

Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam

Translation By: Shahriar Shahriari. 1999

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The palace where Jamshid held his cup
The doe and the fox now rest and sup
Bahram who hunted game non-stop
Was hunted by death when his time was up.

I resolve daily that at dusk I shall repent
For a night with a cup full of wine spent.
In the presence of flowers, my resolve simply went
In such company, I only regret that I ever resolved to repent.

Khayam, if you are intoxicated with wine, enjoy!
If you are seated with a lover of thine, enjoy!
In the end, the Void the whole world employ
Imagine thou art not, while waiting in line, enjoy!

O friend, for the morrow let us not worry
This moment we have now, let us not hurry
When our time comes, we shall not tarry
With seven thousand-year-olds, our burden carry.

In childhood we strove to go to school,
Our turn to teach, joyous as a rule
The end of the story is sad and cruel
From dust we came, and gone with winds cool.

At dawn came a calling from the tavern
Hark drunken mad man of the cavern
Arise; let us fill with wine one more turn
Before destiny fills our cup, our urn.

If my coming were up to me, I'd never be born
And if my going were on my accord, I'd go with scorn
Isn't it better that in this world, so old and worn
Never to be born, neither stay, nor be away torn?

When the canary made its way to the field
Found the rose and wine smiling, kneeled,
In tongues its message in my ear it thus reeled
Hark, no moment in time did twice yield.

Heaven is incomplete without a heavenly romance
Let a glass of wine be my present circumstance
Take what is here now, let go of a promised chance
A drumbeat is best heard from a distance.

The day the stallion of time was tamed and trained
Venus and Jupiter were adorned and stained
This life for us was allotted and ordained
This was not our will; were thus chained and restrained.

The caravan of life shall always pass
Beware that is fresh as sweet young grass
Let's not worry about what tomorrow will amass
Fill my cup again, this night will pass, alas.

Happily I walked with the tavern down the line
Passed an old drunk, holding a bottle of wine
"Do you not fear God?" was reproach of mine
said, "Mercy is God's sign, in silence I wine and dine."

It is a day neither hot nor cold,
Clouds help the dry flowers unfold
Canary with his song to the flower told
Drink while you can, yourself don't scold.

This Old World we've named Cosmos by mistake
Is the graveyard of nights & days, no more awake
And a feast that hundred Jamshid's did break
And a throne that hundred Bahram's did make.

The secrets eternal neither you know nor I
And answers to the riddle neither you know nor I
Behind the veil there is much talk about us, why
When the veil falls, neither you remain nor I.

Before time takes you by surprise
Ask for good red wine and get wise
You are not of gold, don't believe the lies
You are put to dust, once again you'll rise.

I brought the cup to my lips with greed
Begging for longevity, my temporal need
Cup brought its to mine, its secret did feed
Time never returns, drink, of this take heed

All my companions, one by one died
With Angel of Death they now reside
In the banquet of life same wine we tried
A few cups back, they fell to the side.

As the rising Venus and moon in the skies appear
To the goodness of quality wine, nothing comes near
I am amazed at the vendors of a liquid so dear
Where they'll buy a better thing, is not clear.

Don't permit sorrow to be your friend
Sadness and pain become your trend
Don't let the book or the farm you tend
Rule your life before to earth you descend.

Some are thoughtful on their way
Some are doubtful, so they pray.
I hear the hidden voice that may
Shout, "Both paths lead astray."

Like God, if this world I could control
Eliminating the world would be my role
I would create the world anew, whole
Such that the free soul would attain desired goal

This cup was made by the Wise Lord
With love & care to the heights soared
The potter who shaped with such accord
To make and break the same clay, can also afford.

Signs of destiny have always been
Those hands inscribed both good and mean
What was written, came from the unseen
Though we tried without and worried within.

At all times, merrily try
To drink wine and in song cry
Millions of kings in silence lie
From coming of January and passing of July.

Drinking wine is my travail
Till my body is dead and stale
At my grave site all shall hail
Odor of wine shall prevail.

When the clay into a cup is molded
Its breaking, the drunk scolded;
Many limbs and heads are enfolded
Through whose love unfolded, by which decree folded?

Good and evil, our moral prison,
Joy and sorrow passing like season,
Fate in the way of logic and reason
Is the victim of far worse treason.

Lover of drunk and the outcast
Better than pious prayer and fast
Thou art the first and art the last
Caress if thou wilt, if thou wilt blast.

When the Maker formed nature
Why imperfect was the venture
If it is good, why departure
And if bad, why form capture?

This Universal wheel, this merry-go-round
In our imagination we have found
The sun a flame, in the Cosmic lantern bound
We are mere ghosts, revolving, the flame surround.

The rose claimed to be Jacob of grass and dirt
A red ruby resurrected with a green skirt
I said if this is so, show a sign of your hurt
Said just take a look at my bloody shirt.

Anxiously I began this course
With life my awe grew even worse
Unwillingly returned with force
What was the point, I ask my source.

In the wheel of fortune the unseen vine
Drink, be merry, wait your turn in line
When it is your turn, neither cry nor whine
Everyone must taste the same deadly wine.

O Life, you put many traps in my way
Dare to try, is what you clearly say
All that is, thy command must obey
You lead me away and call me astray.

Why treat thy slave so cold as ice?
Where is thy light to save me from vice?
Even with command of Paradise
Where is thy gift above my just price?

They say in heaven are beautiful lovers
Sweet taste of wine in the air hovers
Fear not if succumbed to same earthly powers
In the end the same, one discovers.

Take all the worldly goods, but in lieu
Let the beauty of nature renew
And at night on the grass like dew
And in the morn take me away from view.

Drink wine that drives away joy and pain
And the thought of Seventy Two nations' reign
Never withhold from such elixir again
Of which one sip will purge all that's insane.

Hark! Feed me wine, if you really care
Turn into ruby my face of amber
Bathe me in wine when death me ensnare
With boards of vine my coffin bear

An old potter at his wheel
Clay and dirt mould and deal
My inner eye would reveal
My father's dust bears his seal.

Once transpired, cannot be changed
Only pain will come if remorse engaged
Though with sorrow you may be aged
Not even a dot will be rearranged.

Each drop of wine that is spilt
Burnt deep in my heart and sorrow built
I drink wine while prayer thou wilt
The water that quenched the fire of my guilt.

Alas the youthful fire is a dying ember
The spring of life has reached December
What is termed youth, I vaguely remember
But know not whence and how from life's chamber.

In the cosmic game of polo you are the ball
The mallet's left and right becomes your call
He who causes your movements, your rise and fall
He is the one, the only one, who knows it all.

From the depths of earth to heights of Saturn
We've solved all riddles, turn after turn
Break every chain, our ignorance burn
Except the riddle that fills the urn.

Tonight I shall embrace a gallon cup
With at least two cups of wine I'll sup
I'll divorce my mind and religion stop
With daughter of vine, all night I'll stay up.

Wherever you go in the land of God
Flowers bloom from kingly blood
Violet with its colorful shroud
Was a beauty mole on a face once proud.

Beloved friends let us gather
For each other, together care
With raised cups salute and share
In memory of he who isn't there.

The grass that grows by every stream
Like angelic smiles faintly gleam
Step gently, cause it not to scream
For it has grown from a lover's dream

Those who went in pursuit of knowledge
Soared up so high, stretched the edge
Were still encaged by the same dark hedge
Brought us some tales ere life to death pledge.

Once upon a time, in a potter's shop
I saw two thousand clay pot and cup
Suddenly a lone pot cried out, "stop!
Where the vendor, buyer, where my prop?"

We are the puppets and fate the puppeteer
This is not a metaphor, but a truth sincere
On this stage, fate for sometime our moves steer
Into the chest of non-existence, one by one disappear.

The signs of what's to come has always been
Has always written both benevolent and mean
What is our lot was given by the hand unseen
With futility we try, exert, weep or keen.

This clay pot like a lover once in heat
A lock of hair his senses did defeat
The handle that has made the bottleneck its own seat
Was once the embrace of a lover that entreat.

The sun with its morning light the earth ensnare
The king celebrated the day with a wine so fair

The herald of dawn intoxicated would blare
Its fame and aroma, for time having not a care.