

Азербайджанская
Республика
БАНК
им. М. Ф. Ахундова



YAZICHY
BAKU
1984



Imadeddin

NESIMII

Poems

A-24.003



C (Aз) I
H24

Translated by
PETER TEMPEST

Compiled
VAGIF ASLANOU

Насими И.
H24 Лирика. Перевод П. Темпеста. Составитель и автор предисловия В. Асланов. Б., Язычы, 1984. — 64 с.

H 4702060100—106
M—656—84

C (Aз) I

Решение коллегия Госкомиздата за № 127
от 09. 05. 83.

© Translation into English. Progress Publishers 1973
Printed in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Yazychy, 1984

FOREWORD

Seyyid Imadeddin Nesimi, the great Azerbaijanian poet and an outstanding figure in the poetry and philosophical thought of the Orient, was the founder of philosophical poetry in the Azerbaijanian language.

At the time when he lived and wrote at the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries religious obscurantism was dominant, his homeland was ravaged by Mongol invasion, in the East and the West anyone propagating truly humanist views, opposing feudal oppression and calling on men to trust in their own powers was punished by death and imprisonment and all progressive writings were burned.

His surviving poems show that Nesimi had an encyclopaedic grasp of the learning of his day. He was a propagator and leading theorist of Hurufism, a mystic pantheistic doctrine which emerged in Azerbaijan at the dawn of the fifteenth century. Its name came from the Arab word *huruf*, or letters. Hurufism deified numerals, letters and the combination of letters in words. It regarded letters as the basis of the whole universe. It believed that all the letters of the alphabet, the whole of holy scripture and even God himself were manifest on the face of man. In Nesimi's poems we often find such explicit statements as, for instance, that *Supreme God is himself humanity's son*. Nesimi says to his reader: *O you in whose face pristine substance is seen, your image is merciful and gracious God.*

Nesimi used the personal pronoun "I" in the generic sense to mean "all men": *Since my ending is eternal and my beginning primordial, primordially and eternally I am the Supreme Being.*

He ascribed to man all the epithets of God in the Koran: *The thirty-two immortal letters I am, No mate, no like, no substitute have I.*

Like other monotheistic creeds, Islam claimed: "There is no God but God!" Periphrasing this dogma, Nesimi declared: *There is no God but us—this without fail we know when from our face we lift the veil.*

The founder of Hurufism was the great Azerbaijanian philosopher Fazlullah Naimi, who set out his doctrine in the treatise entitled *Djavidan-Name (The Book*



of Eternity). After Fazlullah Naimi had been executed by Tamerlaine's son, Miranshah, in 1394, Nesimi left Baku and went to Turkey. For spreading Hurufi ideas he was prosecuted and jailed. According to contemporary chronicles, Nesimi spent the last days of his life in the city of Aleppo. It is recorded that a pupil of his declaimed one of Nesimi's Persian ghazels in the street: *To see my face you need an eye that can perceive True God. How can the eye that is short-sighted see the face of God?* Hearing this heresy religious fanatics arrested the youth and ordered him to name the author of the poem. The youth said it was his own poem and he was promptly sentenced to death. Learning of this, Nesimi went to the place of execution and demanded the innocent youth's release, saying that he himself was the author. The religious fanatics resolved to slay Nesimi alive. He faced this terrible death with characteristic dignity. During the torture one of the divines present asked Nesimi: "You say you are God. Then why do you grow pale as your blood drains away?" To which Nesimi replied: "I am the sun of love on eternity's horizon. The sun always pales at sundown."

Thus Nesimi, whose poems praise truthfulness in man and the nobility and beauty of the human heart and soul, took his place in history as a hero who sacrificed his life for a fellow-man, for the triumph of justice.

In his poems Nesimi summons man to know himself and his own divine nature. He believed that only man can grasp all the secrets of Creation. In Oriental mythology the legendary Iranian ruler Djemshid, or Djem, had a cup which, when full of wine, showed all that was happening in the world. Nesimi often calls human reason the cup of Djemshid. *The essence of God is hidden in man, the wine in the chalice of Djem is man.* Knowledge and reason are the greatest riches and knowledge gives man strength: *O you who thirst for pearls and gold, for knowledge strive! For is not this a gold and pearl—knowledge of man? And again: He who masters knowledge, O man, is strong.* The man of reason who is aware of his divine majesty is the most precious being in all Creation: *O you who call a stone and earth a precious pearl, is not man who is so fair and gentle also a pearl?*



Most religions regard God as the Creator at whose command—"Let there be . . .!"—the world was made. Extolling man's beauty and powers, Nesimi regards man as the maker of all things: *Since I am primordial and eternal, I am the Creator and the creature of the universe.*

Nesimi deeply believed that God's command—"Let there be . . .!"—was prompted by the power of human speech: *This command by which all things were made possessed the power of our voice and speech.*

It should be noted that while proclaiming man to be God Nesimi does not idealise man and elevate him to Heaven but, on the contrary, placing God within man, he particularly stresses his material origin: *Why are fire and water, earth and air given the name of man? Entranced by the beauty of man who embraces "the four elements and the six dimensions", the poet exclaims: Praise him who combines the earth with fire and air, praise the artist who impresses this form upon water!*

In many of his poems he voices the thoughts and sufferings of a man gripped by earthly passion for a woman by whose beauty he is entranced.

Nesimi used poetic forms widespread in the Near and Middle East—the ghazal, rubai (quatrain), qasida and mesnevi (rhymed couplets), forms of classic Arabic and Persian poetry. Nesimi's achievement was to be the first poet to compose in a Turkic language ghazels, rubaiyat and mesnevi matching those of classic Arabic and Persian poetry. His brilliant poems had a decisive influence on the later development of these forms in Turkic poetry.

A ghazal consists of seven to fourteen couplets with the rhyme structure *aa, ba, ca, da* and so on. The final couplet usually mentions the author's name. Ghazels are traditionally love poems about a beautiful woman, about the lover's anguish, the grief of separation and the joys of meeting. Nesimi, however, treats social and philosophical themes in his ghazels, which may run to forty or fifty couplets. The distinctive features of his poetry are its combination of lyric verse and philosophical thought, its rich and bold rhythms, harmonies, alliteration and internal rhymes.



Nesimi used religious dogmas to expose the official preachers of all religions, especially Islam: *Do you not say that God is everywhere? Why do you then distinguish between the tavern and the mosque? To him the mosque and the tavern, the Kaaba—the shrine at Mecca—and the infidel temple are all one:*

*Heresy and Islam are the same to lover's eyes,
Like a prince the lover is, wherever he abides...
He who views the Kaaba and the idol not as one,
Though advanced in years, is yet unready to be wise.*

Even in his love poems Nesimi boldly opposed religious scholasticism and stated his own philosophy. Comparing his beloved's dark locks to heresy or disbelief and her fair face to belief, he notes how sweetly they live together: *If disbelief is not belief, how did I come to find the light of faith within the circle of your faithless locks? And again: I say to him who does not know the secrets of your locks and face, they are the very essence of belief and disbelief.*

In Nesimi's time anyone likening the mosque to a tavern and the faith to heterodoxy was signing his own death warrant.

The great Iranian poet Hallaj Mansur was hanged for proclaiming: "I am God!" Nesimi knew of Mansur's tragic end and always mentions his name with great respect.

Praising nature's charms, man's power and nobility and the grandeur of reason, opposing religious scholasticism, fostering love of man and setting a high value on human dignity, Nesimi raised to a new height the ideas of humanism in Oriental poetry. He strove for man's moral purity, taught norms of humanist morality and called on man to reject duplicity, villainy, ignorance, greed and conceit and to do good deeds and to respect his fellow-men. Nesimi proudly proclaimed: *I have no share in the enslavement of man. God knows I speak the truth.*

Nesimi's poetry affirmed life and urged man to relish all the joys of life in



this world. Like other religions, Islam told men to be patient and humbly bow to fate, promising the eternal bliss of Paradise in return for all the hardships of this world. Nesimi categorically rejected the world beyond and considered it Heaven to merge with one's beloved in this world: *Do not thirst for happiness in the world beyond the grave, for Paradise and its fair maidens is to meet your love!* For this reason he reproached the preachers and legislators of Islam, declaring them to be hypocrites: *O preacher, do not seek to scare me with tomorrow! The sage for whom tomorrow comes today, is unafraid.*

Islam promised people the waters of the springs of Paradise, Selsebil and Kevser, water sweeter than honey and more pleasing than wine. But this, Nesimi said, lies on the lips of the beloved: *Although they promise us God's wine and honey in Paradise, it is your lips I need for there I find both honey and wine. . .*

The freedom and happiness, dignity and majesty of man form the leitmotif of Nesimi's poems. Of the grandeur and dignity of man he wrote: *Both worlds within my compass come, but this world cannot compass me.* The poet was in love with the world in which he lived and in which his immortal poetry lives on. Not for one moment did he wish to exchange for Paradise the moments of joy with his beloved in this world. *My rival says: "Give me today's love! Take tomorrow for yourself!" An hour spent with my love for a whole epoch I shall not exchange.*

Nesimi urged people to place no trust in empty promises: *O heart, reject vain promises! Let us spend this moment in pleasure! Yesterday has gone, tomorrow is unknown, and so this moment is pleasure.*

Nesimi's poetry is rooted in the social, political and cultural development of the countries of the Near and Middle East, and especially of his homeland of Azerbaijan. It expresses the poet's own extremely complex outlook.

Alongside his optimism there are occasional notes of pessimism, alongside his faith and confidence in man's might and goodness there are expressions of distrust. Nesimi complains that in this deceitful world there is no true friend and no true love: *Where is the friend who is true to his promise, where the beloved who utters the truth?* In one quatrain he says: *The men of this world have become*



scorpions and snakes. Evil is widespread throughout the world. Where shall one find a true friend of pure heart? Where is the man of conscience and justice?

Sometimes he curses the world, observing that unworthy fools hold the reins of government while men of learning and nobility have no say. Nevertheless the poet does not lose hope and he trusts that justice will triumph: *O nightingale, do not grieve on parting from the rose! Be patient! Winter shall pass, the garden fill with blossom and spring shall come.*

Many of his verses are aphoristic, expressing moral sentiments and maxims. *Do not grasp the hand of foes, though sweet as honey it may be ... How can a man who is corrupt your proper worth assess? ... It is hell—with villains to converse.*

Nesimi was fully justified in ranking himself alongside the unsurpassed lyric poets of Persian literature, Salman Saveji and Faridaddin Attar. Valuing riches of the spirit above all else, Nesimi declared: *I am he to whom as servants shahs and sultans come. I am he whose watchman and custodian is the sun.*

Addressing his readers Nesimi declares: *Call me a man who has immortal life, for I immortal am and ever alive.* We rejoice that Nesimi's wonderful poetry has come down to us from a past age, poetry which shall forever live like the boundless, restless and seething ocean rich in pearls.

VAGIF ASLANOV



GHAZELS

I take the Merciful One's shape, the Merciful I am,
The Spirit Absolute, the word of God and the Koran.

I was the one who told the secret of the burning hills,
I was the bright fire's Abraham, I'm Moses and Imran.

I'm Jesus, Alexander and the water that gives life,
It's immortality I have, the source of life I am.

I am the sea, its coast I am, I am the shell and pearl,
A pearl not only of the sea—the ocean's pearl I am.

I'm thought and beauty, I am attributes, I am desire,
I am the portrait, and the lover charmed by it I am.

I am the realm of darkness, I am death, destruction, life,
The Flood to unbelievers, to believers Noah I am.

I am the balm and doctor, the recovery and pain,
The sufferer and the relief of suffering I am.

I am the Holy Book, its letters, he to whom God spoke
The word, the one who spoke it and the argument I am.

The bearer of the cup I am, the wineseller, the drunk,
The spring of Heaven, the winepours, the wine and cup I am.

I am the much-repeated prayer, I am hypocrisy,
I am the one-God faith and of that faith the flame I am.

I am the Joy-provider, the All-merciful, the Wise,
Beatitude, Eternity and Paradise I am.

Know God, acknowledge him, Nesimi! You are mankind's son
And I am he who did receive from God the name of man.

Both worlds within my compass come, but this world cannot compass me.
An omnipresent pearl am I and both worlds cannot compass me.

Because in me both earth and heaven and Creation's "BE!" were found,
Be silent! For there is no commentary can encompass me.

Both worlds are my inauguration. In your essence I begin.
So know me by this token, though a token cannot compass me.

Through doubt and surmise no one came to be a friend of God and Truth.
The man who honours God knows doubt and surmise cannot compass me.

Pay due regard to form, acknowledge content in the form, because
Body and soul I am, but soul and body cannot compass me.

I am both shell and pearl, the Doomsday scales, the bridge to Paradise.
With such a wealth of wares, this worldly counter cannot compass me.

I am "the hidden treasure" that is God. I am the open eyes.
I am the jewel of the mine. No sea or mine can compass me.

Although I am the boundless sea, my name is Adam, I am man.
I am Mount Sinai and both worlds. This dwelling cannot compass me.

I am both soul and world as well. I am both world and epoch, too.
Mark this particular: this world and epoch cannot compass me.

I am the stars, the sky, the angel, revelation come from God.
So hold your tongue and silent be! There is no tongue can compass me.

I am the atom, sun, four elements, five saints, dimensions six.
Go seek my attributes! But explanations cannot compass me.

I am the core and attribute, the flower, sugar and sweetmeat.
I am Assignment Night, the Eve. No tight-shut lips can compass me.

I am the burning bush. I am the rock that rose into the sky.
Observe this tongue of flame. There is no tongue of flame can compass me.

Men who are far-sighted called your lips pure soul—and this is true.
Then your mouth they likened to a point that's hidden—this is true.

Men who are in love I asked about your face and ruby lips.
They pronounced them to be Khizr and living water—this is true.

Men who bow in homage to the face of Adam and mankind
Said you are the throne and image of God's mercy—this is true.

Waverers declared your figure is a graceful lotus, but
People reckoned this a falsehood, so they tell me—this is true.

Scholars and believers both asserted that the person who
Shall deny your beauty is a fiend and devil—this is true.

Those who dwell in Heaven said the flower garden of your face
Is a heaven and a garden everlasting—this is true.

Those who know from God the secrets of the writing of your Pen,
Said your face's fragrant features are sweet basil—this is true.

Wonder-working men declared your face and all that's written there
To be the Koran, to be the sacred tablet—this is true.

O Nesimi, men of insight said your being's dwelling place
Is the Omnipresent's treasure among ruins—this is true.



Who within your form his own Creator cannot apprehend,
Such a person blind into the world did the Creator send.

Separation from beloved lips and yearning for her love
Make the burning candle melt in grief and bitter tears descend.

No one lived in idle thought nor was his loving immature
When his love was kindled by the Truth and God its flame did tend.

He who has not clearly seen the twin-arc brows of the full moon
The Koran's symbolic message shall not lightly comprehend.

Though an angel servant tends her fragrant locks of hyacinth,
I no servant need: to me the sultan shall himself attend.

Revellers have merged with Truth. The zealot is remote from it.
On the prayer-house chief and on the tavern drunk your glances bend!

There's a Sufi hurls at lovers stone-rebukes from time to time,
But they're hollow stones. This Sufi's form and essence comprehend!

See what final fate awaits you in a corner of the mosque,
You who revellers and drunkards of the tavern reprehend!

Love for you has burnt my soul to ash and all my heart consumed,
One who falls in love so deeply everything to fire commends.

In the city of my heart your love has such a palace raised
That the spheres of heaven shall its well-knit fabric never send.

From the start your love has made my soul its close companion,
He who knows the rights of comradeship shall never leave his friend.

O Nesimi, do not grieve that no one knows your state of mind,
All men's frank and secret thoughts the God of Truth can apprehend.

O love, now you are gone, of soul in body what need have I?
Of wealth and courage, throne and crown of glory what need have I?

My sores I healed when I perceived your presence, O Fazlullah.
I sorely miss you now, of other healing what need have I?

O Muslim, know the world is pleasing with your beloved there.
Now I am parted from my love, what need of the world have I?

I said so many prayers at the Creator's heavenly gates.
If what I wish is not fulfilled, what need of prayers have I?

Your love has died, Nesimi. Patient be, don't utter a cry!
And if I bear the pain today, of sighing what need have I?



Азербайджанская
Республиканская
Библиотека
им. М. Ф. Ахундова

A-24.003.

When I saw your face, I said: "Give praise to God!"
When I saw your form, I said: "Say this is God!"

Then I saw your tresses shedding perfume sweet,
Arching like a bow your brows, so help them God!

When I saw the plunder of your robber eyes,
For a second time I said: "So help them God!"

It's a healing source—the sherbet of your lips,
For they have drunk deeply of the grace of God.

From your face I cannot tear away my eyes.
If you doubt my words, I'll swear to it by God.

Overwhelmed my heart is by your beauty's charm.
Deeds of the Almighty are the will of God.

All the wisdom of the letters thirty-two
Lies in union with you, I swear to God.

Once Nesimi has a solemn promise made
He shall keep it, for it is a vow to God.

For a fig you sold your love. Its proper price you did not know.
Worthless is a man who for a song lets his beloved go.

Pearls from hands of foolish people buyers cheaply may acquire.
Can a man who knowledge lacks a splendid pearl's true value know?

Love's close secret should be known to none but him who is in love.
Can a man who does not love the lover's secret ever know?

Who for love of his beloved has no sacrifices made,
Has no rightful claim to love. His vows of love are but a show.

If a man is double-dealing and his utterance is false,
Do not trust his utterances, do not heed his tales of woe!

If a lover is not tortured by his love, what shall he do?
Never-ending grief on lovers do beloved ones bestow.

Take the noose, burn brightly—you who, like Mansur, say: "I am God!"
You in other worlds will gain a haven safe from any foe!

Men who let love's tresses from their fingers slip to stay alive,
Blindly in the dust the fragrant musk of Tartary do throw.

The ascetic's rosary repeats: "There is no God but God!"
But to me, sweet soul, repeat what pleasures loving lips bestow!

O Nesimi, sell you pearl to one who is a connoisseur!
Do not sell your splendid pearls to those who only folly know.

Your resplendent features are the source of light.
Your sweet words like springs of Paradise delight.

Sun and moon and Jupiter in heaven high
Draw their light from your fair face's taper bright.

By your charming eyes Harut was with Marut
Hung in Babylon's deep well. It served them right!

To your feet the heavens humbly bow their head.
Angels are your guardians all day and night.

Satan ran away, refused to honour you,
So he bears a yoke and cursed is his plight.

Essence of Creation is the precious pearl
And of this fair pearl you are the essence bright.

It's the breath of Jesus brings the dead to life.
But your breath raised Khizr and Jesus to the light.

Your face is a looking-glass for the devout
And in it he takes continual delight.

In the sea of love Nesimi is a pearl.
He who shuns the sea is either fiend or sprite.

You whose lips are coral and whose face—a rose,
Whose narcissus-eyes a swooning queen disclose!

When the angel sees your face he humbly bows,
But the stubborn Satan no such homage shows.

These your cheeks and eyebrows are the Book of God
And your face and features the Koran compose.

Though in darkness Khizr go seek the source of life,
It is from your lips the living water flows.

Mark this grim ascetic of the Sufi sect,
Garrulous and stupid, words to waste he throws.

Fa and Zad and Lam spell "Wisdom"—Fazlullah,
For whose wisdom's sake till death we face our foes.

Both my life and soul are guided by his will,
O fair sultan, reigning on my being's throne!

O Nesimi, your verse-pearls do not disclose
Until your beloved interest in them shows!



O morning breeze, to my beloved greetings please convey,
To her whose flirting eyes like raiders carry all away.

Come tell me now, what remedy may heal a yearning heart?
So I may tell it to my love when she shall look my way.

The flames of being parted from her are consuming me.
Shall I my eyes again upon her moon-face ever lay?

I'm far away from her long tresses and her seed-like moles.
Give me, O God, this fragrant noose and charming bait, I pray!

Whoever in both worlds did not regard you as his goal
Did not attain his chosen aim and sorely went astray.

The sage indeed was bowing to the holiest of shrines
Who took your eyes to guide his prayer, your face to point the way.

O moon-faced one, your rosy-tinted cheeks the tablet are
On which the Holy Spirit did the word of God convey.

The pourer at his winefeast gave to me your ruby lips.
A single draught of such a wine all troubles can allay.

To meet you is eternal joy. But what's a man to do
If all the world is transient and all that we survey?

All things—the sun and moon—reflect the beauty that is you,
Whose ruby lips do sear the soul of freeman and of slave.

I'm summoned by the sage and the Koran to purity,
But where's the lover cares for reputation and good name?

Nesimi's words in praise of you have mounted to the skies.
Where is the shell whose pearl has had such honour come its way?

O heedless man, you've lost Djem's life-restoring cup. Wake up and show
What you have found in sleep, what benefit sleep did on you bestow.

What harm has God's Truth done to you that you should strive for empty words?
You turned away from Truth. Beware! The Truth exists—it's really so.

Heed not the words of wicked men, do not to their temptation yield!
For you shall not attain your goal if you along with Satan go.

Destroy love for the world of lies within your heart, be not deceived!
The world does not revolve at people's will—this you must truly know.

Renounce all this magnificence! For in this world in which we live
One thing is sure: a lifetime passes, whether it be hard or no.

So why do you, deceived by passion, eagerly embrace the world?
Has God's own Truth gone from your mind that where the world commands
you go?

You are in essence a Messiah. Why would you a devil be?
For surely you are not a jinn, and mercy you can surely show.

You are not such a jewel that "a secret treasure" you'll be called.
Why do you not confess yourself, you who are doomed to vanish so?

You deeply drank from love's own cup. By passion you were borne away.
Reject this wine! For it is poisonous and causes death and woe.

Nesimi is interpreting the secret of our driving force.
But when shall this be understood by one who does himself not know?

From your lips, O love, the living waters flow.
Ask the prophet Khizr and what life is you'll know.

O how sweet and fine the flavour of your lips,
Lips as bright as coral with a ruby glow!

On your face did Truth this very day reveal
All the letters which are proof that it is so.

Who distinction makes between yourself and Truth
Is an ignoramus, nothing does he know.

Radiating light, the taper of your cheeks
Has again arisen like the moon aglow.

He who to your beauty did not homage pay—
God on him the name of Satan did bestow.

This is a great feastday, O Nesimi, come,
Sacrifice your life! Your life you must forgo.

O capricious love, I pine away awaiting your return
And upon the taper of your forehead, like a moth, I burn.

Bitter is the cup of parting! Give it not to one in love!
Thus to offer poison to him does the true beloved spurn.

You who are both sun and moon, your beauty agitates the skies.
Who may easily the secrets of your face and tresses learn?

In this world and in the next one it is you to whom I strive.
In your absence neither to this world nor that my eyes I'll turn.

Merging with you made me rich. Of other riches I've no need.
I surrendered all existence your fair features to discern.

Liquid pearls my eyes let fall on patterns of my dreams of you.
You whose teeth are pearls, upon my heavy pearls glance in return!

"I am God!" your features said and in your tresses' noose I'll hang.
He is hung who, like Mansur, shall from love's gallows never turn.

Rosaries and prayer rugs are the trumpery of hypocrites,
Into belts for subject lovers shall your fragrant tresses turn.

If today, O lover, you would merge with your beloved friend,
Come and, like Nesimi, with a kick this world rebuff and spurn.

Without you neither world nor soul is needed.
Once we have met, a parting is not needed.

Purer your moist lips are than springs of Heaven:
A drink of living water is not needed.

On my heart's throne the grief you cause is sultan.
Two sultans in one country are not needed.

The pain you give him gratifies your lover.
Who knows the pain knows well no cure is needed.

All flowers are but thorns if you are absent.
Without you rose and basil are not needed.

Come, you whose face is Paradise to lovers!
For Paradise without you is not needed.

Apart from meeting you, O godlike one,
In this or that world nothing else is needed.

For one who drinks the wine of lovers' meeting
The bane of parting is not sorely needed.

Long suffering that is not for your sake—
Easy or hard to bear with—is not needed.

An old bond with your love I have concluded,
A firm bond. One that crumbles is not needed.

Nesimi shall not spurn a meeting with you,
But do not leave his sight! This is not needed.

No soul can live without you. Such existence is in vain.
The lover knows that life without you is the sheerest pain.

Begotten by the Holy Ghost was Jesus, Mary's son.
This is the instant matters most—this truth come ascertain!

From underneath your dusky locks your face of light appeared.
The night is always followed by the light of day again.

O pilgrim bound for Mecca, know that for the lover true
The face of the beloved is the shrine that he would gain.

My love for you brings sorrow every minute of the day.
Love for the lover is unending sorrow, endless pain.

My loving heart will not exchange its grief for either world,
Because it knows what sorrow sweet the tears of love contain.

Nesimi, of hypocrisy and falsehood destitute,
In love for his beloved is a mighty suzerain.



The whole world is surrendering to your grace.
You brought God's secret forth from its hiding place.

Without you what is soul, or loving the world?
It's you who soul and the lover's world embrace.

Your lips are the source of life. But, God be praised,
Not everyone to your lips the source can trace.

Who drinks life-giving water? Ask of the man
Who once the wine of your ruby lips did taste.

Your lips, I have heard, are thirsting for my blood.
How happy I would be if this were the case!

Behold, she banishes sleep with coquetry
And rouses the world to Judgement Day apace.

No token you have by which you may be known
And nobody found the person with no traits.

Eternal happiness and eternal life
Is merging, merging and merging with your grace.

No home has Nesini. He is everywhere.
The homeless lover makes Truth his dwelling-place.

Dull, the world is dull. I do not wish to stay.
So I quit the world. I'm galloping away.

If with your beloved you desire to merge,
Then you must refuse both worlds without delay.

Worldly loss and profit is not hard to find.
Save yourself from loss and profit disobey!

If you're not a devil, know and study man,
Speak of Adam's essence, origin and sway!

Supposition never led a man to Truth
Nor does early doubting confidence convey.

In this world there is no rose without a thorn,
So renounce the rose, the cypress throw away!

She whose mouth is sweet has lips that are pure soul.
Don't you know her, you who care not either way?

She reveals her face. Beware, O God, because
Beauty such as this shall waken Judgement Day!

Solemnly I swear I have said "no" to all
Saving her among whose tresses perfumes play.

It is you Nesimi yearns for. That is why
He rejects both worlds and turns his eyes away.

Though grief consume the heart, a true love cannot be found.
Though many lands be sought, a true one cannot be found.

Though many claim to be your friend, it's ever the same:
A loyal friend, when need arises, cannot be found.

The custom is to give your heart to someone you love.
I gave my heart, but my beloved cannot be found.

How many men profess the faith! But, look where you will,
A belted Christian with a cross shall never be found.

A man who has no gifts is offered eminent posts,
But office for a man of talent cannot be found.

You cannot see a man without a turban and robe,
But one sound head among a thousand cannot be found.

If thieves go steal the campers' bedding, what is so strange,
When all men drowse and one who watches cannot be found?

Then go put up with grief and learn your sorrow to bear,
If hearts that have great aspirations cannot be found.

Duplicity is feigning, science comes to a halt
And fertile ground for men of learning cannot be found.

Your heart, Nesimi, do not thus unburden, because
Today men who can keep a secret cannot be found.

The pangs of absence grip my soul, in anguish nothing can console.
Pray cast a glance upon the torments and the fires of my soul!

Do not desert my loving heart, because to you, my love, it's clear
Into what depths untold of grief and suffering my heart you throw.

There's nothing for my eyes to see in either world if you're not there,
Although in either world to meet you I would rapturously go.

The lotus of your shapely form has found its dwelling in my eyes;
The lotus plant is suited best to where the running waters flow.

The grief that you occasion lifts my sighs to heaven, burns my soul.
Observe amid the smoke of sighs how bright the fires of sorrow glow!

Let not the one who separates me from my love achieve his aim!
Observe the wretched state of him who thinks it right to treat me so.

Though you and I are separated, all the time I live with you.
How can a man of doubt and surmise such a subtle secret know?

If you, my idol, do not know my state of yearning, come and see,
Look closely at this heart of mine, my heart and breast their wounds shall show.

Suppose I were to give my soul, the world and all the world contains
To meet you and to see your features, still the price would be too low.

Why in her tresses' chains has she my soul and body thus constrained?
Does not this signify that Heaven is the dwelling of my soul?

O moon-faced one, your beauty has seduced Nesimi by its glow,
For Judgement Day's seduction is discovered in our world below.

If you would scent the air with fragrant hair, I beg you refrain
If you would seize all faith and steal my heart, I beg you refrain.

O beauty with the moonlike face, you have discarded the veil.
If you would start the rush of Judgement Day, I beg you refrain.

Your cheeks and moles for men of one God are "the tongue of the birds".
If you wish to transfer the tongue of birds, I beg you refrain.

Since your moon-face has cast the veil from "I am the Truth of God!"
Why should you wish to hide the Truth divine? I beg you refrain.

Your face God's "hidden treasure" is. You show the mirror your face.
If you desire the world entire to show, I beg you refrain.

Your best sword-lash you offered to the drunken Turk of your eyes.
If without feud you wish to shed men's blood, I beg you refrain.

Are not your lashes rows of arrows set to conquer a heart?
If you would turn your brows into a bow, I beg you refrain.

You shook your tresses all about, you threw them into the wind.
If you would leave a heart without a home, I beg you refrain.

The verse "Eternal Being" was sent down your beauty to mark.
If you would show the meaning of the verse, I beg you refrain.

The veil, Nesimi, from the face of Truth you wish to remove.
You seek to influence idolaters? I beg you refrain.

The world is no fit place to live. O soul, why linger there?
Be not deluded by the world's dishonest wiles, beware!

The days are never standing still and life goes swiftly by.
O perspicacious ones, of this condition be aware!

O pilgrim, not eternal are the blessings of the world.
Renounce the world, remember that its wealth is but a snare.

If you are loyal to your love, for your beloved's sake
Go pawn your soul, renounce your life, for sacrifice prepare.

O God, my heart is lost amid the darkness of her hair.
Transform the night to day for one in such a deep despair!

Since beauty's epoch is today apportioned to your face,
O you who are the last temptation, work a wonder rare!

If you, like Moses, Imran's son, have met this fire divine,
Its splendour show me and explain the burning bush's glare.

Since life is five days only in the dwelling of the world,
Courageously destroy the world's foundations everywhere!

Nesimi, you have learned about the one with almond lips.
Tidings of one whose lips are sugar take to all the fair!



Be my beloved, for my soul another does not desire!
You are my soul's beloved. It another does not desire.

The flower garden of your face is Eden in Paradise.
Who finds this garden shall another garden never desire.

It's you my soul desires, it is for this I'm praying to God.
It's you alone I need, my soul another does not desire.

Don't ask me, O beloved, what it is you would have of me,
For anything except his love a lover does not desire.

So come, quintessence of the soul and world! If you are not there,
My heart renounces both the worlds and nothing does it desire.

Since he who is Mansur says: "I am God!" and strives to be hung,
Who's not Mansur to say thus: "I am God!" shall never desire.

To all the world the secret of my love I wish to proclaim.
My rival, who shall grieve, this proclamation does not desire.

I wish to see your face unveiled now and forever. But he,
My rival, has blind eyes and this unveiling does not desire.

Nesimi sought from God to merge with her. God granted his wish.
He owns eternal riches now. Gold coin he does not desire.

My daily fare while you are absent, love, is blood and moan.
Come, let my soul sip sherbet from your lips like roses grown!

Since distance has between us come, between my soul and you,
My portion is all night and day to sigh and wail and groan.

O graceful cypress, grant this favour, step upon my brow!
My tears flow fast from eyes which have twin fountains of their own.

I yearn for you, care not if soul and world there be nowhere.
For soul and world do lovers gain to whom your face is known,

Remove your veil, O dazzling sun, whose face is like the moon!
Scorch, like a moth, the men who to your taper-face have flown!

O rag-and-tattered scoundrel, zealot vaunting many gods,
Go cleanse your motley in the flame of one true God alone!

Framed by your curls your countenance is like an open book.
I saw the hero's head, too, where conviction breathed and shone.

A man who shall conviction gain shall never lose his way.
Whereas the doubter is to copying and guessing prone.

The liar is a hypocrite, a man without belief.
Wake, heedless one, and may your apathy be overthrown.

O you who claim the lover lacks belief, come join the faith!
Thus to abuse the lover is a shame. Such lies disown!

Since men began to blame Nesimi for his love for you,
He has become a man of fame, throughout the world he's known.

With yourself content, O heart, another love do not desire.
Love and cherish but yourself, another love do not desire.

Since the world is treacherous, whom shall you find loyal and true?
In this world of perfidy a lover true do not desire.

In the garden world of thorns a single bloom cannot be found.
Hold your tongue! A flowerbed in barren lands do not desire.

Pure gold is the sage's wisdom and his learning—a true coin.
Know what gold is and true coinage from a rogue do not desire.

Since to "God, reveal yourself!" the answer "No, I shall not!" came,
Seek God's face within yourself! Another face do not desire.

Do not trust the legislator who denies this God exists.
He, like Satan, will not bow. To be with him do not desire.

Words of purity, my heart, you'll hear from lips truly devout,
Not from lips of lying men. To be with them do not desire.

Like a rotting corps the world is. Who would have it is a cur.
Be not such a scavenger and carrion do not desire!

There is poison in the sherbet of the mortal world, beware!
Drinking it will bring no benefit. This drink do not desire.

Mark my words: to love the world is a great burden, it transpires.
O unburdened one, to burden passion thus do not desire!

O Nesimi, since you cannot find a true friend anywhere,
Keep this secret! To reveal your mysteries do not desire!

You alone, my love, suffice. For other friends I have no need.
One true friend, not two, a man has. Two friends may there never be!

Parting from you grieves my soul, O flower fair of Paradise!
May spring blossom, but a thorn between us may there never be!

True the road is that a true friend offers you. Upon it stay!
May the man who shows the road of Truth in fetters never be!

You whose face is blossom in the gardens eight of Paradise,
May your flower garden without leaves and roses never be!

May the man who, not content to see you, asks for something more,
Never reach the goal he seeks and happy may he never be!

Grief at parting from you makes me sleepless, fills my eyes with tears.
May the foe grow parched and die, successful may he never be!

With your love I've made alliance, with your grace a compact sealed
And no other compact or alliance may there ever be!

On the gallows of your locks, O queen, was hung the wise Mansur.
But for one who's not Mansur a gallows may they never be!

Now that by your eyes, love, I am stricken with a sickness sweet,
Smitten by your eye-narcissus may no other ever be!

O Nesimi, watch lest secrets unto strangers you reveal.
Secrets that a friend may know of, known to foes must never be!

I yearn to see you once again. O fount of life, come hither
By further absence do not cause me pain! O soul, come hither!

The sherbet of your absence is so sharp I cannot drain it.
O you whose sugar lips heal my infirmity, come hither!

A lover lives in hell when he is far from his beloved.
O you whose face is Paradise's garden fair, come hither!

Because I miss the amber perfume of your distant tresses,
I am distraught. O you whose locks flow sadly free, come hither!

The yearning of my soul has drowned me in a sea of weeping.
O smiling rosebud, do not make me weep so hard! Come hither!

The tears I shed engulf me in an overwhelming torrent.
O you with fairy face, O slender cypress-tree, come hither!

No sooner has your arrow-lash of love my heart invaded
Than blood comes surging from my heart into my eyes. Come hither!

The cruel burden of your absence crushes and torments me.
Where is your help, O blessing fair of mercy's grace? Come hither!

Word of the beauty of your face around the world is spreading.
O sower of confusion in our century, come hither!

So I may gaze by night and day upon your face and tresses,
With fervent passion I peruse the Holy Book. Come hither!

Since to your love his soul entire Nesimi has surrendered,
Imprisonment and dungeon drear are naught to him. Come hither!

See how my heart is wounded by our separation inhumane,
See how my breast is sorely pressed and torn by bitter grief and pain.

Come, show some grace to one who loves you and in sorrow languishes!
O idol mine, to grant this favour may your heart of marble deign.

Since ever I first heard about your ruby lips, O idol mine,
Your holy flame I bow to, like an angel, time and time again.

What way or means is there for me to shun the pain and injury?
For loved ones ever taunt their lovers, causing injury and pain.

The bitter grief that you occasion poisons and is wounding me.
Don't leave your lover sick and ailing! What the cure is, ascertain!

Her coquetry, rebukes and playfulness consume my pining heart.
Towards her lover such behaviour all the time she does maintain.

How can I possibly compare your beauty to the sun and moon?
Before your beauty sun and moon are tiny stars that shine in vain.

No benefit a man derives from lies, pretence or Sufi views
If he is eager non-intoxicating wine like this to gain.

Her beauty takes me prisoner, consumes my soul in flames of love.
See what a stir is caused by her to whom such graces appertain!

I've cast my boat into the ocean of the love I feel for you.
O come and bring it to the shore, because it seeks the shore to gain!

Because Nesimi's soul and body from the tresses' dust derive,
Back to the source they'll go and to that dust they must return again.

Absence burns away my breast, my heart is bleeding. Come to me!
Come! The contemplation of your face is healing. Come to me!

Bliss and comfort, orchards and the flower gardens of the world
In your absence, queen of beauties, are a prison. Come to me!

Separation from your rosy lips desired to burn my soul.
But upon your lips is God's life-giving moisture. Come to me!

Look, the soul whose constant dream was merging into one with you
By desire is burned entire and sick from parting! Come to me!

Merging with you is the soul within my soul. When cruel fate
Separation bade, poor thing, it languished lifeless. Come to me!

For the lover there's no fairer flower garden than your face.
With no rose how can there be a flower garden? Come to me!

Fascinated by your cheeks and by the wonder of your hair
Scrub and prickly bush have turned to rose and basil. Come to me!

Keen desire to see you drowns my soul in parting's endless woes.
See what great injustice has become your absence! Come to me!

Your slim beauty shames and stirs the splendid tree of Paradise
And from you, O cypress-tree, it learns new graces. Come to me!

Since Nesimi knows of no substantiality but you,
Meeting, parting, faith and heresy are one. So come to me!

Ever since predestination separated me from you,
In my soul amazement reigns and consternation. Come to me!

In your ruby lips the spring of living water hidden lies.
In your casket-mouth pearl-teeth and tongue of coral hidden lie.

Even though it is in words that first your sugar mouth reveals
Your lips' secrets, still within your lips do hidden secrets lie.

Soul within my soul, you cause me sorrow. Yet my soul is glad,
O my love, for all the time your soul within mine hidden lies.

Your dark eyes have hurled the arrows of their lashes at my soul.
From my heart the blood is dripping, but the wound there hidden lies.

What's the wonder if your face is hidden in your musky locks?
In the veil of night the gleaming moon forever hidden lies.

O unknowledgeable doctor, give up hope of healing me!
For within a lover's heart love-sickness always hidden lies.

O my love, Nesimi is content to pine for love of you,
For the remedy within his pining for you hidden lies.



For the sherbet of your lips the very spring of life did thirst.
For the moisture of your pearls my soul was eagerly athirst.

Is there anyone who is not thirsting for your smiling lips?
It's not only smiling tulips for your smiling two lips thirst.

When the morning breezes blew towards your amber-scented locks,
For a lovers' meeting with you did the fresh sweet basil thirst.

Keen the sugar was to savour the sweet flavour of your words.
O how sweet your words must be if sugar cane for them should thirst!

O my heart is bleeding from the suffering and pains of love!
It would seem that my beloved for my heart's blood is athirst.

Shall your anger have no limit? Pity for your lover show!
It is for your pity that your captive lover is athirst.

I am lovesick. Mercy show! Come, understand your lover's state!
You who have the healing touch, to meet you is my heart athirst.

Paragon of beauty, tripping daintily and coyly, come!
For the blessed dust upon your feet my eyes do keenly thirst.

O Nesimi, cast your words upon the ocean as a gift.
There to greet and heed your words the pearl and jewel are athirst.

Your dusky tresses breathing musk for both worlds I shall not exchange.
Your brief kiss for a thousand pleasant lifetimes I shall not exchange.

Your eyes' dark glances are for me a testament and guarantee.
The secrets of the firm world for chimeras vain I'll not exchange.

My rival says: "Give me today's love! Take tomorrow for yourself!"
An hour spent with my love for a whole epoch I shall not exchange.

My soul has found a dwelling in her curls where love is in its place.
This dwelling for the whole of space and being I shall not exchange.

The joys and blessings of the world may be of use, but in the end
They do the lover harm—and good for evil I shall not exchange.

When my beloved spoke, there was no doubt she has a tiny mouth.
The witness of my eyes for supposition I shall not exchange.

O you who have compared her figure to the plane and cypress tree.
The tree of Paradise for inert objects I shall not exchange.

O you so loud in praise of pearls, who think the sapphire of great price.
The pearl I've found for scores of mines and oceans I shall not exchange.

Love's happening to a disciple seems hypocrisy and guile.
Accept this truth: I harm no one and hurt for hurt I'll not exchange.

Nesimi's words have an aroma sweet as the Messiah's breath.
So hold them dear! My words for a life gratis I shall not exchange.

The moon to take a crescent form your sickle brows invite.
The blushing tint of the red rose your rosy cheeks excite.

So sweet the mouth is which great nature made for you at birth
That Heaven's spring is shy to see your lips so crystal-bright.

The crescent moon may draw its light reflected from the sun,
But look, the sun itself from your moon-face acquires its light!

Observe the wonderfully strange condition of your moles!
Don't ask a man who's unaware of this about his plight.

The tale your tresses tell is long, their secret is exact.
Your mole will give the answer if you doubt that this is right.

How fair her beauty and her face! My God their guardian be!
On seeing such perfection thought is disconcerted quite.

I burn in cruel flames. O sovereign, see what I endure!
I'm ill from all the torment that your moving lips excite.

Although her cruelty to me is bitter, I prefer
Her cruelty to any rival's honey of delight.

Though fate will not provide Nesimi with a shawl to wear,
He needs no shawl nor anybody's satin in his plight.

For one who longs to meet you, soul and world are not worth having.
For one who drinks from Kevser spring, this soul is not worth having.

Your love suffices lovers. Can asceticism help them?
For one who knows this bliss, that harm, the harm is not worth having.

For one who has beheld your face, O Paradise's garden,
The flowerbeds and halls of Paradise are not worth having.

For one who has a soul that lives—as God shall live—forever,
A mortal body serves no purpose. It is not worth having.

For one who contemplates your moon-face and your crescent eyebrows,
The sun at sundown and the moon aloft are not worth having.

For one who knows your secret heart—a pearl of human beauty,
The sea, a jewel mine, the universe are not worth having.

For men of moral greatness dreaming of your plane-tree figure,
The cypress growing idly in the field is not worth having.

The men of Truth with their own eyes saw fact become authentic.
For one who's gained the Truth, mistakes and doubts are not worth having.

Nesimi is found everywhere. He has no settled dwelling.
For one whom walls cannot contain, a home is not worth having.

See, the cunning world is keeping my beloved far from me.
Grief has left me with a wounded heart. Come, cleave my breast and see!

Separation from my love consumes me, but what can I do?
All my strength and patience gone, I groan in sorrow. Come and see!

In the fire of love—I do beseech you—do not burn my soul!
I, like Moses, keenly wish to contemplate you, look and see!

For my ills you are the balm. Who else can put an end to pain?
You alone can rid me of my painful sickness, look and see!

Your face is the lover's faith, your tresses—they are his Koran.
This is my religion—with a belt I'm girded, look and see!

Flower of Heaven—that's her face, the Holy Ghost—her nightingale!
You who love this bloom, the garden is in flower, look and see!

If I should be hung for saying "I am God!", why should I grieve?
Was not Mansur also hung upon the gallows? Look and see!

Parting from you cuts my heart to shreds in sorrow. From these wounds,
O beloved, blood is flowing from my eyes. O look and see!

O my smiling bud, from underneath your veil come forth at last,
For in loving you I have by thorns been wounded. Look and see!

Since his loved one scared Nesimi with the splendour of her love,
Many jealous rivals in the fir: have fallen. Look and see!

In me burns the fire of love. My tear-filled eyes from weeping smart.
Pain of absence from you has inflicted wounds upon my heart.

Enemies upbraid me and reproach me with my love for you.
There's no sense in stoning one who's smitten by misfortune's dart.

Grief has made my heart grow weak, it has become a crescent moon
Since I saw your brows which are the lunar crescent's counterpart.

Since my heart began to ache for you, O solace of my soul,
In grief's kitchen I've been drinking beverages sour and tart.

Tangled in your tresses was my leaping heart, but did not know
It was for your locks so many lovers from their heads did part.

O my idol, all within me—moist and dry—has burst in flame,
Kindled by the fire of love for you that blazes in my heart.

Grief has parched and shrunk my patience. All my life I sit and moan.
What shall heal my sickness? What advice can you, my friends, impart?

With the pain of being parted from you I so weak have grown
There's no artist now can tell the features of my face apart.

Nesimi has died of love for you and from this world departs.
In this world stay with your dreams and may long life delight your heart!

Fires of love consume my soul, but you can make me whole. Where are you?
Soul within my soul you are. My soul is seeking you. Where are you?

With the wine of assignation into ecstasy you threw me.
Raging heat I feel within me. Cooling fount of life, where are you?

O rich store of beauty's favours, I am burning. Let me see you!
For there's none but you from whom this boon I can receive. Where are you?

Destiny that promised much has wrested from my grasp your tresses.
Like Medjnun I am distraught and bitterly I weep. Where are you?

O fair beauty, swept by passion strong my yearning eyes are burning.
Tears of blood I shed for you. O graceful cypress tree, where are you?

O you of the rosebud mouth, the thorn of separation galls me.
Come, for blood fills like a rosebud my deserted soul. Where are you?

Of my eyes you are light. For sight of you my soul is thirsting.
Maiden fair, like Paradise your beauty charms me. Say, where are you?

To your fragrant tresses' chains Nesimi has his heart surrendered.
So what need has he of other fetters and of jail? Where are you?

O you grown dazed and drunken from the wine remissness pours.
If you have seen the Truth, where is its argument and cause?

To seek to be a miser is the fit pursuit of fools.
Do that which must be done, think well and foolishness abhor!

Whatever you shall sow you shall eventually reap.
Beware of sowing in the world dissension and discord!

Desist from deeds of wickedness, do noble deeds, because
God with his grace and blessing such behaviour rewards.

Do not devote your time to idle tasks of no account.
A life in this world wasted, in the next you shall deplore.

A bankrupt man may trade without a penny to his name,
But all his efforts are in vain and he no profit draws.

Since ailments congregate upon a body that is lame,
Aim to be perfect, for perfection is not prone to flaws.

Do not succumb to sorrow for the world that we despise,
For no one in the world has found a balm to heal this sore.

Renounce all greed and envy, far remove yourself from these,
For saved shall be the soul which from such infamy withdraws.

Since this is the commandment God has given, bow to man
But not to Satan! Follow God's instructions and his laws!

Discard the garb of demon, be a follower of life!
To seek this happiness sublime is not an easy cause.

Do not, Nesimi, be a slave of this too mortal world,
For of our faith the emirate and sultanate are yours.

From one who trades his tongue I turn away in disgust.
He is untruthful. His confessions I do not trust.

A man who is sincere unites his tongue and his heart.
The false man does no good. Reject the liar I must.

Sheer pain are worldly riches. So be wary, my heart!
The world and all its riches be they thoroughly cursed!

The man whose heart the mortal world has stolen away
Has not found love. His life's ambitions lie in the dust.

Who would be like Mansur seeks neither pulpit nor throne.
Into the noose of love sublime his neck he shall thrust.

The favours of the world are but a mouldering corpse.
O heart so pure, don't soil your hands with carrion thus!

God knows your deeds. Be patient, grieve not! Free of all cares
Live out your span and bear all ills with spirit robust.

No rose but has its thorns. No pleasure but has its grief.
The world's rose is not worth it. Leave the rose on the bush!

Nesimi grieves and Fazlullah has knowledge of this.
To no one else Nesimi need his secrets entrust.





RUBAIYAT

As substance is the world's fundamental state,
So unity do all things reiterate.
A man who is unconcerned I call a horse:
He plays the knight, but finds he is check and mate.

»

A victim I of the bow your brows have bent.
Your figure's charm is my heart's bewilderment.
The Sovereign One is your wonder's argument
Who made you the starting-point of all movement.

»

Beloved of my soul, dearest friend, are you.
Of Truth divine a scroll, dearest friend, are you.
A sage among the wise, dearest friend, are you.
A pearl that unifies, dearest friend, are you.

»

Come, answer my question now! What does "faith" mean?
And "ordinance", "fast", "prayer"—what do they mean?
And how can a man who has never foreseen
The time of his death know what "soul" and "love" mean?

Cupbearer, pass me a cup with graces due,
Drink to bring joy, bid your sufferings adieu.
If only divine words—not wine—we may use,
In every religion these words should be true.

»

Deep into the essence of form if you go,
The meaning of essence and form you shall know.
At reason's fair mirror a stone do not throw:
If this mirror's broken there follows much woe.

»

Flower, come in glory fresh from Paradise,
Smile again, illumine the spring that purifies!
Sovereign of the world, your beauty all enslaves.
Who shall say you are not God before our eyes?

»

From the world of men my heart has turned away,
From a carefree dream awoken to the day.
All the pain it caused it views in deep dismay
And with faith in truth to Truth it seeks the way.

God into dough then moulded water and earth,
Fashioned a man to mirror the universe,
Naming as sultan—beauty, as vizir—love.
Lover, beloved, love in unity merged.

•

God is within me, this is the truth I tell.
Note how obliquely I do these secrets tell.
True to my path, "Be true!" are the words I spell.
I am Mansur. "I'm God!"—ever this I tell.

•

God's Truth is seen in the features of your face.
Ascension is in your tresses and your face.
O you whose cheeks are a portent and a light,
O you, slim Paradise—tree with Heaven's face!

•

How like the crescent moon are your arching brows!
Deceit and wiles begin with your arching brows.
The lover is raided by your arching brows
And China they shall invade, your arching brows.



If you keep vigil, let eyes with knowledge shine.
If you are sober, then must you sip love's wine.
If you seek Truth, then a carefree life decline.
If you rule others, your selfishness resign.

✧

I gave my heart to one who is straight and true.
I gave my heart to one who has eyes of blue.
I gave my heart to one like the sun to view.
I gave my heart to one with a moon-face, too.

✧

I have found the Truth of God. "I'm God!" I state.
I am God. In me is God. The truth I state.
Notice how distinctly I this secret state!
And my words are truthful—this I frankly state.

✧

I have plunged in a sea I can never cross.
I have come on a treasure which has no loss.
I have entered a town with no ruined vaults.
I have found a moon that possesses no faults.

In science I am become a boundless sea.
Of secrets divine become the treasury.
In love I am smitten overwhelmingly,
In body become spirituality.

It brings back the dead to life—your utterance,
Creates with a "B" and "E"—your utterance,
Makes nightingales sick for love—your utterance,
And with "I am God!" concludes your utterance

It's from God that I come with tidings of glee,
I beheld there an "L," and "O", "V" and "E".
And in all eighteen thousand worlds did I see
The Divinity: all-pervading is he.

It's to beauty's queen I have given my heart,
To a two-week moon I have given my heart,
Since to Fazlullah I have given my heart,
It's to Allah, too, I have given my heart

I've yielded my heart to one whose dark eyes swoon.
I've yielded my heart to one whose rose-lips cool.
I've yielded my heart to one who's like the moon.
I've yielded freely my heart to a whirlpool.

»

Know, O man, that the mercy of God is man,
That the lord of the universe, too, is man,
That the summit of all Creation is man,
That the master of earth and heaven is man.

»

Know, your being is of Solomon the throne.
Hold it in esteem, it is the sultan's throne.
God your body moulded as your soul's own throne.
For the scales of Judgement God shall choose this throne.

»

Like musk from the land of China are your moles.
Like grain in the snare of sorrow are your moles.
Like purity's fragrant censer are your moles.
A ruler in Byzantine lands are your moles.

Like sugar, sweet idol of mine, are your lips.
Like honey and exquisite sweetmeats—your lips.
The life-giving waters of Heaven—your lips.
A jewel of purple sapphire are your lips.

◊

Love for a ravishing beauty fills my heart.
Love, though I never will meet her, fills my heart.
Love for a lucky moon-beauty fills my heart.
Love for a silver-breast idol fills my heart.

◊

Love made my heart on aimless journeys start.
Deep wounds her eyelashes made in my heart.
For long I sought a balm for wounds that smart.
I find her lips know best the healing art.

◊

Many years their course have run and fled from view.
Never did I come upon a love so true.
O my love, he dwells in highest heaven, who
All the day and all the night aspires to you.



Now, as long ago, for you I pine and rave,
And in chains behold this heart of mine—your slave.
Absence from you leads me to a sickness grave.
You know what I need: your sympathy I crave.

O mindless hermit, blind to yourself withal,
In splendid secrets you are not versed at all.
May not these secrets to sundry rivals fall.
A true friend's secret should not be known to all.

O mistress, slender cypress is your frame.
A life-giving breath to lovers is your frame.
To Paradise flowers I compare your frame.
To boughs of the Tuba tree compare your frame.

O moon-faced beauty, the face of God unveil!
From your face does the sun's own radiance hail.
A man who has the Koran may well explain
Why such a shyness between us should prevail.

O my idol, your eyes are all artfulness.
Your sly brows and your lashes are artfulness.
Your ambrosial tresses are artfulness.
Every hair of your curly locks—artfulness.

One morning I walked in a garden of bliss
And saw there a tulip bear Djenshid's chalice.
I heard there a whispering lily insist:
The minute that matters, that matters is this.

O skilful physician whose own health is frail,
You know the cure for my heart in its travail.
O you to whose beauty I'm a willing slave,
With dalliance why must you my heart assail?

O you in whose features Heaven I desery.
The sun and the moon your beauty glorify.
O you in whose locks musk, amber, aloes vie,
The smoke from your love is rising in the sky.

O you in whose locks of night the moon feels shame,
The moon is obscured by your sun-face's flame.
Life without love for you merits not the name.
Worship that's not of you merits only blame.

O you who by your beauty confound the moon,
Your fragrant hyacinth locks enfold your moon.
You are eternal sun, O gleaming moon!
To be your beauty's shadow God made the moon.

O you whose face is the everlasting sun,
O you from whose lips the holy waters run!
Be blessed of God, my friend, enchanting one.
The sacrifice of my soul, pray, do not shun.

O you whose face puts Paradise nymphs to shame,
O you whose brows put the gleaming moon to shame,
O you whose lips the life-giving water shame,
O you whose cheeks sweet basil and roses shame!

O you whose pristine beauty shall ever glow,
Your features in myself their reflection show.
Your crescent-moon brows shall ever bend their bow.
Your sun never sink to the horizon low.

O you whose unrivalled beauty I survey,
Your brows are a bow, your arrow-lashes slay.
Your tresses such amber perfume give away
Your beauty is heralding the Judgement Day.

People of reason know the soul is your chin.
Sweet with the scent of Chinese musk is your chin.
Blest goal of pilgrimage is this, your chin.
It is the holiest shrine for me, your chin.

Suddenly a queen assailed me with love's dart,
Like the moon, serene and fair in every part.
Ever since I vowed to Fazlullah my heart
I have found the way, the path to Truth I chart.

Sugar and honey are reproached by your lips.
Sapphire and ruby owe their hues to your lips.
May they enjoy life eternal—your lips!
Friends of your features and moles are your lips.

♦

Supreme God is himself humanity's son.
Of God's words thirty-two letters are the sum.
The whole of the world is the All-holy One,
And man—a soul whose countenance is the sun.

♦

The checks of the ravishing bride, our heart's thief,
Are freshly plucked hyacinth, sweet-basil leaf.
If soul stirs a body there cannot be grief.
A soul that's in love finds in loved ones relief.

♦

The core of the pearls of meaning are your teeth.
They wander across the universe—your teeth.
They saw Incomparable God, did your teeth
And thirty-two secret signs they know—your teeth

The drinker of purest wine purity gains.
The drinker of dregs a cure for his illness gains.
Whoever shall take a love that lies and feigns
Acquires for his soul a hundred thousand pains.

o

The faith'of a lover are your charming eyes,
The gaze of narcissus slumbering—your eyes,
As ever malevolent and sly—your eyes,
My heart is appalled and saddened by your eyes.

o

The flowers of Doomsday garden are your face.
The Paradise fountain to your lips I trace.
The lover deprived of merging with your grace
Shall feel as if fires of hell did him embrace.

o

The fragrance of musk is amassed in your moles.
The perfume reveals where they linger, your moles.
They've robbed Hindustan of its treasure, your moles.
Of Byzantine lands they are sultan, your moles.

*

The full moon envies the beauty of her brow.
A willing slave to Jupiter is her brow.
There's nothing bears comparison with her brow.
The sun is no competitor with her brow.

*

The Holy Koran, O my soul, are your words,
Its whole argument, O my soul, are your words.
Like essential Truth, O my soul, are your words,
All body and soul, O my soul, are your words.

*

The lover, he lives in the world that we span.
In mourning is he who this world cannot scan.
The true "hidden treasure" of God lies in man.
The wine in Djemshid's cup of wisdom is man.

*

The lover's heart is stabbed by your eyelashes,
Bewitching arrows dart from your eyelashes.
Like Tartar raiders battle your eyelashes,
They sell the world for a song—your eyelashes.

*

The lover should be in turmoil, ever stir,
Should wander, seeking his love, and sigh for her.
Who would everlasting happiness prefer?
He faces your bow-brow darts without demur.

*

The man who your lips to sweet sugar compares
Yourself to young Farhad's Queen Shirin compares,
Your stance to a cypress or box-tree compares,
Your eyes to oppressors and tyrants compares.

*

The master of secrets has cast down the veil.
What lies there discover, look under the veil.
See man there, acknowledge him, study him well.
No beast can the secrets of mankind assail.

*

The moon-face idol with thickest brows appears.
A quiver full of arrow-lashes appears.
With eyes that have drunk divine wine she appears.
Her lashes and brows are six. Behold, she nears!

There's no sacrifice for him that I shall shun.
His great stature has my firm allegiance won.
His disturbing truth around the world has run.
Still a fool can't see that Fazlullah is one.

◊

The slender cypress is by your body shamed.
The damask rose by your rosy lips is shamed.
Amber and musk by your fragrant locks are shamed.
Sugar and honey by your sweet lips are shamed.

✧

The soul of the world is Adam, it is man.
Who does not respect him, short shall be his span.
The secret of all the universe go scan
Where God set a seal—upon the brow of man.

✧

The sun and the moon bow down before your face.
Your locks put the musk of China in disgrace.
Your face, God be witness, is God's dwelling place.
In the land of beauties you are sovereign grace.

The sun is moth to your face's taper tall.
Your soul is an ocean shell, your face—the pearl.
Your ruby lips are honey, your eyes—a cup,
The mosque and tavern—your swooning lovers all.

♦

The West and the East hear the message of God.
And where is the lover aspiring to God?
A devil is he who is blind to God's Truth
And he who does not perceive man to be God.

♦

They stab at my soul—your dagger eyelashes.
They master my heart's domain—your eyelashes.
For blood they are thirsting—these your eyelashes.
The whole of the world they seize—your eyelashes.

♦

To sweet amber tresses I've given my heart.
To lips that refresh I have given my heart.
To the surge of her brows I've given my heart.
To how taut a bow have I given my heart!

Unveiled was the face of the stealer of hearts.
Her own light illumined the stealer of hearts.
O you who seek treasure, God's treasure was seen
As man on the face of the stealer of hearts.

*

Water of life is the soul of her lips,
Body and soul are the life of her lips,
Balm for my sickness—the speech of her lips.
Deep in my soul—the safe place for her lips.

*

Who shall gaze at you and stay indifferent,
Never shall he drink the moisture heaven-sent.
Silver-breasted fairy, mark me and relent.
Never may grief's army to my heart be sent.

*

With yearning for my love my heart is wrung.
Dark are her eyes, her brows together strung.
When she displays caprice, I'll not be stung
But sacrifice my soul, for she is young.



Художник *Э. Лазымов*.
Художественный редактор *А. Воловик*.
Технический редактор *А. Аскерова*.

ИБ № 1618.

Сдано в набор 02. 08. 1983 г. Подписано к печати
10. 09. 1983 г. Формат бумаги 60×84¹/₁₆. Физ. п. л.
4,5. Условн. п. л. 4,18. Учетн.-изд. л. 2,07. Заказ
№ 745. Тираж 1 000. Цена 40 коп.

Государственный комитет Азербайджанской ССР
по делам издательства, полиграфии и книжной
торговли.

Издательство «Язычы». 370088. Баку, проспект
Кирова, 18.

Типография им. 26 бакинских коминтернов 370005.
Баку, ул. Али Байрамова, № 3.

A-24003

Имамеддин Насими

«ПОЭЗИЯ»

(на английском языке)

Баку—1984

Издательство «Язычы», 370088, Баку, проспект
Кирова, 18.

Типография им. 26 бакинских комиссаров, 370005,
Баку, ул. Али Байрамова, 3.