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Ronny Noor

A Little Light

The faces I used to see, where did they vanish?

The ones I see today, they will – alas! – vanish.

The rosy grin etched deep like a moon in my heart,

Did I once think someday it would also vanish?

The cold stare that bore like an arrow into me,

Oh, how many times did I wish it to vanish!

The parents and the friends I held so close to me,
The poor souls could not help but, one by one, vanish.

The lanes and by-lanes I explored in distant lands,
Some lead the flock home, but many had to vanish.

The love that I wrapped around like a cashmere shawl,
Why did she sail in the winter storm and vanish?

Saadi fashioned *The Rose Garden* to survive him.
His words have outlived the sage and will not vanish.

"You're neither Saadi nor Plato," said my mother.
"Spread a little light around before you vanish."

Last Time

You wished to kiss me for the last time.
I thought we had split for the last time.

Pressed lips with closed eyes part forever.
But the heart never knows the last time.

If I could rid of the heart – oh! I'd
Be saved from the plague of the last time.

The new day that greets the sun, I know,
Will kiss it goodbye for the last time.

Wise men avow time heals, but wisdom's
Just a crutch, no balm for the last time.

When the nightmare springs me to my feet,
I wish the last breath were the last time.

The Wild Deer: Homage to Hafiz

You hit the tavern; the *zaheds* sent you to hell.
You discovered Jam's Cup; none will find it in hell.

Yes, you were *the tavern, the wine, the winged spirit*.
You sought the *magical fire*, not the fire of hell.

My soul wished to stretch to the dimple of your chin,
Hoping with your insight to keep all out of hell.

You threaded the unity of spirit and mind,
Delving within, away from the highroad to hell.

You were a seeker, a heart-healer, whose poems
Sprang from the *water of grace*, not the fire of hell.

You pacified with your ghazal even the fierce
Timur, who wished to turn your Shiraz into hell.

Though a hafiz, you advised not to memorize,
But *value each other* – to stay away from hell.

Whatever the *zaheds* said, your place in heaven
Is secure, claims Emerson. Have no fear of hell.



Ronny Noor

Born in Dhaka, Bangladesh, Ronny Noor is a professor, scholar, and writer. His poems, stories, essays, and book reviews have appeared in journals and newspapers around the world, including World Literature Today, The Toronto Review, South Asian Review, Palo Alto Review, Taj Mahal Review, World Haiku Review, Kitaab, Kokako, FreeXpresSion, The Daily Star, and Contemporary Literary Review India. He is also the author of Snake Dance in Berlin (a novel), Slice of Heaven and Other Essays (a collection), and Where Heaven Spreads Wide & Other Stories (an anthology).

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