

— Oh Lord —



When the great Founder molded me of old,  
He mixed much baser metal with my gold;  
    Better or fairer I can never be  
Than I first issued from his heavenly mold.

One hand with Koran, one with wine-cup dight,  
    I half incline to wrong, and half to right;  
The azure-marbled sky looks down on me,  
    A sorry Muslim, yet not heathen quite.

This wheel of heaven, which makes us all afraid,  
    I liken to a lamp's revolving shade,  
The sun the candlestick, the earth the shade,  
    And men the trembling forms thereon portrayed.

**In these twin compasses, O Love, you see  
One body with two heads, like you and me,  
Which wander round one center, circlewise,  
But at the last in one same point agree.**

**Who was it that did mix my clay? Not I.  
Who spun my web of silk and wool? Not I.  
Who wrote upon my forehead all my good,  
And all my evil deeds? In truth not I.**

**Ne'er I've strung Thy rosarium deeds pearled  
Nor swabbed sin's dusty beads soiling my world;  
Yet, I'm not hopeless of Thy pardon's grace,  
For I've not judged that two is One unfurled.**

**The unlocked Secret gleams in the tavern,  
Yet in the mosque the key endures unturned.  
Oh, Thou Planner, Designer, and Mixer,  
I'm Thy own recipe to love or burn!**

**Life's cruelty satisfies all repentance,  
So this credit give me when Thy sentence,  
While here, too, I sin to cancel Your debt,  
And away from the holy mosque jump the fence.**

**If Fortune leads one to her masquerade,  
Beware of the sweet desserts therein laid,  
For, once lured by poison's sandy mirage,  
Envenomed, you can't thwart the saber's blade.**

***He to whom reason has inscribed its script  
Upon his self will revel unto the crypt.  
Lest disposing his will to phantasms,  
He navigates his heart's ship well equipped.***

**Oh thou, with "Special Creation's" conceit,  
Thy pride judges the soured mystics you meet.  
Bring not awake the vipers from their sleep;  
For peace, hail those humble souls of the street.**

Their lives are their own, not yours for distain;  
If thou desires three worlds' peace, then refrain  
From smothering the kisses of their bliss,  
Lest you agitate thy own flame in vain.

Cast from thy glory the hindering veil,  
Rather than give up thy body and fail;  
Wear instead the old rug of poverty,  
And such the same as a Sultan prevail.

To miserly creatures Thou hast given  
Baths and waterways in the earth riven,  
Yet we must pledge our goods for nightly bread;  
Who would give a fig for such a Heaven?

Whether where, 'twixt raw Divine and ripe wine?  
Which the lure enshrine? Which the snare intwine?  
In taverns, incline, wise with love, than decline,  
As dumb, in a monastery confine.

Why would the All Knowing, Loving Expert  
Compose with Power His designed concert,  
Then decompose His grand *Magnificat*?  
Because there's none Such beyond the turret.

Small gains to learning on this earth accrue,  
They pluck life's fruitage, learning who eschew;  
Take pattern by the fools who learning shun,  
And then perchance shall fortune smile on you.

Not-being's water served to mix my clay,  
And on my heart grief's fire doth ever prey,  
And blown am I like wind about the world,  
And last my crumbling earth is swept away.

From life we drew our wine, now dregs to drink,  
Then flaunted silk, and now in tatters shrink;  
Such changes wisdom holds of slight account  
To those who stand on death's appalling brink!

**What providence determines our destiny plucked?  
Is it the stars, by chance, that rain down luck,  
Or is it just serendipity and good fortune  
Created by our own karma of kismet done?**

**Do the Fates 'Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos' three  
Predestine the preordination meant for us to be?  
Are we doomed and bound? Is there any guarantee?  
What do we care since it seems so free to be!**

**Of earth, fire, and water I'm a braid,  
Withstanding life's tangles unafrayed.  
Well, I'll live till death unravels me—  
When comes wind to blow my strands away.**

**Yon Heaven's Wheel flings its comet portent,  
The plot to end our lives unimportant.  
To the lawn, love, for one day we shall be  
As the grass that grows about our tent.**

**E'en the smoke from ember's ash fades away,  
That warp with the woof and weave burned to clay.  
How many beautiful hearts have melted here?  
Where in heaven's cosmic vault wefts their sway?**

**Here the evil of the heavens is flung,  
Life laid barren by our friends' passing young.  
Mourn not yesterday, nor morrow unsung;  
It's To-Day, the best time to roll life's dung!**

**Fate's Wheel soft whispers in my ear, 'I know  
What's been decreed—just ask and I will show.'  
Were mine the hand that made myself revolve,  
I should have saved myself from reeling so.**

**If souls are eternal, then where were they  
During the eternity before births?  
Nonexistence is nonexistence, whether  
It comes before or after a lifetime.**

*Most deep religious beliefs are shaped by  
Little more than local social forces:  
Jewish, Buddhist, Islamic, Christian, or none,  
So then, how deep and meaningful are they?*

**Love is giving without gain in return;  
Taking is selfish; do we never learn?  
Graciously accept all that you receive,  
And give kindness to everyone in turn.**

*The meaning of love is in its Giving  
When there's no motive towards obtaining;  
Taking is the opposite of giving!  
Caring? Sharing? They're reasons for loving.*

**The brain interprets reality and puts  
A face on the waves of sound, light, color, touch,  
And a sense on molecules' smell and taste.  
Consciousness is the brain's perception of itself.**

*Appearance and motion wholly create  
Being and time in the arena of space;  
We're complex composites, from simple stuff,  
Ultimate, perhaps, in the universe.*

**Light peels information off an object;  
Air waves carry vibrations select;  
Odors are molecules brought to inspect;  
Reality's but in what mind connects.**

*People are like stained-glass windows without:  
They sparkle and shine when the sun is out,  
But when darkness sets in, their true beauty  
Is revealed only if there's light within.*

**Knowing that we can't solve all life's mysteries  
Frees us from that senseless task of misery.  
We can see, hear, smell, feel, and drink in all  
Reality that penetrates sensibility.**

*No matter how one tries to shake from boughs  
The fruits of time's truth from the Tree of Knows,  
Computation makes not yet the morrows;  
There's naught else but lone, resultant Nows.*

*Worries seldom come true, but, if they do,  
Thus they had to, so in them you must stew.  
Past imperfect points to a future tense,  
Yet ever only Nows does the Wheel brew.*

*A dream spoke to me, while I slumbered deep,  
"You're wasting on the threshold of Death's keep;  
Doth such in repose the rosebud blossom?  
Entombed, you can for eternity sleep."*

*Outputs must have inputs, they in turning  
Becoming inputs to more fates churning;  
In that sense, all is writ, on every path,  
As in ours, so what must be will e'er spring.*

*Now's pen inscribes, based on what was there,  
Its destined words phrasing our sentence here.  
Although it may spell to us right or wrong,  
Even one letter's change hasn't a prayer.*

*What be: thy output must form from input,  
For naught else can stride the moving foot,  
And surely naught from nought makes no 'random';  
The pen can't revise its scroll; "we're" caput.*

*Oh heart, here the Fount of Truth does not rain,  
Nor do I from the subtle sages gain,  
But here with a loving heart Heaven's made,  
For I may'st ne'er another Heaven attain.*

*A rose's prime lasts for but an hour of morn:  
Flowering and free, then fragile and forlorn,  
The petals float to earth, and there signify  
That beauty's past, for all that's left is the thorn.*