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*Abu 'Abd Allah Ja'far ibn Muhammad Roudaki*

*If one doesn't have his wisdom,  
Arriving at his age,  
It can be taught by no teacher  
In the world.*

## Lament in Old Age

Every tooth, ah me! has crumbled, dropped and fallen in decay!  
Tooth it was not, nay say rather, 'twas a brilliant lamp's bright ray;  
Each was white and silvery-flashing, pearl and coral in the light,  
Glistening like the stars of morning or the raindrop sparkling bright;  
Not a one remaineth to me, lost through weakness and decay,  
Whose the fault? 'Twas surely Saturn's planetary rule, long lapse of days;  
No, the fault of Saturn 'twas not, not the long long lapse of days;  
'What then?' I will answer truly: 'Providence which God displays.'  
Ever like to this world is--ball of dust as in the past,  
Ball of dust for aye remaineth, long as its great law doth last.  
That same thing which once was healing, may become a source of pain;  
And the thing that now is painful, healing balm may prove again--  
Time, in fact, at the same moment bringeth age where once was youth,  
And anon rejuvenateth what was gone in eld, forsooth.  
Many a desert waste existeth where was once garden glad;  
And a garden glad existeth where was once a desert sad.  
Ah, thou moon-faced, musky-tressed one, how cans't thou e'er know or deem  
What was once thy poor slave's station--how once held in high esteem?  
On him now thy curling tresses, coquettish thou dost bestow,  
In those days thou didst not see him, when his own rich curls did flow.  
Where are the days when my tresses could make you run!  
Time there was when he in gladness, happy did himself disport,  
Pleasure in excess enjoying, though his silver store ran short;  
Always brought he in the market, countless priced above the rest,  
Every captive Turki damsel with a round pomegranate breast.  
Ah, how many a beauteous maiden, in whose heart love for him reigned,  
Came by night as pilgrim to him, and secret there remained!  
Sparkling wine and eyes that ravish, and the face of beauty deep,  
High-priced though they might be elsewhere, at my door were ever cheap.  
Always happy, never knew I what might be the touch of pain,  
And my heart to gladsome music opened like a wide champaign.  
Many a heart to silk was softened by the magic of my verse,  
Yea, though it were hard as flintstone, anvil-hard, or even worse.  
Ever was my keen eye open for a maid's curled tresses long,  
Ever alert my ear to listen to the world-wise man of song.  
House I had not, wife nor children, no, nor female family ties,  
Free from these and unencumbered have I been in every wise.  
Rudaki's sad plight in old age, Sage, thou verily dost see;  
In those days thou didst not see him as this wretch of low degree.  
In those days thou didst not see him when he roved the wild world o'er,  
Songs inditing, chatting gaily, with a thousand tales and more.  
Time there was when that his verses broadcast through the whole world ran,  
Time there was when he all-hailed was, as the bard of Khurasan,  
Who had greatness? Who had favour, of all people in the land?

*I it was had favour, greatness, from the Saman scions' hand;  
Kfurasan's own Amir, Nasr, forty thousand dirhams gave,  
And a fifth to this was added by Prince of Pure and Brave;  
From his nobles, widely scattered, came a sixty thousand more;  
Those the times when mine was fortune, fortune good in plenteous store.  
Now the times have changed--and I, too, changed and altered must succumb,  
Bring the beggar's staff here to me; time for staff and script has come!*

Abu Abullah Rudaki (d. AD 940), Translated by A. V. William Jackson  
Reference: Arberry, 1972.

### *Mother of Wine*

*The mother of wine must be sacrificed,  
And her children seized and cast into prison.  
But you won't be able to take her children from her  
Unless you first trample her underfoot and drag her soul from her  
Nor is it lawful to separate babe  
From its mother's breast,  
Until it has nursed a full seven months  
From April until the end of October...*

Abu Abullah Rudaki (d. AD 940)

### *Ju-yi Muliyan*

*The Ju-yi Muliyan we call to mind,  
We long for those dear friends long left behind.  
The sands of Oxus, toilsome though they be,  
Beneath my feet were soft as silk to me.  
Glad at the friend's return, the Oxus deep  
Up to our girths in laughing waves shall leap.  
Long live Bukhara! Be thou of good cheer!  
Joyous towards thee hasteth our Amir!  
The moon's the prince, Bukhara is the sky;  
O Sky, the Moon shall light thee by and by!  
Bukhara is the Mead, the Cypress he;  
Receive at last, O Mead, thy Cypress tree!*

Abu Abullah Rudaki (d. AD 940)  
Translated by A. J. Arberry, 1958

## The Muliyan Brook I Recall

The sweet fragrance of the Muliyan brook,  
Recalls memories, so long ago forsook,  
Rough sands of the Oxus beneath my feet,  
Caress them as silk would, soft and sweet.  
Enjoy life everlasting, always full of cheer,  
Your guest's the Amir, ever joyous and dear.  
Tumultuous Oxus, full of joy and mirth,  
Greeting us, leaps warmly to our girth.  
O Bukhara!  
Thou art the Sky, brilliant Moon is He,  
O mighty Sky, embrace Thy Moon with glee.  
Thou art the Mead, stately Cypress He,  
Receive Thee anon, Thy beloved Cypress tree.

Abu Abullah Rudaki (d. AD 940)

## جوى موليان

سروده ابو عبدالله رودكى

بوى جوى موليان آيد همى  
ياد يار مهربان آيد همى  
ريگ آموى و درشتى هاى او  
زير پايم پرنیان آيد همى  
اى بخارا شاد باش و دير زى  
مير زى تو ميهمان آيد همى  
آب جيحون از نشاط روى دوست  
خنك مارا تا ميان آيد همى  
مير ماه است و بخارا آسمان  
ماه سوى آسمان آيد همى  
مير سرو است و بخارا بوستان  
ماه سوى بوستان آيد همى

مرا بسود و فرو ریخت آنچه دندان بود  
 سپیدسیم زده بود و دُر و مرجان بود  
 یکی نماد کنون ز آن همه بسود و بریخت  
 نه نحس کیوان بود و نه روزگار دراز  
 جهان همیشه چنینست گرد و گردانست  
 همان که درمان باشد بجای درد شود  
 کهن کند بزمانی همان کجا نو بود  
 بسا شکفته بیابان که باغ خرم بود  
 هسی چه دانی ای ماهروی مشکین موی  
 بزلف چو گان نازش هسی کنی تو بدو  
 شد آن زمانه که رویش بسان دیبا بود  
 چنانکه خوبی مهمان و دوست، بود عزیز  
 بسا نگار که حیران بدی بدو در چشم  
 شد آن زمانه که او شاد بود و خرم بود  
 هسی خرید و هسی سخت بی شمار درم  
 بسا کنیزک نیکو که میل داشت بدو  
 بروز چونکه نیارست شد بدیدن او  
 نبید روشن و دیدار خوب و روی لطیف  
 دلم خزانه، پر گنج بود و گنج سخن  
 همیشه شاد و ندانستی که غم چه بود  
 بسا دلا که بسان حریر کرده بشعر  
 همیشه چشم زی زلفکان چابک بود  
 عیال نه زن و فرزند نه مؤنت نه  
 تو رودکی را ای ماهرو کنون بینی  
 بدان زمانه ندیدی که از جهان رفتی  
 شد آن زمان که باوانس رادمردان بود  
 همیشه شعر و را زی ملوک دیوانست  
 شد آن زمان که باوانس رادمردان بود  
 کجا بگیتی بودست نامور دهقان  
 کرا بزرگی و نعمت زاین و آن بودی  
 بداد میر خراسانش چل هزار درم  
 ز اولیاش پراگنده نیز هشت هزار  
 چومیردید سخن، داد داد مردی خویش  
 کنون زمانه دگر گشت و من دگر گشتم

نبود دندان لابل چراغ تابان بود  
 ستاره، سحری بود و قطره باران بود  
 چه نحس بود همانا که نحس کیوان بود  
 چه بود منت بگویم قضای یزدان بود  
 همیشه تابود آیین گرد، گردان بود  
 و باز درد همان کز نخست درمان بود  
 و نو کند بزمانی همان که مخلقان بود  
 و باغ خرم گشت آن کجا بیابان بود  
 که حال بنده ازین پیش برچه سامان بود  
 ندیدی آنگه او را که زلف چو گان بود  
 شد آن زمانه که مویش بسان قطران بود  
 بشد که باز نیامد، عزیز مهمان بود  
 بروی او در چشم همیشه حیران بود  
 نشاط او بفزون بود و بیم نقصان بود  
 بشهر هر که یکی ترک نار پستان بود  
 بشب زیاری او نزد جمله پنهان بود  
 نهیب خواجه، او بود و بیم زندان بود  
 اگر گران بدزی من همیشه ارزان بود  
 نشان نامه، مامهر و شعر عنوان بود  
 دلم نشاط و طرب را فراخ میدان بود  
 از آن سپس که بکردار سنک و سندان بود  
 همیشه گوشم زی مردم سخندان بود  
 ازین ستم همه آسوده بود و آسان بود  
 بدان زمانه ندیدی که این چنینان بود  
 سرود گویان گویی هزار داستان بود  
 شد آن زمانه که او پیشکار میران بود  
 همیشه شعر و را زی ملوک دیوان بود  
 شد آن زمانه که او شاعر خراسان بود  
 مرا بخانه او سیم بود و خملان بود  
 و را بزرگی و نعمت ز آل سامان بود  
 و زو فزونی، یک پنج میر ماکان بود  
 بمن رسید بدان وقت، خال خوب آن بود  
 ز اولیاش چنان کز امیر فرمان بود  
 عصا بیار که وقت عصا و انبان بود