

The Herald

Like the voyager told in tales
Taking a knapsack born with on their back
Holding a bamboo cane firmly in their hand
Sometimes talkative, sometimes silent
Travelling in that misty, secluded atmosphere of their tale
We too begin our journey.

Three paths are visible.
At the threshold of each carved in stone,
A tale which reads no more.
The first: the path of potation, pleasure and glee.
Tainted by disgrace, but towards the glittering city.
The second: the path of half disgrace, half fame,
If you praise a lot, or if you keep quiet.
The third: the path of no return, of no end.

So heavy hearted I am here
And every tune ominous to my ear.
Let's pack our bags,
Let's step onto the path of no return,
To see whether the colour of the sky is the same "everywhere".

And you know that this journey is by no means towards the heavens.
Towards Ares, that bloodthirsty immortal,
Towards Venus, that wicked insouciant wolf-like whore of a widow
Who raised her cup along with Hafez and Khayyam's
And who danced tumultuously like a gypsy girl
She who now drinks to MacNeice or Nima
And tomorrow too she will with whomever after us,
No, this path leads to neither of these.
But rather towards a vast godless plain,
Upon which thousands of languished fluttering stars

Fall with every beat of my pulse.

Let go

For the holy heaven

Is but the pasture of Christ and alike:

Saints who neither their father

Nor their own goodness known or will ever be known to me

Let's take our knapsacks

Let's step onto the path

Towards the lands

Which upon visiting

Like the flames of fire

Run potent, living wakeful blood into my veins.

Not like my own, old and cold, sooty and sick.

Like a half-dead, headless, tailless worm

That drags itself like staggering drunken men

From the tunnels of the labyrinth of my intoxicated veins

Towards my heart; this pavilion with dim curtains

And asks, with its voice like a lifeless moan:

- Is anyone there?

Hey you! I'm asking, is anyone there?

Has anyone brought any news?

A regard, or a smile?

The warm squeeze of a handshake from a pal-like?

But it sees there is no sound, no light there, not even a trace of a dead man's stare.

There is no sound but the faint flickering of a dying candle. Cheerless, its hands busy with death as dawn approaches.

Going out of there to yet another pavilion,

Hoping to drink up fresh air from the outside

But all that's there is cannabis, is opiate- bestowed by the Sufi man who's singing:

"The world is old and pointless, oh damn this murderous olden wheel..."

And it goes out from there too, towards all shores.
But after a tedious tour,
With its head into yet another pavilion with dim curtains, it asks once
more:
- Is anyone there?
And it sees the same is there, the same candle, the same sound is there.
Who says stay here for you to ask like that forsaken pain-ridden old man:
Oh God! "Where in this dark night should I hang my ragged robe?"

Let's pack our bags
Let's step onto a path
Where? Wherever it may be.
There, where they say the sun of our setting
Paints an image on the canvas of their dawn.

On one hand, a gold-beaded banner, saying: early
From the other, a fallen dead torch, saying: late

Where? Wherever it may be.
There, where they say a bright city has grown like a flower from within a
sea of sinners
And where there are fountains
From which the crystalline leaves and petals of poetry grow and
incessantly so
And from which a man is drinking who says:
"Why should one bring upon oneself the burden of watering a garden
from which grows paper roses?"
Where they say there once was a girl whose death has been (like that of
Taras Bulba's, not like yours, not like mine) yet another virtuous death,

Where? Wherever that's not here. Wherever but here.
Here, I'm fearful of a caress just as much as of battery.
Of the batterer, of the battered

Of the picture on this wall I am fearful.
In this picture,
Omar, with the cruel cursed whip of Xerxes, is hitting so hard
Not upon the seas but on my back, upon my lethargic veins
Upon your living, upon my dead.

Let's begin our journey
Towards meadows no one has sown nor anyone has harvested
Towards those lands where whatever you see is pure, is virgin
And its contour, and its portrait has always been so since the dawn of time
for it's been so pure, so fine.

Towards the sun of a cheerful desert,
That leaves nothing, nowhere, void of its red hot blood
And we sail our cockleshells like the shell of an almond
Upon the endless green velvet of the sea
And we teach the white birds of the sails
To embrace the favourable wind
And we sail on sometimes fast, sometimes slow
Come you the weary friend! You, who just like me, have forsaken things
and drown in sorrow
So heavyhearted I am here
Let's pack our bags,
Let's step onto the endless path.

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