafiz can



appear so *pale* in English! How can this be, when Meher Baba says that Hafiz is such a great poet?" He replied, "Baba has said it is because no one has yet properly translated him!" Thus began this work. That night, working from a literal translation, I wrote my first version of a Hafiz poem.

For hundreds of years, people have struggled to find ways to reflect in English the sweetness and profundity of Hafiz's poetry. Some translators have tried to reproduce the rhythm, meter, and rhyme of the original Persian, often bending and twisting English into strange and unfamiliar configurations to do so. Such careful efforts to honor the *form* of the poetry can sometimes ignore or violate the *spirit* of Hafiz—a spirit of infinite tenderness and compassion, of great exuberance, joy, and laughter, of ecstatic love and fervent longing for his Beloved, and of wonder and delight at the divine splendor of the universe. I wanted to find ways to release that spirit in our own language.

The poems of Hafiz are mostly short love songs called *ghazals*, each one about the length of a sonnet. Scholars disagree about the exact number of poems that can be authenticated, but there are no more than eight hundred. Compared to Rumi and others, this is a tiny body of work. However, Hafiz created his poetry in a way that permits many kinds of interpretation. Persian is a flexible and mutable language, and Hafiz was an absolute master of it. Persian-speaking friends say that in some of his poems each *word* can have seven or eight shades of meaning and a variety of interpretations. A single couplet can be translated in many different ways, and each one would be "right."

I quickly discovered that even in English, a single Hafiz poem, often a single couplet, could be approached from many different points of view. A



single stanza of Hafiz could generate whole families of independent poems in English, each exploring some aspect of the original. One might call the results “renderings” or renditions of Hafiz, rather than “translations.” To “render” an artistic work means to interpret, to express, to realize. The word can also suggest “surrendering” and “yielding”—in this case, opening up to the guidance of the spirit contained within the poetry. Thus my poems are not “translations” in any traditional sense. They are not intended to be literal or scholarly or even “accurate.” But I hope they are True—faithful to the living spirit of this divine poet.

These “renderings” are based on a remarkable translation of the *Divan of Hafiz*, by H. Wilberforce Clarke, originally published in 1891. I work from a beautiful two-volume, 1011-page edition of Clarke’s work, recently republished in Iran. I also borrow and shape ideas and thoughts from the many other available translations of Hafiz.

It is my understanding that when Hafiz created his poems, he often spoke them or sang them spontaneously, and his companions later wrote the verses down. Even if one does not know Persian, it is easy to appreciate the rhythm and music of his “playful verse” when one hears it recited aloud. Many of his poems were set to popular tunes, and they are still sung now, six hundred years later, all over the East.

What can I say to my dear Master, Meher Baba, for all his help and guidance? Whatever truth, beauty, laughter and charm you may find here, I would say is a gift from him, the Avatar.

May these poems inspire us to give the great gift of kindness—to ourselves and to others.



Poetic Conventions

Hafiz uses a few Persian literary devices that may initially confuse Western readers:

In some poems, Hafiz is like a playwright who is acting all the parts: the lover, the disciple, the Master and Guide, the voice of God, sometimes even the reader. Often *I*, *you*, *he*, or *she*, and *Hafiz* refer to the same person.

He frequently includes his name, "Hafiz," in at least one stanza. This was a method of "signing" the poem, as one might sign a letter to a friend or as an artist might sign a painting.

Hafiz uses a technical vocabulary to write about stages of spiritual unfolding. Fortunately, his images are so vivid and real that one does not need to understand the mysticism to recognize the experience. In essence, all mysticism deal with processes of love and the ways in which one joins god through love. For Hafiz, the focus of love is often a Master of Love, described as a Luminous Figure, *Pir* (Friend), or sometimes the Tavern-keeper, the one who pours Love's Wine. The Master puts the student on intimate terms with God, who is called the Friend, the Beloved, the Beautiful One.





Why Carry?

Hafiz,
Why carry a whole load of books
Upon your back
Climbing this mountain,
When tonight,
Just a few thoughts of God
Will light the holy fire.



Exquisitely Woven

Wayfarer,
Your body is my prayer carpet,

For I can see in your eyes

That you are exquisitely woven
With the finest silk and wool

And that Pattern upon your soul
Has the signature of God

And all your moods and colors of love
Come from His Divine vats of dye and
Gold.

Wayfarer,
Your body is my shrine.

If you had the eyes of a *Pir*,

You would see Hafiz
Kneeling by your side,

Humming playful tunes
And shedding joyful tears

Upon your wondrous hidden Crown.



Every Movement

I rarely let the word "No" escape
From my mouth

Because it is so plain to my soul

That God has shouted, "Yes! Yes! Yes!"
To every luminous movement in Existence.

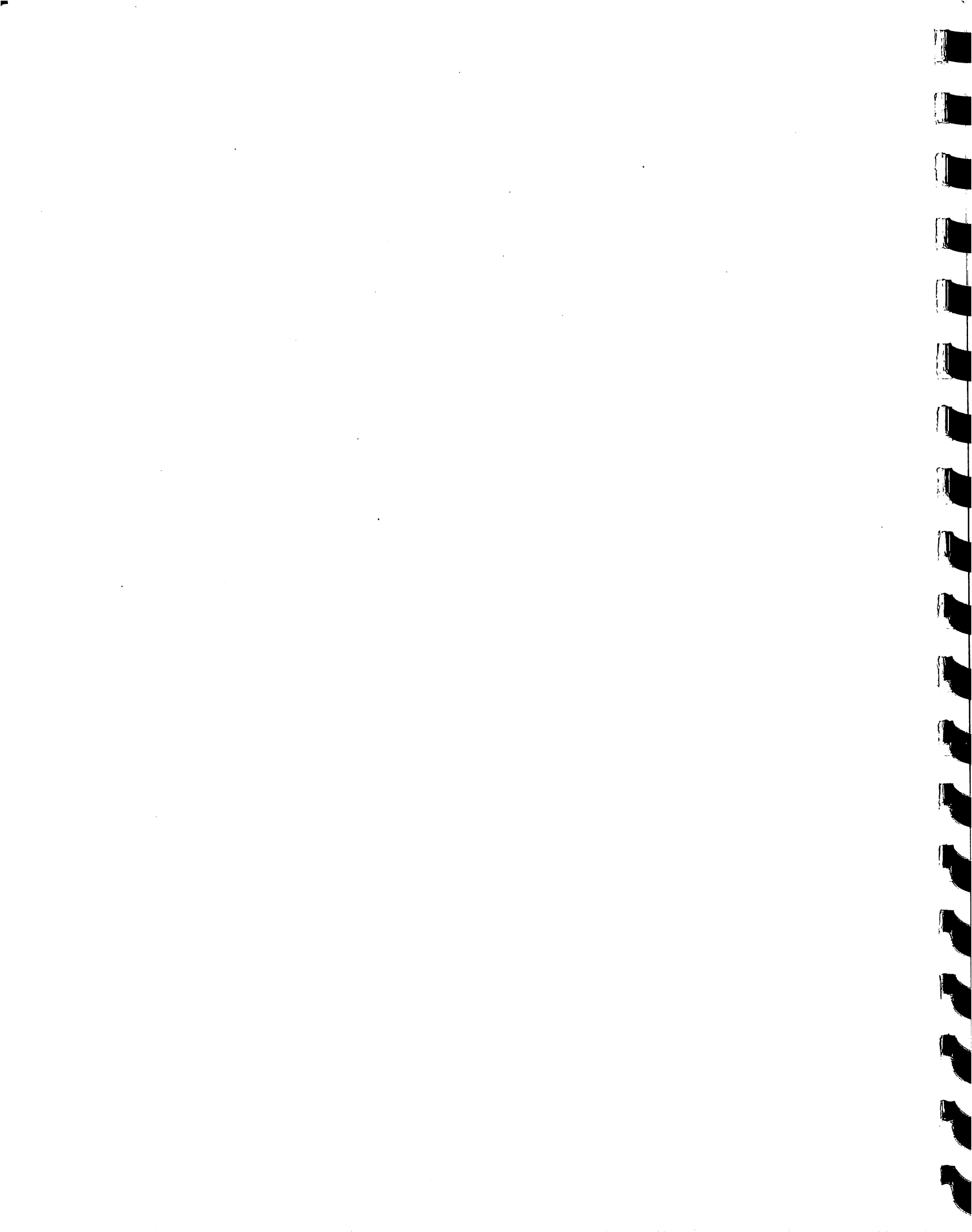


Spill the Oil Lamp!

Spill the oil lamp!
Set this dry, boring place on fire!

If you have ever
Made wanton love with God,
Then you have ignited that brilliant Light inside
That every person needs.

So—
Spill the oil!



In the Middle of God

It should be like this:

That our cheeks and hands
Can now easily rest
Upon His effulgent tress
And shoulder.

It should be like this:

With the dawning of the sublime knowledge
That makes the crazed ocean fish sane:

We all finally realize
There ain't no place to move
Or be—

But right in the middle
Of
God.



I Can No Longer

I have learned so much from God
That I can no longer
Call myself

A Christian, a Hindu, a Muslim,
A Jew.

The Truth has shared so much of Itself
With me

That I can no longer call myself
A man, an angel, Existence
Or even—
Pure soul.

Love has befriended me so completely
It has turned Hafiz to ash
And freed me

Of every thought and concept
I have ever
Know.



Someone Calls Your Name

Someone calls your name in a crowd,
And Hafiz, too, begins to look around.

You receive a piece of
Hoped-for foreign mail,
And Hafiz, too,
Becomes so excited to open it.

You lie down with a lover
After many days apart,
And Hafiz will close his eyes
When things get bare and moving,
If you ask.

My dear, there is something
You should think about and that is:

If just an old sweeper of the Tavern
Can truly be so near
And intimate with you,
How extraordinary
Must be your relationship
With—*God, God, God!*



The Great Secret

God was full of Wine last night,
So full of Wine

That He let a great secret slip.

He said:

*There is no man on this earth
Who needs a pardon from Me—*

*For there is really no such thing,
No such thing
As Sin!*

The Beloved has gone completely Wild—
He has poured Himself into me!

I am Blissful and Drunk and Overflowing.

Dear world,
Draw life from my Sweet Body.

Dear wayfaring souls,
Come drink your fill of liquid rubies
For God has made my heart
An Eternal Fountain!



Outside Her Window

The Real Love
I always keep a secret.

All words
Are sung outside Her window.

For when She lets me In
I take a thousand oaths of silence.

But
Then She says.

O, then God says,

“But—Hafiz,
Why not give the whole world
My
Address?”



Would You Think It Odd?

Would you think it odd if Hafiz said,

“I am in love with every church
And mosque
And temple
And any kind of shrine

Because I know it is there
That people say the different names
Of the One God.”

Would you tell your friends
I was a bit strange if I admitted

I am indeed in love with every mind
And heart and body.

O I am sincerely
Plumb crazy
About your every thought and yearning
And limb

Because, my dear,
I know
That it is through these

That you search for Him.



What Happens

What happens when your soul
Begins to awaken
Your eyes
And your heart
And the cells of your body
To the great Journey of Love?

First there is wonderful laughter
And probably precious tears

And a hundred sweet promises
And those heroic vows
No one can ever keep.

But still God is delighted and amused
You once tried to be a saint.

What happens when your soul
Begins to awake in this world

To our deep need to love
And serve the Friend?

O the Beloved
Will send you
One of His wonderful, wild companions—

Like Hafiz.



Starving

Why just show you God's menu?

Hell, we are all starving—

Let's eat!



Laughing at the Word "Two"

Only
That Perfect One

Who can seduce the formless into form

Had the charm to win my heart.

Only that Illumined One

Who is always Laughing at the word "two"

Can really make you know
of
Love.



Looking for Good Fish

Why complain about life
If you are looking for good fish
And have followed some idiot
Into the middle of the copper market?

Why go crazy
If you are looking for fine silk
And you keep rubbing your body against
Burlap and hemp sacks?

If your eyes really needs to touch a face
That is filled with gold and tenderness
Then why didn't you come to me sooner.

For the moon and the sun camp upon my cheeks
And if you can make your prayers sweet enough
To God tonight —

Then I will lean down and offer you
The warmth in my spirit
In case God is busy
And needing to do something else
Very wild—somewhere.

Why complain if you are looking
To quench your aching heart
And have followed some reptile into their desert.

If your soul really needs to touch a face
That is always filled with compassion and tenderness
Then why—
Why my dear did you not come to Hafiz
Sooner?



A Hunting Party

A

Hunting party

Sometimes has a greater chance

Of flushing love and God

Out into the Open

Than a warrior

All alone.



I Just Felt Like Talking

I can see angels sitting on your ears,
Polishing trumpets,
Replacing lute strings,
Stretching new skins on their drums
And gathering wood for the evening's fire.

They all danced last night
But you did not hear them.

If you ask Hafiz for advice
On how to befriend their sweet voices
And how to have
The wonderful company of the other worlds

I would reply,

"I could not say anything—
You could not tell me."

Then,
What was the use of this story?

O,
I just felt like talking.



Who Wrote All the Music

Why is it now
That I come to you like a humble servant
Willing to feed you brilliant words and love
From my own sacred mouth and palms,

Willing to say, "I am sorry,
I am sorry for all your pain?"

It is because when God
Fully revealed Himself in me

I saw that it was Hafiz
Who wrote all the Music you have been playing.

I saw it was Hafiz
Who "caused" all your notes of sadness,
But also etched and gave you
Every ecstatic wince of joy your face, body
And heart—has ever known.

Okay my dear,
You have stumbled enough in the earth's sweet dance.
You have paid your dues many times.

Now let's get down to the real reason
Why we sit together and breathe—
And begin the laughing, the divine laughing,
Like great heroic women

And
Magnificent strong
Men.



Our Brilliant Reed Instruments

My heart
Is an unset jewel
Upon the tender night
Yearning for its dear old Friend—
The Moon.

When the Nameless One
Debuts again
Ten thousand facets of my being
Unfurls resplendent wings
And I enter such a divine realm
That even I too begin
To so sweetly peddle light
Through the streets of this wondrous earth.

My heart is an unset jewel
Upon existence
Waiting for the Kind Radiant One's Touch.

Tonight
My heart is an unset ruby
Offered bowed and weeping to the Sky.

I am dying in these wee cold hours
For the resplendent glance of God.

I am dying
Because of a divine Remembrance
Of who I Really Am.

Hafiz, tonight,
Our souls are brilliant reed instruments
In need of the Breath of the
Christ.



To See My Own Heart

You are
A Shy Divine Deer
That I can not cease but track.

Though only once of late Beloved
Did I get so close
To see

My own face and heart
Reflected—

Reflected in Your wondrous soft eyes.

Only once of late Beloved
When I thought that I had You
At last cornered,

Did Hafiz come to know
The sublime beauty of God's Body—

Of God's Body
Against my own
Hand.



Removing the Shoe in the Temple

Once someone asked me,
“Why do saints seek divine annihilation,
And are often humble
And like to spend their free time
Upon their knees?”

And I replied,

“It is a simple matter of etiquette.”

And then they said,
“What do you mean Hafiz?”

“Well,” I continued,
“When ones goes into a mosque or temple
Is it not common to remove what covers your feet?

“So too does it happen
With this whole mind and body—
That is something like a sole—

“When one begins to Realize
Upon Whom you are Really Standing,

“One begins to remove the ‘shoe’ from the
Temple.”



If the Falling of a Hoof

If the falling of a hoof
Ever rings the temple bells,

If a lonely man's final scream
Before he hangs himself

And the nightingale's perfect lyric
Of happiness
All become an equal cause to dance,

Then the Sun has at last parted
Its curtain before you—

God has stopped playing child's games
With your mind
And dragged you backstage by
The hair,

And has shown to you the only possible
Reason

For this bizarre and spectacular
Existence.

Go running through the worlds
Creating divine chaos—

Make everyone and yourself mad
For the Friend's beautiful open arms.

Go running through this world
Giving love, giving love,

If the falling of a hoof upon this earth
Ever rings the Temple Bell.



Who Can Hear the Buddha Sing

Hafiz,
Tonight as you sit with your young students
Who have eyes burning like coals for the
Truth,

Raise your glass in honor
Of the Old Great One from Asia—

Speak in the impeccable style
And precise wit of a Japanese verse,

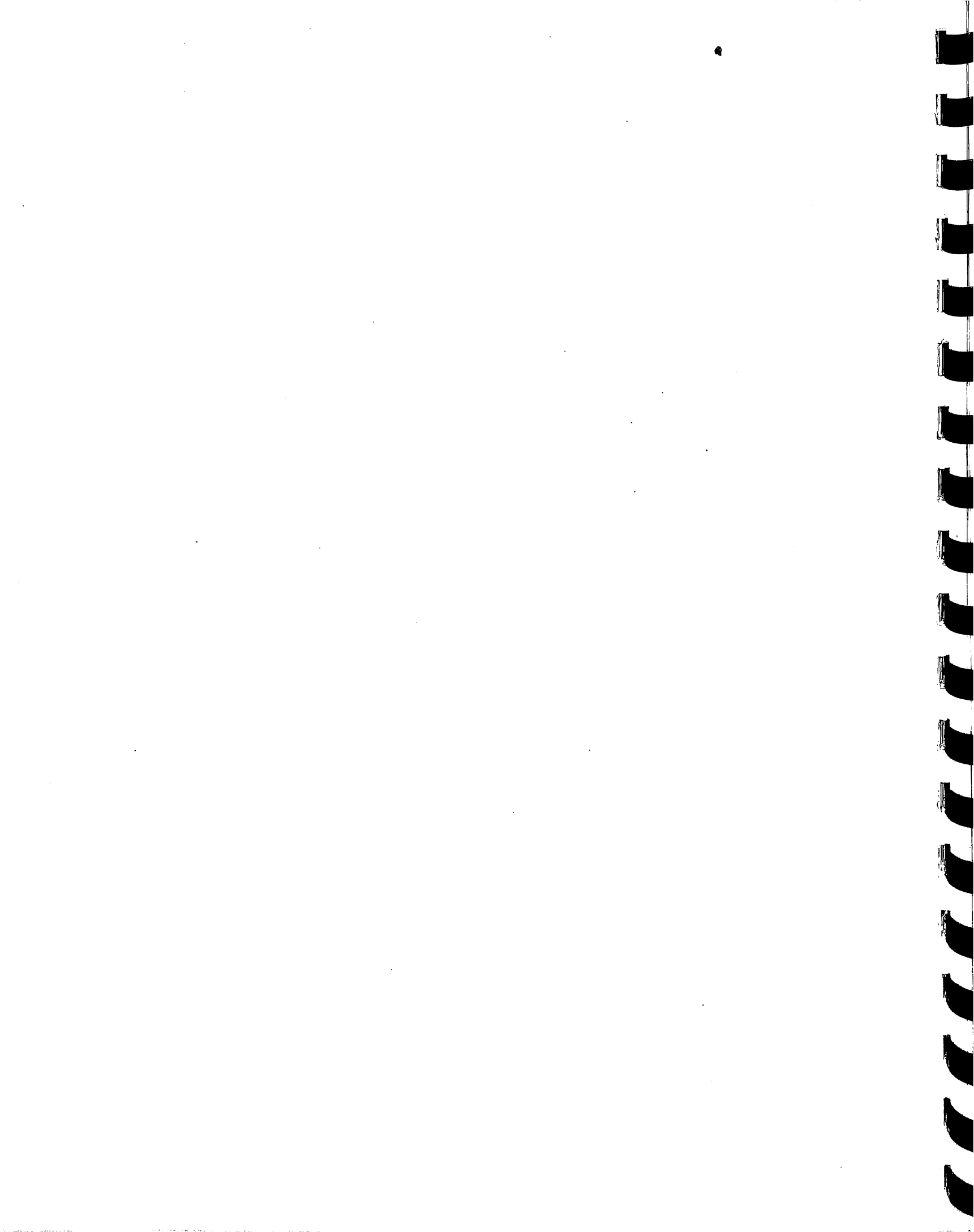
Say a profound truth about this path
With the edge of your sailor's tongue
That has been honed on the finest sake.

O.K. dears ones,
Are you ready?
Are you braced?

Well then:

Who can hear the Buddha sing
If that dog between your legs is barking?

Who can hear the Buddha sing
If that canine between your thighs
Still wants to do
Circus tricks?



I Hold the Lion's Paw

I hold the Lion's Paw
Whenever I dance.

I know the ecstasy of the falcon's wings
When they make love against the sky,

And the sun and the moon
Have begun to argue over
Who will tuck me in at night.

If you think I am having more fun
Than anyone on this planet
You are absolutely correct.

But Hafiz
Is so willing to share all his secrets
About how to near God.

Indeed,
Hafiz is very willing
To share all his secrets
About how to more deeply befriend
Your Beloved.

I hold the Lion's Paw whenever I dance.

I know the ecstasy of my heart's wings
When they make love against the Sky,

And the sun and the moon
Will someday fight over

Who can tuck you in
At night!



Stay with Us

You leave our company when you speak
Of shame

And this makes everyone in the Tavern
Sad.

Stay with us
As we do the hardest work
Of rarely laying down
That pick and shovel

That will keep revealing our deeper kinship
With God,

That will keep revealing
Our own—divine worth.

You leave the company of the Beloved's friends
Whenever you speak of guilt,

And this makes everyone in the Tavern
Very sad.

Stay with us tonight
As we weave love

And reveal ourselves—
Reveal ourselves

As His precious garments.



An Infant in Your Arms

The tide
Of my love has risen so high—
Let me flood over you.

Close your eyes for a moment
And maybe all your fears and fantasies
Will end—

If that happened
God would become an infant in your arms,

And then you
Would have to nurse all

Creation!



Now the Drum Plays

Now
The sky-drum plays
All by itself in my head

Singing all day long,
"Allah, Allah,
Allah."



The Silk Mandala

A spider and a lizard
Grabbed hold of each other's mouths
Because of love.

Most would not like to hear
The details of their affections

But I watched for a while
Their holy dance
As God might—

Spinning from one thread
That hung
From The Silk Mandala.

I watched until they fell
As our own bodies someday will—

Panting like a great falling
Star.



For a Single Tear

I know of Beauty
That no one has ever known.

But how could that be possible
When I may 'seem'
So new in Infinite-time?

It is because God belongs to only you!

Did you hear that?
Did you hear what Hafiz just said.

That God belongs to only you!

It is the only reasonable repayment

For a single
Tear?



The Other End

Like
A clever piece of mutton
That refuses to go down the "well"
Knowing it will so quickly just come out
The "other end"—

So it lodges itself between one's teeth:

That's the kind of poems Hafiz
Wants to sing
Today.



Stop Being So Religious

What do sad people have in common?

It seems
They have all built a shrine
To the past

And often go there
And do a strange wail and worship.

What is the beginning of happiness?

It is to stop being so religious—
Like “that.”



Jan Adam Amadan

We are at
The Nile's end.

We are carrying particles
From every continent, creature, age.

It has been raining
For a million years on our senses
And vision

So our water
Is so muddy compared to Yours
Dear God,

But I only hear three words
From where we are all trying to embrace
The Clear Sky—Ocean—

"Jan adam amadan"

Jan adam
Amadan—

Dear one
Come.



Mohammad's Twin

I know
The one you are looking for.

I call that man Mohammad's twin.

You once saw Him so now your eyes

Are weaving a great net of tenderness

That will one day capture
God.



The God Who Only Knows Four Words

Every child has known God.

Not the God of names.

Not the God of don'ts.

Not the God who ever does anything weird.

But the God who only knows four words

And keeps repeating them, saying:

“Come Dance With Me.”

Come Dance.



Hafiz

It

Is all

Just a love contest

And I never lose.

Now you have another good reason

To spend more time with

Me.



The Prettiest Mule

Sometimes a mule does not know
What is best for itself.

When the mind is confused like that
It secretly desires a Master
With a skilled whip

To guide it to those meadows
On the sky's table
Where the Kind One's light has made
Life more tasty.

Hafiz carries such a whip
But I rarely need to use it.

I prefer turning myself into
The prettiest mule in town

And making my tail sing and dance
Knowing your heart
Will then
Follow.



Just Came Near

No one

In need of love

Can sit with my verse for an hour

And then walk away without feeling

God just came

Near.



My Brilliant Image

One day the sun admitted,

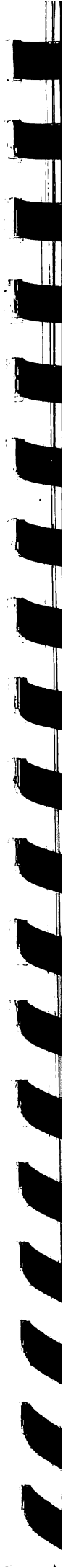
I am just a shadow.
I wish I could show you
The Infinite Incandescence (*Tej*)

That has cast my brilliant image!

I wish I could show you,
When you are lonely or in darkness,

The Astonishing Light

Of your own Being!



The Moon Is Also Busy

I bow to God in gratitude,
And I find the moon is also busy
Doing the same.

I bow to God in great happiness,
And I learn from where the suns
And the children
And my heart
All borrow their Light.

I bow to the Friend in deep reverence
And discover a marvelous secret carried in the air:

This whole Universe is just as blessed
And divinely crazed as I,
And just as lost in this Wonderful Holy Dance.

My dear,
After such
a long, long journey,
God has made another soul
Free!

Now all Hafiz wants to do
Is open a beautiful Tavern
Where this Sacred Wine
Of God's Truth, Knowledge and Love
Is forever and ever
Freely offered to you.

O bow to God in gratitude,
And some day
You will see how
The moon is also busy doing the same.



I Am So Glad

Start seeing everything as God,
But keep it a secret.

Become like a man who is Awestruck
And Nourished

Listening to a Golden Nightingale
Sing in a beautiful foreign language
While God invisibly nests
Upon its tongue.

Hafiz,
Who can you tell in this world
That when a dog runs up to you
Wagging its ecstatic tail,
You lean down and whisper in its ear,

“Beloved,
I am so glad You are happy to see me.

Beloved,
I am so glad,
So very glad You have come.”



Silence

A day of Silence
Can be a pilgrimage in itself.

A day of Silence
Can help you listen
To the Soul play
Its marvelous lute and drum.

Is not most talking
A crazed defense of a crumbling fort?

I thought we came here
To surrender in Silence,

To yield to Light and Happiness,

To Dance within
In celebration of Love's Victory!



Forever Dance

I am happy even before I have a reason.

I am full of Light even before the sky
Can greet the sun or the moon.

Dear companions,
We have been in love with God
For so very, very long.

What can Hafiz now do but Forever
Dance!



Why Just Ask the Donkey

Why
Just ask the donkey in me
To speak to the donkey in you,

When I have so many other beautiful animals
And brilliant colored birds inside
That are all longing to say something marvelous
And exciting to your heart.

Let's open all the locks upon our eyes
That keep us from knowing that Intelligence—
That begets love
And a more lively and satisfying *sobbet* (conversation)
With the Friend.

Let's turn loose our golden falcons
So that they can meet in the sky
Where our spirits belong—
Necking like two hot kids.

Let's hold hands and get drunk near the Sun
And sing sweet songs to God
Until He joins us with a few notes
From His own sublime lute and drum.

If you have any better ideas
Of how to pass a lonely night
After your glands may have performed
All their little magic—

Then speak up sweethearts, speak up,
For Hafiz and all the world will listen.

Why just bring your donkey to my door
Asking for stale hay
And a boring conference with "the Idiot"
In regards to this precious matter—
Such a precious matter as Love,



When I have so many other Divine Animals
And brilliant Colored Birds inside
That are longing,
That are all sweetly longing

To say something
Wonderful!



I Am Determined

One regret, dear world,
That I am determined not to have
When I am lying on my deathbed
Is that
I did not kiss you enough.





