

Al-Qaṣīda al-Ḥusayniyya

إن كان أحسن ما في الشعر كذباً فحسب شغري فيهم غيرة كذب

Though the most beautiful poetry is the most false,
the beauty of my poetry about them is that it contains no lie
-al-Shabb al-Zarīf

Last night, when we pledged our love with “balā”¹
You called to witness clay from Karbala

When the earth’s mountains, heavens all said “lā”²
You gazed in the blaze, and said “Jamīla”

Your beauty embraced the blades and the pain
Adorning your love, like flowers do rain

Loveliness rejoiced that you it attained
So Love’s Beloved named you al-Ḥusayn

Bravery took courage from your campaign
Even oppression longed for you, its bane

Perfection’s steeds strove, and for you they strained
Thirsting for the thirsty Lord of the Slain

The pure wine that fills and spills from each vein
Gives life to every lover’s liver again

Forbidden, sacrosanct in every domain
Your life sanctified each day, every place

They struck down he who rode on the shoulders twain
Of the lovely lord of the Ḥaramayn

¹ Qur’an 7:172

² Qur’an 33:72

While his dust rose above the sun's blinding flame
And his soul fain reclaimed by the Jannatayn

Of the Lord of the Mashriqayn, Maghribayn
Whose Light shines through the love of al-Ḥassanayn

In the midst of dark clouds, you're lightning, its refrain
Heralding the healing downpour of rain

The night stars all wept and fell down in shame
The full moon blushed from your face's rouge stains

What rogues are we to your sweet call disdain
You who sought to save your killers from pain

You gave all for the Truth, so you reaped all love's gains
What all the oceans just could not contain

So the whole cosmos became your floodplains
In love, Noah's ark, Pharoah's chariot's the same

God, before my end, join me with the same
Outwardly, raincloud's grace, within love's fire, insane

By your mighty Name and the might of Ḥusayn

بِقَلْبِكَ صَاحِبَ الْقِبْلَتَيْنِ

Biqalbika Ṣāhibal-Qiblatayn

[By your heart, O Possessor of the Two Qiblas]

Please accept these halting words in your praise
Gather me to you when your banner's raised

Son of God's Lion and yet more, his mane
By you the Truth dashed out bātil's brains³

By you hearts all broke free of fear's chains
Righteousness refuted all falsehood's claims

Ibnul-Batūli baṭalal-buṭūla
[*Son of the Virgin Fāṭima, O hero of heroism*]

Inna jaddaka Māhīd-ḍalāla
[*Truly your grandfather is the Effacer of Error*]

Upon him be God's blessings and Ṣalāh
And your family too, Ahlil-Karbala

And then greetings and SalāmuLlah
Perfumed with the echo of our "balā"

As long as your lands draw love's impalas
Make us, with Zaynab, only see jamīla

-Oludamini
11th Muḥarram, 1448
Charlottesville-Tyson's Corner, VA

ابن البتول بطل البطولة

انّ جّدك ماحي الضلالة

³ Qur'an 21:18