

In Our Tiny Veranda

By Fereydoon Moshiri

But the laughter of my precious daughter, *Bahār*¹,
It's been years since I've seen any springtime or gardens!
And, from rooftops' withered hedges,
I've only seen bitter poisonous grins.
On the melancholy palette of this ancient sky,
I've not seen anything other than dark cloud sketches!

In this dusty, smoke-filled place, alas,
I've forgotten the color of tulips and grass.
And, whatever poets about springtime have composed,
I keep recalling with remorse.

□

In our hideous metropolis,
Here where low brains and high barriers
Cast shadows on us and our destinies,
Years upon years,
To hear a joyful tune, I've been yearning,
To see a green bough, I've been dreaming,
To see a fountain, a tree,
A garden full of blossoms, a clear sky,
I've been chasing smoke and dust and brick and steel!

¹ ***Bahār*** is the name of the spring season in the Persian language. It is also a girls' name.

Not just me, for my expressive daughter
Has heard my tales of flowers and meadows,
But has never seen the joyful flight of swallows.
She who has flown like one herself,
Has only leaped from this room to the veranda!

□

At night, as I fall asleep on the lap of *Hāfez*²,
In colorful dreams, in the garden of sun,
Lovelier than paradise, *Shirāz*³ is blooming,
Brighter than wine, *Shirāz* is gleaming.

□

With my own fantasies,
With my colorful dreams,
With the laughter of my precious daughter, *Bahār*,
With poems composed about springtime,
I'm content to spend my time
In the withered garden of my mind.

But, my “spring,”
This little bird with tied-up wings,
With no springtime, no garden,

² *Hāfez* of *Shirāz* is one of the greatest Persian poets of all time.

³ *Shirāz* is an ancient city in Iran famous for poetry, wine and beautiful gardens. Tombs of two of the greatest Persian poets, *Hāfez* and *Sa'adi*, are located in this city.

With weary wings in her tiny veranda,
--In this hideous metropolis,
Here where low brains and high barriers
Cast shadows on us and our destinies--
What can she do, all by herself?

I watch her, unhappy and fenced-in,
To hear a joyful tune, yearning,
To see a green bough, dreaming,
To see a fountain, a tree,
A garden full of blossoms, a clear sky,
She's sitting dazed,
Staring at distant clouds,
Keeping an eye on her little dream.

I watch her and I grieve.

Translated by Franak Moshiri

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