FAIZ AHMED FAIZ (1911 - )

Born: Sialkot, Punjab (now in Pakistan)
Mother tongue: Punjabi
University: Punjab University, M. A., 1934.

During World War II, Faiz left his post teaching English at a college in Amritsar to join the army, attaining the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and receiving an M. B. E. for his war-time services. After Partition in 1947 he became the editor of the English-language daily The Pakistan Times, and was jailed in connection with the Rawalpindi conspiracy case against the Government of Pakistan. Later, he settled in Lebanon, in self-imposed exile, and edited Lotus, an international leftist magazine. He has recently returned to Pakistan.

Actively involved in the Progressive Writers Movement, Faiz early became a communist sympathiser. He was awarded the Lenin Peace Prize in 1962.

Between 1941 and 1981 he has published seven collections of verse and six works in Urdu prose. Faiz is the best-selling modern Urdu poet both in India and Pakistan.
DARLING, DON'T ASK ME FOR THE SAME LOVE AGAIN

Darling, don't ask me for the same love again.

I believed that you gave life its glow,
And life's problems paled before your grief.
Your face gave spring its meaning.
Your eyes were all that mattered in the world.

If I could just have you, I could laugh at the Fate.

But I made it all up – it wasn't true.
There are other concerns, apart from love.
There are other pleasures, besides your embrace.
The dark brutal spells of countless centuries,
Woven in velvet, silk and brocade.
Bodies for sale in the streets, in the markets,
Bodies dust-smirched, drenched in blood.
Bodies spill out from the furnaces of plagues,
Foul puss oozes down from running sores.
One cannot help seeing these things too.
You are still lovely, but what can one do?

There are other concerns, apart from love.
There are other pleasures, besides your embrace.
Darling, don’t ask me for the same love again.
THE DOGS

Aimlessly wandering vagrants,
These dogs have been blessed with a taste for begging.
Their wealth is every man's abuse,
Their wages insult.
No comfort by night, no solace by day,
They live on garbage, they shelter in filth.
When they snarl, make them fight each other:
Just hold up a piece of bread.
They take insults from anyone,
And die, fed up with hunger.

If these poor curs once raised their heads,
Their masters would cringe.
Given the will, they could own the world,
Tear at the bones of their masters.
If they would just once feel ashamed,
If someone really twisted their sleeping tails.
THE HIGHWAY

A pensive highway,  
Stretched along  
Gazing far to the horizon,  
Adorns the cold earth  
With the dark beauty of its bosom  
As  
A desolate woman,  
In her empty home,  
Lost in thought,  
Mourns the embrace of her lover,  
Her limbs weary, her body's every cell exhausted.
THE MORNING OF FREEDOM
(August, 1947)

This pock-marked daylight, this morning that reeks of night.
Is not the morning we looked for
Is not the morning the good companions longed for
When they set forth across the wasteland by starlight,
Seeking the shore of night’s dead ocean,
Some anchorage for the vessels of grief.

Starting out, those friends
Found traps on young blood’s mysterious highways;
Allurements called from the land of pleasure,
Arms beckoned, lips blew a kiss.
But the face of morning was their heart’s desire,
The thighs of daylight gleamed near.  
Tense with desire, they knew nothing of weariness.

People say that the light and the darkness are parted.  
People say that feet and destination have met.  
The afflicted are far better off, people say.  
The pleasures of union are blessed,  
The rigors of parting forbidden.

That fire in their hearts, that longing in their eyes  
This ‘blessed union’ will never assuage.  
When did the breeze of morning rise,  
Where did it go?  
On the roadside the lamp glows, just the same.  
The night hangs heavy, just the same.  
Our hearts and eyes still look for salvation,  
Let us move on now,  
We have yet to arrive.
THE PAIN WILL EMERGE SOFTLY

In a little while, when my lonely heart
Considers yet again the remedy for loneliness,
The pain will emerge softly, bearing a red lamp,
The pain that pulses somewhere beyond my heart.

When that flame flashes down my side
It will light up every image on my heart:
A lock of hair, soft silken cheek,
A desert of parting, a paradise of meeting,
A word of pleasure, a confession of love.
Then I’ll say to my heart.

درد آتے تک کہ دل بھاول

اور کچھ دریا، جب بیخبر میں تنہا دل کو
تیر بنا لی کر تنہا کہ کہا ماں کے
درد آتے تک دل ہے پاول، یہ شپر پہرا
دو جاک دو دمحم کا کہ ہر ہیں دل سے پہنے

شمندل درد ہو پس کوہم لپ کے نے کا
دل کی دیوار پہ چھوڑنے کا ہما کا
غلبت زرت کر سی، جو بھرنے کے رواں کہ
بہار کا رشت کیمین کہ گھسی دیوار کہ
اٹھ کی ات کر کہنہ، پھیلیا اقرار کہ

دل سے حیرت گر میں بات کا اے دل، اے دل
Listen, my heart,
This companion of your solitude,
Is just passing through, will soon go away,
It brings you no solution.

Inflamed, all your unruly images will rise up.
The pain will go, but they will stay.
This night you face a bloody fight,
Real war, no fancy game.
Each one is a foe,
Every one a murderer:
This black night, your memories, your loneliness too.
Pain parleys not with war.

Let's fan to life the embers of our rage.

There it comes! rouse the mighty blaze of anger.
There it comes! bring up that fiery garden
With its ardour, its tumult, its might.
Out there beyond the edge of dark
There's bound to be an army on our side.

Flames that sing of war will leap against the sky.
If friends can't reach us, they surely will call
And let us know how long the morn.
THERE IS NO REMEDY NOW, YOU SAY

The war has already occurred, you say,
To which nobody came.
No one stepped onto the field,
Not our side,
Not theirs.
No ranks were drawn
No banners sought for lost allies,
None led us to strangers, to foes.
The war has already occurred, you say,
In which we haven't yet fought.
There is no remedy now, you say.
The body is dying, the hands give way.

We cannot bear the stones of abuse,
Stones of abuse, mountains of grief.
Others just touched them and ran away,
And lived to be honoured another day.
Friends, in this harsh country we love
Will our bright blood's flower never bloom
And turn the land red with tulips?
In this silence shall we not hear
Once more the clamour of truth,
The clash of chain and gallows?

We exerted our will, so be it.
Body and soul have lost, so be it.
Before we win there's more to lose,
The lament of body and soul still await us
Still many more bitter trials lie ahead.
THE BLACKOUT

Ever since the lamps went out,
I keep searching in the dust
For my two lost eyes.
Tell me if you know who I am.
Wave after wave of venom has surged
Through every vein of my body,
Desiring you, remembering you,
My heart got lost among the waves.
But wait! from another world
A flash of lightning may bring me
A miracle – lost pearls of my eyes,
Drunk with darkness,
Glowing pearls of new eyes
Returned to me.
Wait for a moment till we find the sea's shore
And my new heart,
That perished in the venom waves,
Reaches land.
Then I will give again new eyes and heart,
Sing hymns of beauty, write stories of desire.
DO WHAT YOU FEEL LIKE DOING

Why prate about the day
When the heart will lie shattered
And griefs melt away?
Whatever we found be lost,
Whatever we sought be found?
This day is the same:
The first day of love,
So often longed for,
So often feared.
That day has often arrived,
We settled down, to be ravaged a thousand times,
Beggared a thousand times, had enough.
Why prate about the day
When the heart will lie shattered
And griefs melt away?
Forget your worries and fears.
Whatever will be, will be.
Laugh, if you must;
Cry, if you'd rather;
Do what you feel like doing.
Come what may.
Eyes bright with lust, gang danced through the streets, again.
Crowding on the doorstep of hope,
Picking fragments of dreams in the streets, again.
Trying to put them together once more.

Blood-soaked tags of my body again were法宝
That splashed the town bright with colours
Rabid tongues hurled at my senses again.
Their stones of praise and reproach.
To jeer at men weighed down with truth.
To laugh at men crippled with love.

To laugh at men,crippled with love.
LOVED A LITTLE, WORKED A LITTLE

People were really lucky
Who could turn love into work
Or were in love with work.
We stayed busy all our life,
Loved a little, worked a little.
Work kept interfering with love,
And love kept getting in the way of work.
In the end
Fed up,
We left them both, unfinished.