THE ILLUMINATED

H AF I Z

Love Poems for the Journey to Light

Illuminated by Michael & Saliha Green

Translations by
Coleman Barks • Robert Bly • Meher Baba • Peter Booth

with Jonathan Granoff
Thomas Rain Crowe • Carl Ernst • Elizabeth T. Gray, Jr. & Iraj Anvar
James R. Newell • Annemarie Schimmel & Others

Foreword by Omid Safi
Edited by Nancy Owen Barton

sounds true
BOULDER, COLORADO
Do not procrastinate!
Start to love this very moment.
Do not forget the Beloved
even for one instant.
AND I AM NEARER TO YOU

THAN THE BEATING

OF YOUR OWN HEART
Last night in the radiance

Last night I heard angels pounding on the door of the tavern.

They had kneaded the clay of Adam, and they threw the clay in the shape of a wine cup.

I am a nobody, just a squatter sitting in the dust of the public street; and yet these sacred beings from The Innermost Sanctuary drank some wine with me.

The heavens could not bear the weight of the trust. When the lots were thrown again, the Trust Fell on man, on me, an idiot and a fool.

Let's forgive the seventy-two sects for their ridiculous wars and misbehaviors. Because they couldn't accept the path of truth, they took the road of moonshine.
Thanks be to God,
the Darling whom I love and I
live in peace. Each time the playful angels
in Paradise catch sight of us,
they reach for their wine glasses
and dance.

In the cosmology of Persian mystics the descent of man’s spirit is represented in an allegory that describes angels, under God’s instructions, kneading dust with the wine of God’s love over a forty-day period and shaping it into human form—the chalice of the covenant of God’s love. It is the metaphorical drinking of the wine of God’s love that leads the soul back to its source in God. The Persian mystics call this process the spiritual path. The culmination of this journey is termed God-realization, or Union with God as infinite eternal Love. This is the subject of Hafiz’s poetry—his magnificent love poems for our journey to light.
I did not fall away from the mosque
to the tavern of ruin
by my own wish.
everything that has happened to me
took place through some agreement
made in pre-eternity.

What can be done? For each of us
who has fallen down into time,
the situation is the same
as the needle faces
inside the compass.

There is no way
to keep from turning.
We are the lords of owning nothing!

But we have no tongue to use for requests.

Is there a need for appeal when we’re already with the generous?
The sky-wheel turns us into dawn and fills creation again with color.

Let it be our weakness, this thirst-love for the world, the sun coming up like red-gold being poured!

The potter’s wheel moves, and shapes change quickly.

Let the jar I am becoming turn to a wine cup. Fill me with your love for being awake.

I’m no hypocrite renunciate. Call me this delicious substance you taste when you create new beauty.

Be strong, Hafiz! Work here inside time, where we fail, catch hold again, and climb.

Seek life and patience, for the great wheel, with its sleight of hand, has a thousand tricks more strange than these.
Don’t vex me with your contempt.
Old friends have certain rights, surely,
More rare than all the jewels you’ve stashed.

But your face, the wealth
That mirrors the sun and moon.
I can’t say its value!

Don’t scold me again. Whatever happened
Was supposed to happen, wasn’t it?

Don’t you worry that my breath
May stain your white wool?

Pour me more of that from last night,
So I can forget how much I spent.

And Hafiz! I want to hear your songs.
They’re the best, I swear it,
By the book inscribed in your chest.

This is what the broke drunkard says.
Now that you’ve ripped open the shirt of their patience, your lovers will not let go of the hem of your garment.

Between lover and Beloved there is no veil.

Hafiz, you yourself are the veil.

Get out of the way.
It doesn't matter . . .