THE POISON OF LOVE

Praise for God

Write pen first the praise of beneficent God,
For it is He alone who is present in every place.
This worshipped power is eternal
Whatever else is, is transient
There is no equal to him, no close companion
All others are recent, none is ancient.

Praise of the Prophet

How can praise of Muhammad come on the tongue?
How can the ocean be contained in a pitcher?
How can anyone know about the real power of Muhammad?
Either Ali knows or God knows.

Praise of People coming in next Rank

If one were to open one's month in praise of the lion (Ali)
There is no place of speech further than that.
Whoever understood the greatness (rank) of Ali?
On the one hand very few men, and on the other hand only God.

Account of Love

From the time when the world (garden of invention) was made
God bestowed every (appropriate) thing to every creature.
He gave colour and beauty to the rose,
Pain and lamentation to the nightingale,
Radiance to the moon, beauty to its halo,
The eye to the narcissus, the scar to the poppy.
He bestowed uprightness to the pine
Curls to the hyacinth, lustre to the pearl.
He gave hardness (in) to the hearts of all idols
He gave love to the water and clay (very nature) of man
What human being is devoid of love?
It (which) has made house upon house empty
In it (love) people lie at death's door
It raises blisters on the liver (heart)
Those who were acquainted with all the proper ways
of doing things
It made those beautiful ones sift the dust
(wander in the desert)
To entertain any hope of it (love) is vain
Look at the treatment it meted out to brother Majnun
It did not allow anyone to utter complaint
It singled out and struck down the finest of the young men
He for whom it showed a little affection
It struck him down first
It burns one with the fire of separation
It sets fire (even) to water
It has killed lovers of beauty
It has caused poison to be eaten by the beautiful
May God not put (one) in its power
There is not the slightest compassion in its heart.

The beginning of the story

I write a strange story
I write a wonderful story
The story is so fresh
That it brings astonishment to the hearers
In the mubulla where our house was
In the very same one lived a merchant
A man of noble family, and a possessor of wealth
He held perfect honour among traders
Because of his freedom from trouble he knew no grief
He was of a very exalted family
He had a daughter whose brow was as clear as the moon
She hadn’t been married anywhere
She didn’t possess a peer in beauty (appearance)
She was the envy of the houri, in very truth
She was the green tree of the flower of youth
(Compared with her) the beauty of Joseph was only a story
Even at this age and year she was of perfect good disposition
Her walk and bearing reached the limits of grace.
May the evil eye be far; she had such beautiful eyes -
Eyes which were the envy of the eye of the gazelle of China
Since her mother and father feared the evil eye
They did not look their fill at her (filling their eye)
In her time she was unrivalled
She had a nice voice, great beauty, and was well spoken
In the city there was nobody to equal her
Among hundreds of thousands her beauty was outstanding
She had a liking for composing poetry
She was keen on reading and writing
The body of that rose was so garment-adorning
Her dress was simple, but there were a hundred graces
She was the light of (her parents’) eyes, and the ease of their hearts.
She was the joy of her parents’ life
One day when clouds came over the sky (and) a sort of darkness spread in all directions.
When the clouds, having rained, cleared up
And then a rainbow appeared in the heaven
I got tired of just sitting
And went up on the roof to see the sights
After my dejection, I began to be amused
I began to stroll this way and that
When having lifted my gaze I looked in one direction
In front of me was that daughter of the merchant
There were also two or three girl-companions with her
They were looking at the pleasant sight of the sky
They were walking a little below the parapet
They laughed and joked amongst themselves
Then that rose-faced one remained alone
She looked in every direction to enjoy the view
When her and my glance met
A sigh escaped my mouth spontaneously
The state of my heart cannot be described
I exercised all my self-control; otherwise
I'd have swooned

Although there was no conversation between the two of us
The spirit in my body became restless
The arrow of love hit its mark (effectively)
Tears flowed freely
She stood, a radiant moon, before me
I stood there silent as a picture
I could not muster the endurance to look upon her to this extent:
That I could not call her by even a gesture
I looked at her again and again
I was absorbed in the beauty of the loveliness of my beloved

Although I kept restraining (my heart)
I couldn't control my heart
In this way when evening came
A maid-servant brought a message to her
"You are sitting here to no good purpose;
you have become miserable
Your dear mother sends for you
The wind moves the hair on your cheek
Come along now, twilight has come (is coming)"
Having heard this message from the mouth of the servant
The flower-like one went down from the roof
Now her radiance was no longer visible
I went down too weeping
I died many deaths from evening to morning
I passed that night with great difficulty
A running sore was opened up in my heart from grief
From that day this custom established itself:
During the day to go onto the roof a hundred times
To see, to watch, and to come back down
When I did not see that flower-faced one up there
Tears came from excessive grief and fell
However much I tried, my heart could not become hard
This coming and going became a means of comfort
When several days passed and on account of sorrow my cheeks became quite yellow
Then my condition became so miserable
As though I had been an invalid for years.
I was forgetful of myself with grief
The seal of silence was put on my lips
The strength of self control deserted my heart.
I dashed my head with a thump whenever I wished
I bore grief of a hundred (lit. 100,000) sorts
My lips were silent, the tears flowed
My condition became changed for the worse from separation
My appearance altogether changed from grief
(Everyone, whether) my own (relative) or (people)
unrelated, became astonished (at my condition)

Whoever saw me did not recognise me
When my parents saw this state of affairs
Their spirit took flight from their body
(My mother) asked me: "What is this state you're in?
On which side have you fixed your thoughts?
Tell me true, about whom are your thoughts?
In your heart, my dear, is grief for whom?
For which flame-faced one do you eat grief?
That you melt like a candle
Your face is sallow like the eryxvan flower
Your clothes are tattered like ketan
On which moon-faced one do you die?
Tell me true whom do you love?
Tell me this, what moon-browed one has met you?
What such beauty has met you?
You neither eat, drink, nor sleep
Daily you are constantly getting up and weeping at night
I do not know who that hag (harlôt) is
Who has reduced my child to this state?
She who would torment the life of my child
I would sacrifice her seven times
Bearing all difficulties we reared you
You in this way put our (your) life in misery
I did not regard (understand) day as day,
   nor night as night
Because of you I made my days bitter
With what care and trouble did we bring you up, my dear
What vow was there which we did not make?
I used to put a light in the mosques
Having gone to the shrine, I used to make an offering
Now that by God's grace you have become a man
You have become so independent my dear, (that) -
Yes young sir the truth is this by God's glory -
You are deliberately harassing us
Thus we tread warily
Whereas you now dedicate yourself to (fall
   in love with) everybody
Here are we weeping in grief and sorrow
You ruin (lose) your life for strangers
We had no idea that the day would come when
You would dash all our hopes like this.
When I see your deplorable condition
The blood in my body becomes dry
Do not thus destroy the vigour of youth
Do not reduce your parents to a sad plight
Well say something to us of the condition of your heart
Whose beauty has pleased you?
By whom is your heart distracted?
Tell us the truth, for whom is this infatuation?
How distressed your heart has become within two days!
What is this state of my little boy?
Just pick up the mirror and look at yourself
See how emaciated your face has become in two days!
You have no concern for eating nor for drinking
What hope then can there be that you will live?
In love for whom have you made your condition like this?
And not taken any thought for your parents.
Tell us what grief has afflicted your heart?
Tell us your condition, you good-for-nothing, have you
   lost your tongue?
If in this way you become a madman
The disgrace of it will reach far.
Who will give any care to such a mad one?
Whoever will marry you (to his daughter)?
Who has made you such a vagabond?
So that now no remedy can be made
This was not formerly your custom
From whom have you acquired this (sort of behaviour)?
Looking at you my senses have fled
You have put Laila and Majnun to shame."
I heard these words of my parents
And another dagger struck at my heart
I covered my face for shame
I did not give my mother and father any excuses
This was how my state of affairs passed up to now
Now my account is of her condition
I had been wounded by the arrow of love
But on her heart too was an effect
The two measures of her eyes overflowed
Her heart began to feel uneasy of its own accord
When smoke rose from the tears of love
In no time at all her agitation increased
Her ears began to listen to the complaint of her heart
Her hands and feet began to move restlessly of their own accord
When pain and grief became agreeable to her heart
She couldn't sleep at night as though
she had taken an oath not to
The wave of love began to overwhelm her
A sort of perplexity came into her heart
As day by day her strength began to diminish
The flame of separation began to burn in her heart
As the scars on (of) her heart burned
Warm tears welled from her eyes
On her lips were passionate complaints and deep sighs
In her heart was a sweet sweet pain
Her heart fluttered in her breast
As a bird with its throat cut might writhe
When her condition became completely distressed
She too began to get fever at night
It is true; how should one's heart not be despondent?
When you have not even a confidante with you?
Her distressed heart was not restrained by her restraining
No patience was left in her heart
Since she was fond of reading and writing
Having pondered in her heart, she wrote a love letter
She boldly sent me that letter
From fear she did not write an address*
An old nurse came and secretly
Gave her letter into my hand
When I opened it and looked at it
This was written with marvellous (deep) feeling:
Let this be known to you, after greetings to you
My heart is without peace from the grief of separation
You do not come up onto your flat roof
My heart is greatly distressed
Show your face, for God's sake
Just come onto the roof, for God's sake
May there be the blow of God on this love
Which has made me helpless in its grip in this way.

* [i.e. the equivalent of "Dear So and So"]
Love has caused me to lose all my senses,  
Otherwise would I have written this? by God's Glory  
And now in this what need is there for anyone to produce proof?  
God humiliates whomever he pleases  
Having read the letter, I wrote her this reply  
"How shall I write to you of my miserable state?  
In my case I am almost at death's door  
You have well and truly punished me!  
I have been dragging out my life dying in separation  
Now that you've asked (after me) at last,  
you have been kind to me [i.e. I appreciate your kindness (ironical)]  
From when I first looked at you  
Patience and steadfastness have vanished from my heart  
I am feverish every day  
A jinn remains mounted on my head  
I swear by your feet  
Consciousness does not come for two watches together  
(= I lose consciousness for as long as two watches at a time)  
If someone comes and enquires about my condition  
The distress of my heart is even more  
To how many (lit. whom whom) can I tell this story?  
May fire consume this youth!  
My strength has so departed  
(That) the burden of the grief of separation cannot rise  
(be lifted) (by me)  
I cannot move even to get myself a drink of water  
Otherwise I would have carried out your order (to come up onto the roof)  
If the desire of seeing you had obtained strength  
I would have come onto the roof hundreds of times (in the day) every day  
From the time when your letter arrived  
Some way of life (means of keeping alive) has been established.  
If grief be exchanged for sorrow  
What wonder is it (would it be) if my heart should recover?  
Your initiative which you took with me  
What is there disgraceful in it?  
Nothing in this is your fault  
This is the effect of my love, madam  
It is the effect of my love, by God!  
Otherwise would you have written this?  
May God pardon me (for suggesting it)  
You as everybody knows are executioners  
You do not listen no matter if anyone does complain  
You couldn't care less about anybody's wretched condition  
If anyone dies, what do you care?  
It is not possible that your pride goes  
No matter if your lover's breath (life) expires  
Now this is what I have to write to you, your Highness:  
It is absolutely necessary that you think how a meeting in  
private may be arranged  
If you do not heed this, oh moon-faced one  
My condition will be completely destroyed  
My state is altered (perilous) for the worse by separation  
Now I do not have the strength to bear grief  
A strange calamity has come upon my heart  
If my life is saved, that is evidence of God's power  
At what moment did peace of mind come to my soul?  
When unconsciousness gave me a respite (= departed), fever came
If the burning of my heart made me alert
Forebodings began to come in thousands
If distraction of the heart brought some turmoil
Even those senses that had come to me were lost (again)
If ever friends and acquaintances came
Their tears burst forth when they saw me
The pain in my side (i.e. of my heart) is such an enmity to me
(= so distresses me)
That even movement is in the hand of others (i.e. I cannot move
unless another moves me)

Do not think this a lie, your Highness.
If my life should go, that would be nothing far (from what might
be expected)

If I die, it's from the grief of separation
But I have told you of my condition, haven't I?

Now when you sent this letter
It is incumbent on you that you contrive such a plan
Whereby the hardships of separation should be changed.
'(And) all the yearnings of the heart be realized'

Having given the letter to the nurse I said to her (= the maids)
"Quickly bring the reply to this from her"

When my letter reached her
She laughed and said "Wonderful!"

What a fine set-up!" (Ironical)

Then she wrote this in reply:
"Is some fate gripping you? (=driving you to behave like this?)
What mention of these things was there here (=on my part)?
I wrote this to tease you
When were such things acceptable to me?
Only your trial was acceptable
(=I only wanted to put you to the test)

All I wrote to you was in fact just
Otherwise what had I to do with such things?
What such concern for you had I?
For all I care come onto the roof or not
This thing was completely far from my mind
From my writing lies you have become proud,
If I had been dying of love for you what a terrible thing
it would have been!

[Do you think that] [such a] terrible ill-fortune had befallen
my enemies?

Such an idea about me! What a good joke!
Lies have always been very pleasing to me
Didn't you understand what it was all about? [i.e. that it was a joke?]
Does anybody write to anyone just like that?
Just swallow a black grain
Lay a grain of salt on your understanding
Even if I had been ready to die for you
I would not ever have written like this, God forbid! (God pardon the
thought!)

My life might have expired for all I cared (lit. by my slipper =
meri belas e)

But my nature would not have so changed (as to behave as you imagined
I was)

The only possible outcome of such things is to become disgraced
Now (from now on) please don't write this sort of composition
Grief comes from just this sort of impropriety
Let not a man advance from sensible (proper) bounds.
What were you thinking of to write this subject (kind of thing)?
Such excess is not a good thing
Just tell me what you had planned to do in your heart
Did you think of me as some prostitute or kept woman?
There is no prostitute here (I am no prostitute)
For you to have some affair with
Having seen my letter, you got all excited
You very quickly became joyful
The fact that you became desirous of union with me
Shows that you must always have been a simple soul.

This exchange of letters was kept up for some days
Then my fate became favourable
Promises of union came from that rose
Disharmony disappeared from between us
What she had written she fulfilled
One day she carried out her promise faithfully
The whole night she stayed in my house (lit. having stayed, went)
At the time of morning then saying this she want:
"Please remember everything about this moment
One day you will have to taste the relish (pay the penalty) of it too.
Everything will go to pieces and no solution will be found
Because of you my life will go (= my love for you will cost me my life.)"
Since that envy of the hours loved (me)
She kept up this routine of meeting me
every Thursday she used to go to the shrine
From there that moon used to come to my house
There began to be enjoyment between us
My rivals began to be angry when they heard of this
And then suddenly something happened
For two months that moon did not come
All intercourse between us was finished
Means of tranquillity and peace did not remain
Anxiety came to the heart
Strange perplexity troubled the mind
Worry beyond all bounds was in the heart
As to what could have happened all of a sudden
There was not here enmity for me to anyone (no-one here harboured
any enmity towards me)

Who has stirred up this mischief?
Some such development (story) has taken place
That her coming was not possible
I do not know what has befallen
That she has forgotten my memory
Who is there who can go (may go) to her house?
Whom can I (may I) send to her house?
Why should I not be fed up of living?
I have not seen her for two months
My life has been dragged and come into my eyes
(I'm at death's door)

Now I no longer have the strength to bear separation
As far as possible I have endured (it)
Now tell me to what point is the heart to endure?
When it has not seen the rose for two months
How should peace come to the nightingale?
In what way should the night be passed?
In what way should the restlessness of the heart go
(be banished)?

In what way should one's spirit become interested (in life)?
When the spirit leaves the body
Meanwhile suddenly the new moon festival came
On this pretext she came to the shrine
She was greatly dying for my name (= deeply in love with me)
She came secretly from there to my house  
Since there was not rest from weeping  
She wept as she sighted from her conveyance  
Then having immediately put her arms around my neck  
She began to explain the state of affairs thus:  
My relatives have become aware  
Now there isn't any way of meeting you  
There are consultations going on between them  
They are going to send me to Benares  
That he whom I love (lit. we) should be lost to me.  
How can I adopt such compulsion?  
(accept such cruelty)?  
Although my senses are not in their proper place  
Still I come to say this to you:  
The (this) transient inn (= the world) is a place of warning  
It is the bringer of the death of youth  
Those people who lived in fine lofty buildings  
Are today laid in the narrow grave  
Where the bud and the rose were yesterday  
Today when I saw them they were entirely thorn  
In the garden where there was a throng of nightingales  
Today there is the nest of an owl in that place  
It is a matter of yesterday (it seems only yesterday that we observed that) those who were young,  
And possessors of high rank and fame  
Today neither they nor their house remains  
No trace remains by which their name might be remembered  
Women with foreheads like the moon do not remain the envy of the houris  
If there are houses then the residents do not remain  
Those who were the kings of the seven chains  
One by one they died and became resident under the ground  
No one ever mentions their name now  
Into what grave went Behram?  
Now neither Rustam nor Sam remain  
There is only their name (= fame) that remains  
Those who yesterday had crowns on their head  
Today they are in need of prayers for the dead  
Those who in the world were famous as mighty (= wadser) men  
All their pride has mingled with the dust  
Those who would not rub themselves even with the attar of earth (av. costly scent)  
And who never went out in the heat of the sun  
By the revolving of the sky (passing of time) they were destroyed  
Even their bones have become dust  
Those who were known as Caesar and the Emperor of China  
The trace of their tombs does not remain  
Those in whose crowns jewels were set  
Those (i.e. their) skulls are kicked about  
Those fair ones who were the envy of Joseph in the world  
The sky and the earth have consumed them  
(i.e. time has destroyed all trace of them)  
Every moment there are drastic changes in the world  
This is the way the world works.  
There is no trace of Shirin and Kohkan  
There is not anywhere Nala and Demeayanti  
The fragrance of love is spread everywhere  
Now Majnun and Laila do not remain
In the morning sweet-voiced birds
Recite: All things are mortal
To whom is there escape from death?
Today it is he; tomorrow it is our turn
Life in this world is transient
The essence of life in this world is death
If I too give up my life having eaten poison
Do not weep, I adjure you by my head!
Amuse yourself how among your close companions
Or come to my tomb
Do not go to live far from this house
If I die far away from you
My spirit will wander about if it does not find you
Which way will it go to search for you?
Keep great restraint on your own feelings
Remember my behest
If grief haunts you, suppress it
Mind you do not disgrace me
When you hear the news of my death
Do not come running thoughtlessly
At that moment when my relatives gather together
Then (i.e. and not before) you just come
Mark my words, do not lose your life
Do not weep (as you go along) with the bier
If you become mad
My disgrace will spread far
You may say a hundred thousand things, but people will not
    believe you, and people will know who my lover was
Everybody, rich and poor will scoff
Do not become a devotee and sit at my tomb
Even if 1,000 difficulties confront you
Have regard for my honour
When my relatives take up my bier
Do not shed tears seated there
Please have regard to my earnest supplication
Keep your tongue closed (i.e. silent)
Do not make any mention of me
Do not mention my name with your mouth
Don't shed tears from your eyes.
Go along as though you were a stranger
You are not to give your shoulder to me
    (i.e. not to help carry my coffin)
Do not disgrace me before everyone
Do not let your face change colour
Do not let lamentation escape from your mouth at all
Do not go along with your hair dishevelled
In order that the state of affairs is not revealed to somebody.
These clever people are terrible
People accustomed to divining the truth manage to do so.
If my state is described in some place
Don't you pay any attention in that direction
Having heard mention of me do not cry
Do not cause my honour to sink thus
Bear the grief of separation from me
And begin to set your heart somewhere else (i.e. find a new love)
Nothing is obtained by remembering me.
Occupy your heart with someone else
Do not grieve for me; may I be a sacrifice.
Hear me; if you have your life you have everything.
May God never send it (or him) any pain
The heart of a man is extremely delicate
Do not be anguished having parted with me.
Do not suffocate to death
Having come to my tomb weep
That the pent-up emotion of your heart may be released
Shed a few tears silently
Throw your arms round my tomb
If something comes over you (i.e. if you begin to feel that
your grief can't be restrained)
Read the Koran over my grave
Cause the bud of my heart to bloom
Place two or three flowers on my tomb
Having wept do not let your condition be distressed.
Lest thus you (lit. your enemies) may go mad
See how you can bring about relief
The first stage is difficult
Come daily to my tomb
Do not neglect to perform my Fatiha
The gist of all these words is this;
Throw earth upon me with your own hands
Who weeps for anyone all his life?
Who, sir, becomes anybody's?
If ever you think of me
Reflect: "She became a sacrifice for me"
Do not allow any grief to come to your heart
Imagine to yourself that you had seen a dream
Grief and pleasure are twin in the world
Sometimes there is pleasure and sometimes grief
There is in one place celebration evening and morning
And in another place there is the cry of lamentation and sighing
Who is there who does not await death?
There is no certainty of life
Then let's see whether we shall meet again or not
Today embrace me to your heart's content
Today take a good look at me
Realise all the longings of your heart
Come and kiss me well and truly
That to some extent the fever of your heart may pass
Let no longing remain in your heart
Embracing me well, may I be a sacrifice!
Until doomsday where will this thing be?
Where will I be, where will you be, where will this might be?
Speak and listen (i.e. talk about) whatever comes into your heart
After this God knows what fate may bring us.
Do not grieve your heart
There is nothing gained by weeping and wailing
If you shed tears you will be lamenting over me.
If you torture your heart you will be burying me
You still have your life to live (lit. to row).
You have plenty of days left for weeping
Today use both your arms in an embrace
Whatever yearnings you have, fulfill them today
After this God knows what is the will of God.
Even so short a time is something to be grateful for
Having settled down, tomorrow whom will you kiss (make love to)?
Whom will you be kissing again and again?
Tomorrow with whom will you unite in an embrace?
Whom will you sit in your lap like this?
Having come whose condition will she (i.e. a mmm) talk of?
Whose nurse will come and summon you?
Tomorrow I am leaving this house
Tomorrow I depart this world
Let me remind you of me to this extent as I go:
As I go let me put a pān (betal leaf) ready for you to have
tomorrow

Today what was to be is over
Tomorrow I shall inhabit a corner of a tomb
This kind of enjoyment has been reduced to ashes
After this where will we be, and where this pleasant companionship?
Look on me to your heart's content
Nobody once having died comes back again
Today my life comes to an end.
Today my youth is reduced to dust
Keep silent! why are you weeping in vain?
Why are you losing your life for nothing?
Think of this night as yeberat (cf. Platts - it is a night of
rejoicing and festivity)

I am your guest all night
Comfort will not come to the heart without you
When we part this time we shall not meet again till Judgement Day
Now say just this much prayer for me, my dear
That God may smooth tomorrow's path
I never tasted the fruits of life
I never experienced any of the pleasures of youth
I go with memories of you fixed in my heart
I go from the garden of the world never having achieved my desire
Again and again the courage of love declared:
This is what the honour of love demands
Who would die lying on a bed?
Who would die of useless repining?
Why should one go submerging the name of love in disgrace?
Why should I not lose my life this very day?
As long as the unreliable sky (=treacherous fate) remains
This story will remain as a monument (i.e. people will remember
our story)

Then in alarm she said: "Just wait my dear
Did you hear what (hour) struck this moment?
The assured longing of my heart remains unfilled
And only a little of the night remains to us
Sit me in your lap again, dear
Embrace me again, dear
Put your arms about my neck again
Once more chew pān and put it in my mouth
After this where shall we be, where this companionship?
Once more hold me tightly and kiss me
Lay your head on mine again
Place your cheek on mine again
Then rub your mouth against my mouth like that (i.e. as you did before)
Say those words of love once more
Again my waves of black hair are climbing
Make me smell the fragrance of your hair again
Once more when I rise up, do you make me sit down
Once more when I get cross do you coax me
Once more having bitten your lips, speak (=bite your lips as you speak)
Once more smile a little as you speak
Once more let me take your misfortunes upon myself, my love
Come, let me again take your head to mine
Do not weep unrestrainedly like this
Lest your enemies (=you) get fever
Lest you depart (=die) in your prime
Lest calamity befall from which you cannot recover
Let someone cut my head from my body
But let not a single hair of yours be disturbed
I am devoted to you heart and soul
Having taken your misfortunes upon me, let me die
Now why do you sigh deeply?
Why do you break my heart?
I have not died yet
Why have you made your eyes swell by much weeping?
Why are you becoming full of grief to such an extent?
Why do you destroy your grieving soul?
By weeping continually do not make your condition hopeless
O cruel one, I am still alive!
Your tears are displeasing to me
Don't weep! I have become a sacrifice for you
There are thousands of stories like ours
Do men weep like this anywhere?
Then don't you shed your tears like this
Just keep your heart strong
Do not be at all grieved at my sorrow.
By God! do not be despondent like this
You have become sad already
You have become tired and the destination is still far.
It is this grief that has killed me
It is the heavy blow to you which is unbearable to me
I have no sorrow for my own death
In my heart is only grief for you
I have thrown away my life like this
And (after me) who will comfort your heart
Who will come to calm you down?
Who will embrace you like this?
Who will restrain this temper of yours?
To whom am I to make this last bequest before I go?
(i.e. Who is there on whom I can lay as I go the duty of consoling you for my death?)
Thou' your distress is not unwarranted
There is not even a consoler for you
Where shall I be to help you?
Into whose hand can I put your hand?
Thus who will console you?
I ask you, who will die (make any sacrifice on your account) like me?
And who will make your heart glad like this?
My heart is weak with this grief

But what can I do now about it, unlucky one that I am?
The heavens are far, the earth is hard
Even if I left in disgrace in the end
Still I have been true to my love

(fulfilled all the obligations of love)
I have sacrificed my heart for you.
I have fulfilled the demands of fidelity

Then she said striking her hands on her knees (= sign of helplessness and despair):

"I do not know how much of the night is left now
As he strikes the gong
My heart becomes more and more numb
Let nobody suffer pain and grief like this!
My hands and feet are progressively flowering (— going out of my control)
The state of my soul is becoming something strange
I go to say something, and something else comes out
Tears are welling up in my eyes
All my hands and feet are trembling,
I remonstrate with my heart very much
But my heart does not gain control of itself
Although you are sitting by my side
Still my senses are not in their proper state
Even such senses as have come to me are going
All manner of thoughts come into my heart
May separation from one’s friend never confront (anyone) like this
Let it not fall to the fate even of an enemy
There is now another grief, (namely) this:
The roles we yet have to play are many; the night is too short
It is out of the question to give rest to the lamenting soul
Now shall we make our last will or shall we make love?"
When I heard this I gave her this answer
Enough! do not torture my heart now
You are to give away your life thus, my dear
And I am to hear your last wishes, Great God!
Just keep this intention far from your heart
What wretch plans to bring about these things?
May God not bring the day upon me
When you are to die and I live — God forbid it!
If you will lose your life by taking poison
I too shall die, (I swear) by God
Whoever shall see this shall weep greatly
Our biers will be borne along one behind the other
Just tell me what this is all about
What thought is this that came into your heart of hearts?
You undergo grief in your heart of hearts (— without telling me)
You give up your life; you swallow poison
If grief has come (to you) from your parents
You ought not to grieve over it
Those who are the gentlement of our community
Forgive faults with no trouble at all
(— and you should be like them and forgive your parents for
the grief they have caused you)

A fate like this is not on you alone
Everybody’s parents are executioners.
This sort of misfortune happens to everyone
Does anyone (for that reason) die (commit suicide) by eating poison?
To complain against one’s parents is impermissible
Their right(s) over their children is great
If they (= yyh) become angry, it is Judgement Day (= terrible)
Beneath their feet is Paradise.
You are wise, by God’s grace
And yet you do (lit. did) not recognize their rank (= rights over you)
What certainty is there of their life?
Do not take their words ill
The senses do not remain at (lit. of) this age
(i.e. When people get as old as your parents are they no longer realise
quite what they’re doing)
They are the guests of a day or two
(i.e. in a day or so they will be departing this life)
What resentment can there be over a little thing like this?
What importance can be attached to what they say?
If you think it out carefully in your heart
(You will realise that) their anger (against you) is no ground for
grief (on your part).

Beloved's Answer

Having heard this, she answered me thus:
"I can't bear anyone to be angry with me

(or)
I've never experienced (my parents') anger
I want nothing more to do with such a shameless life
These words never passed my lips
I have been hearing these taunts for two months now
Death is better than this sort of life
How long can anyone drink the blood of her heart?
(= undergo sorrow and not show it)
How can anybody live after becoming (or, being represented as) shameless
God forbid that man should be without a sense of honour?
What sort of a man is it who has no sense of honour?
How can anybody endure that thing
Which he has not heard with his ears
(= How can one endure insults such as one's ears have never heard?)
Let him listen who is accustomed to it.
No harm in that - everyone has his own sense of honour
But for God's sake as long as I live
Do not speak of your dying
What so great grief and toil has happened (to you)?
Why will you throw away your life?
As for the fact that you plan to take your life
I will call you to account on the day of resurrection
Stay safe and sound in the world my dear
May the dearest wishes of your parents come true
For my sake do not torment your heart
Having married bring your bride, beautiful like the moon, into your house

This is the pleasure of life
Look to the enjoyment of your youth
This lamentation and complaint is only for four days
Who remembers anyone for a whole life-time?
When you enjoy the pleasures of the world
You will forget me in two days
While she was speaking thus a gong was struck
As soon as she heard it she became agitated
From excess of grief her face became drawn (lit. pale, yellow)
Her hands and feet trembled and went cold
A deathly pallor spread over her cheek
Agitation filled her heart
When suspicion of morning entered her heart
She went and stood under the sky
When the cool breeze of early morning blew
Her condition became even worse
Meanwhile the gong sounded for the putting on of uniform
The pallor of her face became twice as bad
When the signs of morning became evident
Her condition became even more lamentable
Her body trembled like the willow
She sweated from her head to her feet
She quickly forgot what she was saying
She began to pant and be out of breath
She spoke agitatedly: You must remain witness of this
And said: There is no god but God
Now this only is my blood money, namely
Forgive anything out of place which I may have said
Having said this, she clung to me once more
And hugging me very lovingly, kissed me
Having taken my misfortunes on her from head to foot
She said "I sacrifice myself for you"
May fire consume that wretched moment!
At what (fateful) time did I come up onto the roof?
Then having wiped away her tears she said this:
I beg you by my head, do not grieve
I was putting you to the test; I was trying you
I was joking in order to tease you
Having said this she "became mounted", (= got into her conveyance)
On my part a continuous stream of tears flowed from my eyes
A redoubled flame of grief flared up
The burning of my heart increased
When I remembered the last wishes of my friend
Thousands of forebodings came to my heart
When this misfortune stirred up calamity
What various stirring thoughts rose up!
Since the grief at what she had said was in my heart
Strange thoughts came into my mind
Who will go and stop her? One (I) must stay in the house
I hope she won't go and do what she said she would
When every moment this restlessness went on increasing
I sat there weeping quietly in grief
When suddenly from one direction came such an uproar
As a result of which my senses fled completely
A flame of fire began to flare up
Just like the nightingale's, my heart began to quiver
As it was six hours had passed in weeping
And I sat completely helpless
Such a dread came into my heart
That a hundred sorts of forebodings came
I told a friend: "You go and
Quickly bring me news of this tumult and uproar
Perhaps unfortunate people like me are weeping?
Has a friend of theirs died, perhaps?
They who are pouring out their hearts like this,
Who are they? and why are they weeping?
What fatal shock has befallen them?
That they make lamentation and sighing like this?"
In the end my friends ran there
And came (back) quickly from there bringing news
Having come they told me like this
"Near here is a dwelling
The house which is built near the garden
Staying there is a merchant
It is of course the case that noise fills the whole street
But this calamity is in his house
This secret is not clearly revealed
Whether someone is ill or whether someone has died
But it can be perceived by the intelligence
That people are not throwing dust in the air without any reason
There is some such happening.
To cause this sound of grief and lamentation
This lamentation was not set up without cause
The breath of some youth is expiring
Every man is becoming mad
(Perhaps) the master of the house is dying
No-one's heart is in his control
The householders are beating their heads
Not a sound can be heard at all
There is only the cry of the Hael! Hael!
The noise there does not cease even for a moment
Whom should we ask? No-one is in his right senses
The pain with which they are weeping at this moment
(Is such that) one cannot bear to see it! by God"
She had said "I will take poison"
And I realised that just that terrible thing had happened
Tho' from a sense of shame I did not speak her name
I pressed my heart with both my hands
When my friends saw this state of affairs
They spoke to me thus to show their love (for me)
How is it that the condition of your heart is altered thus?
But what is there now (to cause it)?
Is everything alright?
Why are you depressed without reason?
Why have your sense and reason fled?
What disaster has befallen (you) at this moment?
A deathly pallor has spread over your face at this moment
What is it, that you are so agitated now
What concern is it of yours that someone has died?
The fact that there is such a condition of extreme agitation -
What reason have you to be distressed?
Every day people die in the city
Does anyone ever worry about it?
To worry like this is bad
It is thus that a man becomes mad
Tell us - what will your parents say
When they hear about this?
Pull yourself together; just come to your senses
What's the matter with you that you are losing your life?
(Extravagantly grieving)
And that you weep entirely spontaneously without good cause.
From what sorrow are you grieved?
Tell us something of the condition of your heart"
These statements of my friends mingled with taunts
Seemed a dagger at the vein of life
I did not answer them on account of grief
Having covered my face I made the pretext of sleep
(= pretended I wanted to go to sleep or, that I was asleep)
The moment that people got up and left me
Uncovering my face I sat down quietly
When the condition of my heart was destroyed in my breast
I sat having come into a room which overlooked the street
I witnessed a tumult set up as of Judgement Day
The road was completely blocked by the crowd
The people who came from that way
Were saying this among themselves.
"Their (= parents') state is an occasion for compassion
The scar (caused by the death) of (one's) children is a great calamity
They have plucked out all the hair from their heads
How distressed is the state of the parents.
An unheard of calamity has come upon their heads.  
They are talking incoherently like madmen  
When your thoughts go in their direction  
Your heart comes into your mouth from grief"

Those who were possessors of children in the crowd  
Their condition was miserable beyond limit  
Beating their heads and breasts, they were saying:  
"It is very understandable that life is hard for them  
The death of one's children is such a great sorrow  
That whatever pain and grief they indulge in is very little."  
Someone was saying: "What a disaster it is!

It is a terrible thing to die young  
Of course it's true that everyone has to die  
But no-one should die young"

So, when I was saying "Everyone is grieved.  
But one cannot bear to see the condition of the father  
The flame of love has burned his heart  
He is writhing (in anguish) like a fish out of water  
The spring of his lamenting eyes is flowing  
He is no longer conscious of his body and soul"

Nobody possesses either power to endure or peace of mind  
The onlookers were all weeping  
All have beaten their heads  
They are not aware of their head and feet  
The moneylenders are grieving extravagantly  
All the shop-keepers are weeping  
When having risen up I saw this state  
It was a great blow to the distressed heart in my breast  
Restraint did not remain on account of grief  
All my hands and feet began to tremble  
The ocean of love raged in my heart  
I fell senseless on the ground  
Since the sickness of love was in my heart  
A sort of state of swooning became overspreading  
After some 48 minutes, when my senses returned  
I saw a strange agitation going on  
In front was some procession moving  
Behind were bare-headed old men and youths  
With them were some old women  
They were beating their hands on their heads and bosoms  
Some were old servants, some midwives  
Some were nurses, and some nannies  
When they sighed deeply with grief  
Pain came into the hearts of the hearers  
(Even) outsiders felt grief for them  
Their condition could not be looked at  
Such affecting statements were being made  
(That) even the people in the streets were weeping  
After that my eyes fell upon that  
Which I pray no man may see, God forbid!  
There was a new canopy of cloth of gold  
Under (it) was the coffin of that fairy  
A garland of gold thread was fastened upon her  
It was like the last spring of a rose-garden  
On that was laid a sheet of roses  
From which the road was completely fragrance  
Lighted incense burners went before  
She was dead, but still there were a hundred thousand attractions  
There was such a crowd with the coffin
As if the marriage procession of some bride was coming
All the rich and high born were walking with it.
The crowd was so big that the road was blocked
All the members of her family were there (with it)
All these unfortunate poor people were weeping
Behind everybody was the merchant
His hair dishevelled, downcast, with dust on his head
Before him went the bier
He swooned at every step
All his family were holding his hands
Lest he dash his head against something
His condition was becoming to this degree deplorable
That blood flowed from a wound in his head
Everyone, rich and poor, was weeping
Having seen this the wayfarers wept
Behind all was the mother in a sedan chair
Weeping, she said thus, as she went along:
"I sacrifice myself to your corpse
Alas my proud one, who said so little!
Now you are unconscious of your mother's plight
Whose was this evil eye which has devoured you?
You never told me what passed in your heart
You did not even give me any last instructions my dear
You have gone, breaking my heart in my old age
My daughter, to whom have you forsaken me?
A fresh scar has been made in my heart
Today my house has become without a lamp
Someone is crushing my heart between their hands.
However much I try I cannot rally
If someone gave me poison I would swallow it
Or if the earth should open up,
I would let myself be swallowed up
The scar of separation from you burns in my heart
I miss your moonlike face
The pleasure of life has been blotted out
The grief of your youth is in my heart
I was not allowed to celebrate your marriage
I was not permitted to fulfill any of my vows.
I sacrificed myself to your beauty
You went away from the world how full of longings
Tell me what you were angry at
May your mother be a sacrifice, just give an answer
You do not reply from being called
Now what support shall I live with?
What a scar fate has given my liver
Today it has put out the light of my house
None of the hope of your parents was realised
Alas daughter! you were not reared to maturity
You so lost interest in this mother
That you did not even fall ill and receive my service (i.e. so that I could wait on you and care for you before you died)
I will not live in separation from you
My heart flutters, my eyes seek (you)
What trouble have I fallen into my daughter?
My womb has been laid waste, my daughter
My days were (fated) to be passed in sorrow from such a blow
In old age stumbling were fated (for me)"
Having thus heard her mother's lamentation
My heart in my breast became agitated
When I remembered the last wishes of that fairy
I went along behind all (the others) unhappy
Although I did not have the strength to walk along the road
Still the force of love carried me along with it
As I was going along behind them all
I was like the dust of a caravan
Sometimes I was agitated like a bird with its throat cut
At other times I sat down clasping my heart
The more I kept my grief in check
The more in turmoil was my heart
My condition was like that of a dying bird
I fell here, I fell there - such was my state
In short I reached there with them
Where her burying place was
When there I saw her grave being dug
A hundred times I restrained myself, but my eyes filled with tears
When people saw this and began to weep
My heart was shattered in pieces
When the power of restraint did not remain with me there
I said this to my heart
What did she order you before she died
Do you give any thought to her last wishes?
For God's sake, don't be so agitated
Restrain your heart as much as is possible
Having rebuked my heart thus I went where
All her relations were gathered together
Having turned my afflicted mind off its afflictions
I went and sat quietly on one side
Although tears did not flow from my eyes
Still people looked at me repeatedly and said
"What a state your face is in today!
Is everything alright? How are you feeling?
Your eyes are bloodshot; your cheeks are flushed
What is the reason? Do describe your condition to me
A sort of deathly pallor is spread over your face
Your face shows the stunning blow you have received"
I said, "It is nothing (but this)
That last night I did not sleep all night
And since besides that I was compelled to come on foot
The colour of my face would disappear (like camphor)
The abandonment of habit too is an enmity (= terrible thing)
To stay awake at night is a terrible ordeal"
I ejected all the doubts of their heart
By telling them this, I put them off
There was a shout in the meantime "Everybody file by!
Reading prayers for the dead (the fatyha), go; go one by one"
Having heard this all the friends (= people) went there
They (= the organisers of the funeral) repeatedly read the fatyha and
so bestowed (on the hearers) heavenly reward

When this too was finished
All who had come departed
When I found the grave of my friend deserted
The strength of endurance did not remain in my heart
Since I was the moth of that candle-face
I came running like a madman
I came and fell upon her grave all at once
And I began to weep with great lamentation (copiously)
When my heart did not remain in my control
I rolled on her tomb like a bird with its throat cut
My heart experienced some strange enjoyment
I embraced her tomb
Since that flowerlike one had died for me
Life for me too became forbidden
Because I had seen such terrible sights with my eyes
Having come into my house I too swallowed poison
Vomiting lasted till noon.
And then after that swooning overcame me
That state of helplessness lasted three days
From which forgetfulness of myself came about (means simply that
he was completely unconscious)
Precisely in this heedlessness (= state of unconsciousness) I then
saw a dream
That she said this with an eye of wrath.
Just listen to me - why did you take poison?
You did not have any regard for my last wishes
You have been extremely forgetful of yourself
You forgot me in the space of two days
You forgot (= banished) my sayings (= command) from your heart
Indeed it was to be expected!
Words cannot do justice!
When, having said this, she vanished
My eyes opened and my senses came back to me.
Then I could find no trace of poison
A sort of wonderment came to me
The assertion of all my friends and acquaintances was this
"You were a corpse and you came to life again. Behold the power of
God!"
My parents were delighted at this
The peace of their hearts and the light of their eyes grew
All my relatives heard it and became happy
They came and began to offer their congratulations
The outcome of this story was this
I remained alive because of my stamina
I have earned this in love:
I gave my heart and became acquainted with grief.