

POEMS AND TRANSLATIONS

Non val aqua al mio gran foco

Non val aqua al mio gran foco,
che per pianto non si amorza
anzi ognhor più se rinforza
quanto più con quel mi sfoco.
Non val aqua al mio gran foco,
che per pianto non si amorza.

El mio foco ha tal usanza
che per pianto ognhor più cresce
e maggior prende possanza
se'l mio intento non riesce.
El mio foco è come el pescie
che n l'aqua ha el proprio loco.
Non val aqua...

Ho nel petto un mongibello
e negli occhi un largo mare
che per mio maggior flagello
son concordi al mio penare.
Piango et ardo e il lachrymare
col mio ardor m'han tolto a ioco.
Non val aqua...

Non mi val getar sospiri
per scemar l'ardor ch'io sento
che per un che fuor ne tiri
poi ne nascon più di cento,
dove per menor tormento
morte acerba ognhor invoco.
Non val aqua...

Non mi vale lamentarmi,
ché per gridi el duol non scema.
Qual saran doncha bon armi
a la pena mia sì extrema?
Star paziente e con tal tema
ben servir chi m'ama pocho.
Non val aqua...

Water cannot quench my fire

Water cannot quench my fire,
it is not put out by tears.
It only grows stronger all the time,
the more I let them flow.
Water cannot quench my fire,
it is not put out by tears.

My fire has this habit
of growing through my tears,
it even gains more force
when my plans come to naught.
My fire is like a fish:
it feels most at home in the water.
Water cannot...

I have a volcano in my breast
and a big ocean in my eyes.
Together they strive to
give me even greater pain!
I weep and I burn, and the tears
and the fire rob me of every joy.
Water cannot...

Sighs are of no use
to lessen the ardor I feel:
for with every sigh I let out,
a hundred more spring forth!
So I keep begging for bitter death
to suffer less torment.
Water cannot...

Laments will not help me,
crying won't lessen my sorrow
What then would be good weapons
against my violent pain?
Be patient, and in this manner
serve her well who loves me little.
Water cannot...

Staralla ben cusi

Staralla ben cusi?
Deh! dimme, anima mia,
dolce signora mia,
la non sta ben cusi!

Staralla ben cusi?
Haymé! Privarmi a torto,
s'io son sepulto e morto
la non sta ben cusi!

Staralla ben cusi?
S'io t'ho donato el core
Fuggime a tutte l'hore
la non sta ben cusi!

Staralla ben cusi?
O mia dolce nemica
Oyme forza è ch'el dica
la non sta ben cusi!

Staralla ben cusi?
Avendo al collo un laccio
A far ch' io me disfaccio,
la non sta ben cusi!

Staralla ben cusi?
Da poi li dolci sguardi
Donarmi acuti dardi
la non sta ben cusi!

Staralla ben cusi?
Mo che per te ho spanto
El sangue in ogni canto
la non sta ben cusi!

Staralla ben cusi?
S'io sono alto salito
Esser da te bandito
la non sta ben cusi!

Is this how it should be

Is this how it should be?
Oh, tell me, my soul,
my sweet mistress:
that's not how it should be!

Is this how it should be?
To wrongfully deny me everything,
as if I'm dead and buried:
that's not how it should be!

Is this how it should be?
I have given you my heart,
but you escape me all the time:
that's not how it should be!

Is this how it should be?
O my sweet enemy,
I feel a need to tell you:
that's not how it should be!

Is this how it should be?
With a noose around my neck
so you can let me perish:
that's not how it should be!

Is this how it should be?
To pierce me with sharp arrows
after giving me sweet looks:
that's not how it should be!

Is this how it should be?
Now that for you I have shed
my blood in every place:
that's not how it should be!

Is this how it should be?
To be driven away by you
when I've risen so high:
that's not how it should be!

Staralla ben cusi?
S'io son tuo servitore
E tu sei mio signore
La starà ben cosi!

Is this how it should be?
If I'm your humble servant,
and you my mistress:
yes, that's how it should be!

Amir Khusrow, Ghazal 1034

I do not know where they went, those
Who once were friends. What day was it,
O Lord, when they abandoned us?
If spring comes and asks after them,
Tell the zephyr, 'All those flowers
Are turned to grass,' and ask the flower
When it pokes out from the earth
How those faces look that now are gone
Deep beneath the dust of death.

Pan de miglio caldo

Pan de miglio caldo,
donne mie a chi ne vole
Le man presto alle guarnole,
sù, che questo è caldo!
Pan de miglio...

Orsù donne, comperati
del mio pan caldo de miglio,
Fa star tutte inamorati,
fresche e belle come un ziglio;
Vi farà color vermiglio
se 'l gustati cusì caldo!
Pan de miglio...

Io so ben e vi prometto
se 'l mio pan voi gustareti,
Tal dolceza in vostro petto
con piacere e festa haretì;
Con effecto voi direti:
"Benedetto che l'è caldo!"
Pan de miglio...

Tal virtù e tal dolceza
el mio pan en sè retiene

Hot millet bread

Hot millet bread, my ladies,
for whoever wants some!
Put your hands in your skirts,
quick, while it's still hot!
Hot millet bread...

Come, my ladies, buy some
of my nice hot millet bread!
It makes everyone fall in love,
lovely and fresh like a lily!
It will make you turn bright red
if you eat it hot like that!
Hot millet bread...

Well I know, and I promise you
that, if you try my bread,
you will feel such pleasure
and sweetness in your breast,
that you will say out loud:
'What a blessing that it's hot!'
Hot millet bread....

Such virtue, such sweetness
my bread contains,

Che, chi 'l gusta con tristeza
e che sempre vive in pene,
Crudel pene non retiene
mentre il gusta cusì caldo.
Pan de miglio...

Orsù presto, donne care,
le man presto nel mio cesto!
Comenzate hormai gustare,
non l'abiati già a molesto;
Se son tropo a voi molesto,
qui Amor mi fa star saldo!
Pan de miglio...

Sera ne lo cor mio

Sera ne lo cor mio doglia e tormento
Poy che privata soy del mio thesoro
Sera la vita mia in pianto et lamento
Po che ma tolto el veder chadoro
Sera el pensir mio [tristo] e scontento
Poy che penando ognihoro puncto moro
La fe che prometesti sulo momento
Cambiata me sera per forza d'oro

Tu dormi

Tu dormi, io veglio alla tempesta e al
vento
su la marmorea petra di tua porta.
Tu dormi, io veglio e sto sempre in
tormento
e l'anima ed il core da me scampo.

Tu dormi, io veglio e con amaro accento
ognhor chiamo pietà che è per me
morta.
Tu dormi, io veglio e poi in un sol
momento

if someone tastes it who always
lives in sadness and sorrow,
she will forget her cruel pain,
when she tastes it hot.
Hot millet bread...

Come on, my dear ladies,
quick, put your hands in my basket!
Just begin to enjoy it,
it won't do you any harm!
And if I seem to bother you...
Amor makes me stand up straight!
Hot millet bread...

My heart will be full

My heart will be full of sorrow and
torment,
now that I am deprived of my treasure.
My life will be steeped in tears and
laments
now that my precious one is torn from
my sight.
My thoughts will be sad and malcontent,
now that every moment I suffer and die.
The faithful promise you made me that
day,
for every price I would now give it away!

You sleep

You sleep, I keep watch in storm and
wind,
on the cold marble of your doorstep,
You sleep, I keep watch, and I'm ever
afflicted
and try to preserve my heart and soul.

You sleep, I keep watch, and in bitter
tones
I keep crying out for mercy, that is dead
for me.

di lagrime e di pianto io qui divampo.

Tu dormi, io veglio con grave tormento
né trovo al mio penar chi me conforta.

Tu dormi, io veglio e solo mi lamento
di vita vo' soffrir tutto l'inciampo.

Tu dormi riposata senza affanno,
e gli occhi miei serrati mai non stanno.
Tu dormi ed io, crudel, lamento e ploro,
e moro ahimé, ch'io moro.

You sleep, I keep watch, and in a single
moment

I dissolve here in weeping and tears.

You sleep, I keep watch in great torment
and I find no-one to comfort my pain.

You sleep, I keep watch, and complain
all alone

every hindrance in life I must bear.

You sleep, well rested, without a care,
while my eyes are never closed!

You sleep and I, cruel woman, weep
and cry,

and I die, alas, how I die....

Rumi, Ghazal 302

Night and day
buffeted by fantasies of you
head planted at your pedestal
night and day

Day and night
I'll keep this up
until I drive
the night and day
to love distraction

They demanded from the lovers
earnest heart and soul
I make pledges day and night
with heart and soul

Until I discover
what is in my brain
I'll not scratch my head for a time
day and night

Your love plays me
like a tune
day and night
Sometimes harpstring, sometimes lyre

you work me over with your plectrum
day and night

My high quivering notes
scale the skies
you poured out forty-fold libations
for all mankind
from that ferment
I'm sotted night and day.

So stato ne lo inferno

So stato ne lo inferno tanto tanto
Che s'eo n'ensese gran mercede seria
Erami in paradiso sancto sancto
Mo me n'a tracto la fortuna ria
Stame la morte acanto acanto
Amor disdegno dolgia et zelosia
Sempre me nutriragio in pianto in pianto
Dopo che piace alla signora mia

I've been in hell

I've been in hell for long, so long,
it would be a great mercy to escape.
Once I was in holy, holy paradise,
but evil fate has torn me away.
Death stands at my side, my side,
with love, disdain, jealousy and sorrow.
Always will I feed on tears, on tears,
for so it pleases my lady.

Hafez, Ghazal 175

The zephyr came to greet the wine-seller Pir and say that
The season of joy, pleasure, drinking, and merry-making
came.

The breath of the air became like that of Messiah's and the
wind opened its musk-bag.
The trees turned green and the birds began to sing loudly.
The spring wind so blazed the oven of the tulip that

The bud drowned in its sweat and the rose began to boil.
Hear from me with your ear of intelligence: Endeavor for
pleasure.

Cavalca Sinisbaldo

Cavalca Sinisbaldo tutta la notte
e tanto cavalchè che a le porte zunse.

Sinisbaldo galloped all night long,
he galloped untill he reached the gate.

Pan e paneda,

Bread and butter,

man a la braga,
pere, mere,
nus' e castagne,
fig' e lasagne,
do sosine fresche...

Trovò bella fantina, basar la volse:
fantina fo cortese, bochin li sporse.
Pan e paneda...

El cavalier vilan in terra la pose,
fantina tenerella i occhi stravolse.
Pan e paneda...

Diceva la badessa: mo foss'io d'essa,
diceva la priora: et io ancora
Pan e paneda...

Che meneria el culo con tal vigoria,
se avesse sassi sotto faria farina.
Pan e paneda...

Noi che semper naveghemmo

Noi che semper naveghemmo
E' n gran perigo semmo
En questo nostro mar
Mai possemmo reposar
No dovemmo unca cessar
Lo pietoso deo pregar
Che ne scampe coi soi santi
Da perigoli chi son tanti
Da li gran commovimenti
De fortuna e de gran venti
Bachaneixi e onde brave
Chi conturban nostra nave

L'aere par tutto offuscòu
E lo mar asturbòu
No par stella no par lunna
Tento è o ciel d'esta fortunna

hands in your purses,
pears and apples,
chestnuts and pines,
lasagna and vines,
and... two fresh plums!

He found a pretty maiden, wanted to kiss
her:
the maiden was gracious, offered her lips.
Bread and butter...

The daring knight laid her down in the
grass,
the dear girl didn't know where to look!
Bread and butter...

Cried the abbess: I want no less!
And the prioress said: kiss me instead!
Bread and butter...

And she shook her ass so vigorously,
it could have ground stones to dust!
Bread and butter..

We, who are always at drift

We, who are always at drift,
always in great danger
on this sea of ours,
never can we rest,
never can we stop praying
to the merciful God
to save us us with his saints
from the dangers, that are many,
from the great upheavals
of fortune and the strong winds,
crashing tides and sturdy waves
that ravage our ship.

The sky is all clouded,
the sea is in turmoil,
the moon and stars hide,
heaven is darkened by storm.

Ni se trovemmo conforto
De poer venir à o pòrto
Ni osemmo strenze li euggi
Tanto è pin lo mar de scheuggi
E sempre semmo aguaitai
Da berruel e da corsai
Chi no cessam in dar stòrte
En rapinar e dar morte
Sempre temando d'esser conquixi
D'alcun dei nostri nemixi.

De vianda e de bevenda
Ammo sci scarsa prevenda
Chi ne dà monto gran guerra
Ni arrivar possammo à terra
E in sci greve roinna
No savemmo aotra meixinna
Se no far a deo preghere
Solo in questo noi se spere

We never have the comfort
of entering a safe haven,
and the sea is so full of rocks,
that we dare not raise our eyes.
We are always hounded
by pirates and marauders,
who never cease to torment,
plunder, bring us death,
we are always in fear of being
overthrown by one of our enemies.

Of food and water
we have such scarcity,
that we are ever at war.
We cannot reach firm land,
and in our great ruin
we know no other medicine
than to pray to God:
only this is our hope.