

# LOST GENERATION

POETRY & PROSE



EHAB SHAWKY



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*Dedicated to Egypt's Lost Generation.*

*Special dedication to,  
Ahmed Ibrahim, Tamer Dabbour, Mohamed Badry,  
Ahmed Gado, Ahmed Serry, Samir Sabry, Amr Rasem,  
Mohamed Farouk, Maged Mohamed, Mohamed Rashed,  
Omar Adel, Haytham Refky, Shady Ma'moun,  
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Ms. Ne'mah & Ms. Ghada Abd Er-Rahman.*

*To all "Child Home" amazing teachers (1985-1990),  
& all "Gezira" wonderful mentors (1991-1994).*

*This book is a compilation of selected poems, prose, and rhymed stories,  
written by Ehab Shawky. It's a reflection upon forty years of his  
generation's dreams, aspirations, feelings, thoughts, and breakdowns.*

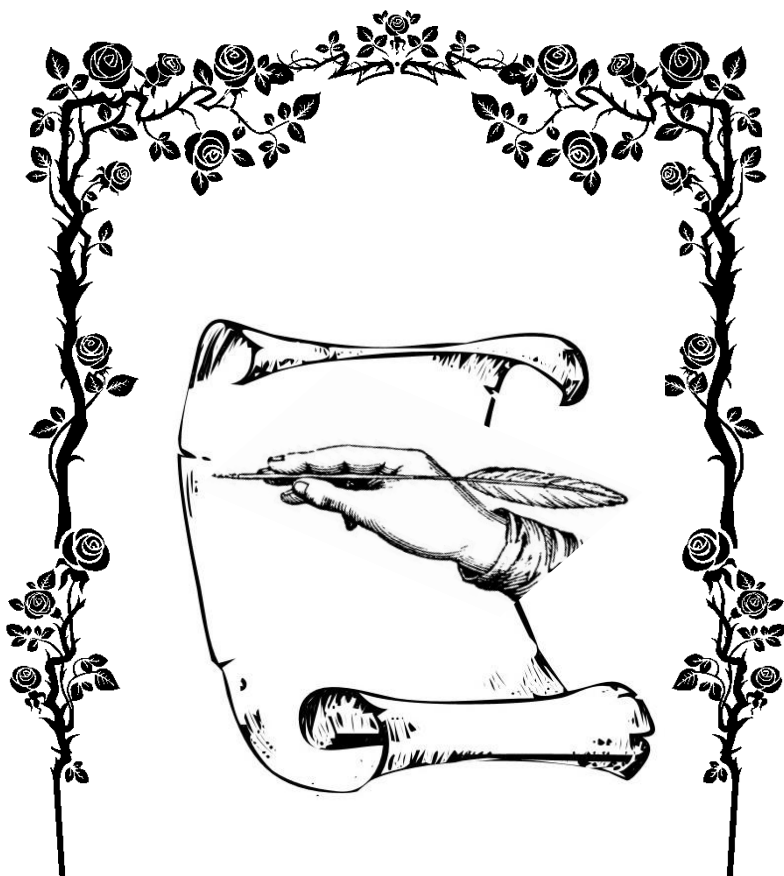


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Let's Start Our Journey



POETRY IS A REMEDY FOR THE SOUL  
A MEDICINE FOR THE MIND  
& A DOORWAY TO WISDOM

## DARK THOUGHTS

Suffering the treacherous wind,  
Having my wings pinned,  
I lie naked in the shadow  
Under a tree amidst a meadow  
Watching a little bird fly  
Eager to reach the sky.  
How brave and bold it was,  
Striving for such an impossible cause,  
Never tired from falling,  
Never giving in to crawling,  
Always rising again,  
Ever persisting to win.  
I looked at the bird and pondered  
Over its actions and wondered,  
Why couldn't I be like him?  
Why couldn't I surmount my whim?  
In my thoughts, I'm a prisoner,  
To my fate, I'm a petitioner,  
Waiting for a hazy old dream  
To let me out & my soul redeem,



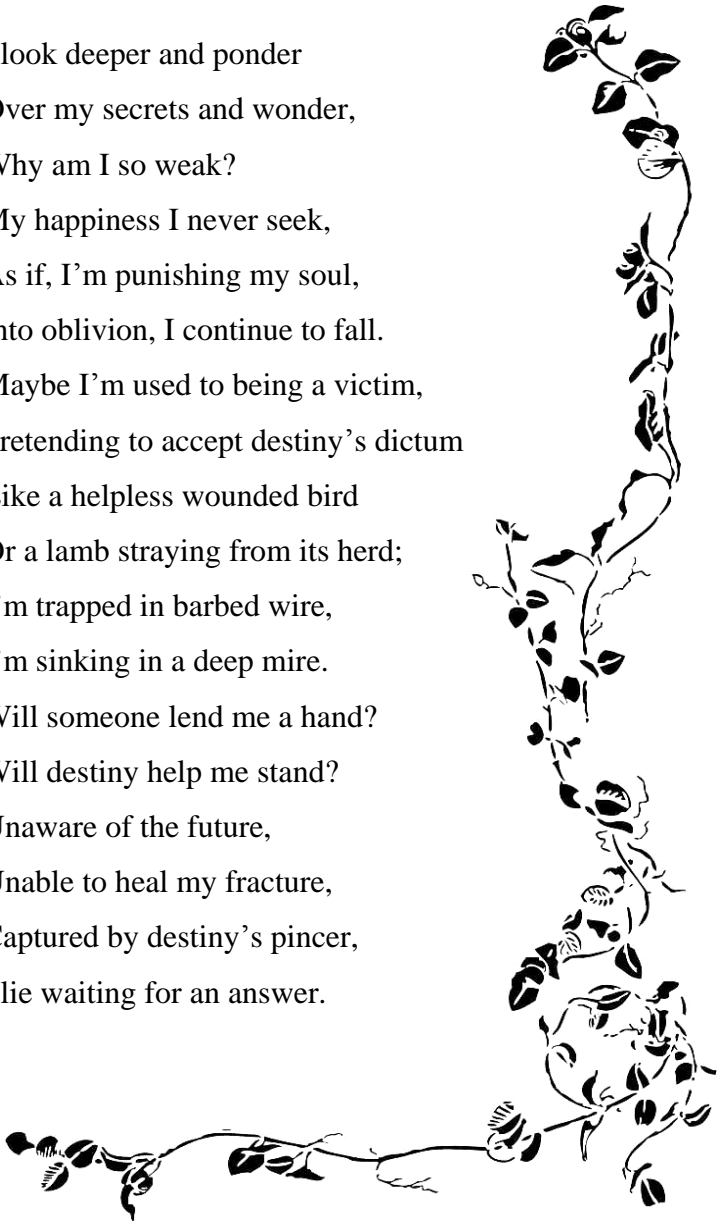


When I shall fly as I please—  
Soar in freedom's breeze,  
Strong and sound,  
No longer bound.

I wake up on reality  
Realizing its brutality.  
Sometimes I ponder  
Over my past & wonder,  
Have I lost my way?  
Have I gone astray?  
There is emptiness inside.  
Desperation, I try to hide.  
I cannot see any future,  
I just hope for a peaceful departure.  
When I think of my sins,  
My head spins.  
I look at myself in despise,  
I look through my soul and recognize  
My weakness and my shame  
From a will I found lame.



I look deeper and ponder  
Over my secrets and wonder,  
Why am I so weak?  
My happiness I never seek,  
As if, I'm punishing my soul,  
Into oblivion, I continue to fall.  
Maybe I'm used to being a victim,  
Pretending to accept destiny's dictum  
Like a helpless wounded bird  
Or a lamb straying from its herd;  
I'm trapped in barbed wire,  
I'm sinking in a deep mire.  
Will someone lend me a hand?  
Will destiny help me stand?  
Unaware of the future,  
Unable to heal my fracture,  
Captured by destiny's pincer,  
I lie waiting for an answer.



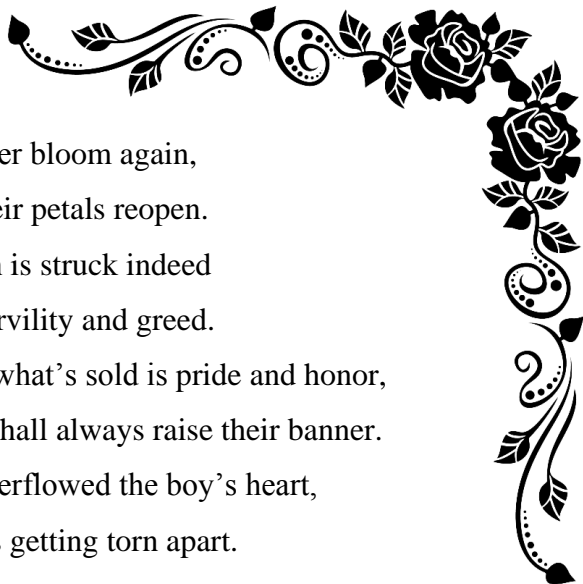
## TIME OF THE FALLEN

Destined to sorrow,  
With no hope in tomorrow,  
Luckless by birth,  
Bluer than earth,  
The ever-afflicted boy,  
Destiny's favorite toy;  
Deeply hurt,  
Treated as dirt;  
From misery to fear,  
He shed no tear.  
The world is a nasty place,  
Inhabited by a stupid race.  
A truth he discovered late,  
After the sealing of his fate.  
He hoped to make a change;  
To the world, he was so strange.  
Righting wrongs is dangerous  
When most people are treacherous.  
Like Don Quichotte, he failed,  
He grew old and despaired.  
Worn-ruin is what remains,  
Bound by sorrow's chains,



Of the boy who walked in love,  
Created from clay thereof.  
Tired of the world,  
With banners furled,  
He lies in isolation,  
Preferring seclusion;  
Sick of blind eyes,  
Of lies and failed tries;  
Sick of deaf ears,  
Of loud jeers  
Mocking his venture,  
His refusal to surrender.  
He continues to struggle,  
Entering tussle after tussle,  
After a lost hope crawling,  
In times of the fallen.  
With a mind shaking in worry,  
With a vision dark and blurry,  
His heart wails and screams,  
Over remnants of old dreams,  
Lying like dead roses  
Behind a curtain that closes.





They'll never bloom again,  
Nor will their petals reopen.  
The bargain is struck indeed  
Between servility and greed.  
As long as what's sold is pride and honor,  
The fallen shall always raise their banner.  
Anguish overflowed the boy's heart,  
His life was getting torn apart.  
Screaming but unheard,  
Saying the unspoken word,  
"For the cheapest price,  
Hell has defeated paradise."



*In times of the fallen, striving souls lead a lonely life.  
They try to make victorious what's right.  
Don't forsake them. Join their struggle.*

## LOST GENERATION

Standing firm for honesty,  
Holding on to veracity,  
In times of lies and illusions,  
Ruled by endless confusions.  
Alone they insist to strive,  
Unstoppable till they thrive.  
From one generation to the next,  
Like a verse out of context,  
They tumble and halt  
Enduring every assault.  
They walk and crawl,  
Taking fall after fall,  
Clinging to a passion,  
Seeking no compassion,  
Sure of victory,  
Smelling its liberty,  
Invoking their Lord,  
Adhering to his cord.  
“Till death,” they pledged;  
With legs wedged,  
They held their grounds  
Ignoring warning sounds,

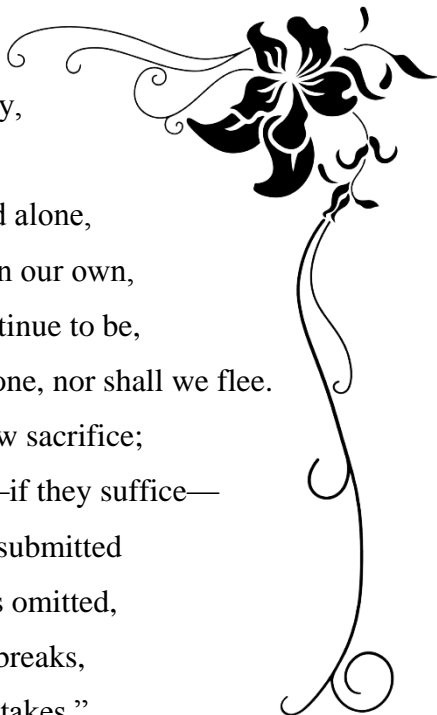


“The enemy is too many,  
Take allies if any.”

“No, we’ll stand alone,  
We’re always on our own,  
So we shall continue to be,  
We shall fear none, nor shall we flee.  
Every day, a new sacrifice;  
Our own lives—if they suffice—  
Shall gladly be submitted  
Till falsehood is omitted,  
Till our enemy breaks,  
If that’s what it takes.”

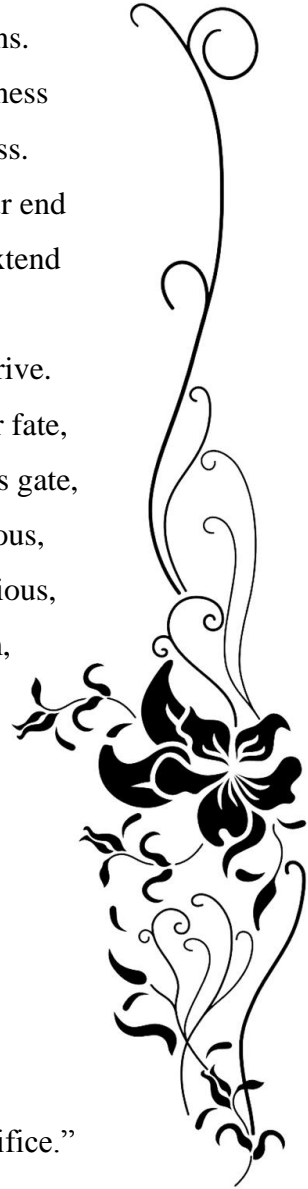
The brave youths noted not  
That traitors continue to plot  
Against their dreams  
Protecting rotten regimes.  
The stab came from behind  
By hands so blind.

“O wretched senseless countries,  
Why can’t you recognize your enemies?  
We were your dawn,  
Your youth, your backbone.



*Dedicated to the honest sincere youths of the Middle East who gave  
their lives defending their people's right to justice & a decent life.  
R.I.P precious dreamers.*

We swallowed your pains  
To inject love in your veins.  
We consumed your bitterness  
To grant you our sweetness.  
Your silence is writing our end  
While our voices die to extend  
Your existence, your life,  
May others continue to strive.  
Willingly, we wait for our fate,  
Willingly, we knock on its gate,  
Concealing a pain so vicious,  
Submitting our most precious,  
May it restore your charm,  
May it sound the alarm  
In deaf ears,  
Blocked by endless fears.  
Now that we're leaving  
You start grieving!  
We don't need your tears,  
Nor do we ask for cheers.  
We ask you for no price,  
But to remember our sacrifice.”





## L O S T   T I M E S

In its motion  
Time is a deep ocean,  
With whirls and raging waves  
Darker than deep caves.  
We flounder in its maze,  
And our souls blaze.  
Unwillingly, we lost our way,  
Blinded, gone far astray.  
Something fell broken within,  
Feelings turned into a sin.  
Dreams lost in oblivion,  
Pervaded by sadness alluvion.  
While days pass by,  
Our wounds continue to cry.  
We walk above their thorns,  
Listening to their horns  
Declare the rise of darkness  
In a sky turning starless,  
Tortured by running years,  
Drowned in screams and tears.  
'Hope,' no longer floats;  
'Why,' chokes our throats.

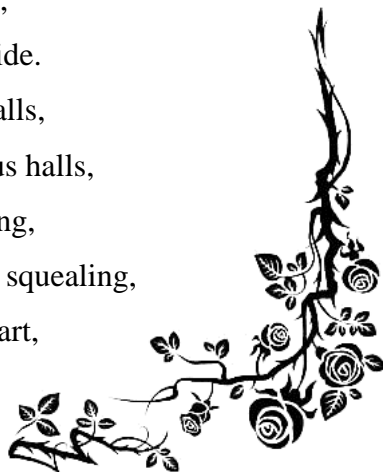


Speech turned into silence,  
Screams heard in their sadness  
For lost green hearts;  
Amidst their torn parts,  
We search for an old track  
Unable to find our way back.



## LOST HOPE

Like a shredded web,  
Life continues to ebb.  
Tears falling in the dark  
In hearts dull and stark  
With pains so stern,  
With none to miss or yearn.  
Strained by people's cruelty,  
Over-run by dark reality,  
A reality full of suffering,  
Full of waste and plundering.  
Dragging our souls over its thorns,  
It laughs maniacally blowing its horns.  
Doors of steel surround the premises,  
Murdered feelings lie on dry clematis.  
Screams unheard inside,  
Sadness in all nooks abide.  
Dreams pinned to its walls,  
Decorating its monstrous halls,  
Dangling from the ceiling,  
Shredded, continuously squealing,  
Piercing through my heart,  
Tearing it apart.



Can you hear? Can you feel?  
I beg you, stop this ordeal.  
Will you respond? Will you speak?  
Or will matters—forever—remain so bleak?  
Stop stabbing my heart without killing me,  
Stop crushing my soul, I'm done, can't you see!  
I'm not asking for a chance anymore,  
The end is what I'm asking for.  
I hope for nothing,  
I ask to stop living.  
I beg you, Let me go,  
Upon me, your pardon bestow.  
Adrift, like a feather in the wind,  
Evil, I can no longer fend.  
Forlorn by birth,  
Labelled, "The Wretched of the earth."  
I'm not tired, I'm broken,  
My wounds are wide open.  
Let me return to dust,  
I'm done living like rust.  
Let me scatter like ash,  
I can't suffer another lash.  
Let me depart, I beg you please;  
Let my departure feel like a gentle breeze.

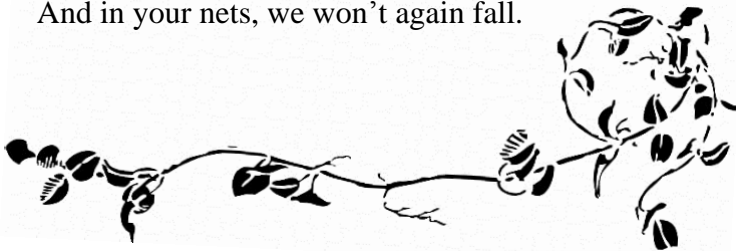


## MENIAL LIFE

East and West, evil resides all around;  
To its strings, most people are bound.  
Stop it before its spark ignites our lands;  
Stop it before its winds disable our hands.  
Our mirrors no longer identify our faces,  
Our spirits are gone leaving no traces.  
Treason is killing all that's humane,  
In men's veins runs the blood of Cain.  
Abels are extinct; they no longer exist.  
Injustice, selfishness and greed persist.  
Who's lying and who's truthful?  
No one can tell; we're all distrustful.  
Old times soak the face of my mother;  
In my own brother, I can't see my father.  
Life is a menial deceitful place,  
Whoever seeks its glitter gets lost in its maze.  
What's the purpose of life if we lose our souls?  
How can we live ignoring wisdom's calls?  
Who would we be if we sell our past and present?  
Why should we live if tomorrow won't be pleasant?  
From pure hearts let new times spring,  
Like a fresh tone from a violin's string,



Spreading kindness, planting emotions  
In chests drowned in sadness oceans.  
Let us soar high beyond the skies,  
Let us dream and open our eyes  
On a paradise of humanity  
Planted with wisdom and sanity.  
May our dreams hold our backs straight  
Till tomorrow brings forth what's great.  
O life seduce others but the kind,  
Their hearts aren't yours to grind.  
In their eyes, your treasures hold no light;  
Over your remnants, they will never fight.  
They live simple with pure intentions,  
Their deeds are their sole companions.  
Innocent souls are not yours to take,  
Spray your poison elsewhere you dirty snake.  
We have divorced you once and for all,  
And in your nets, we won't again fall.



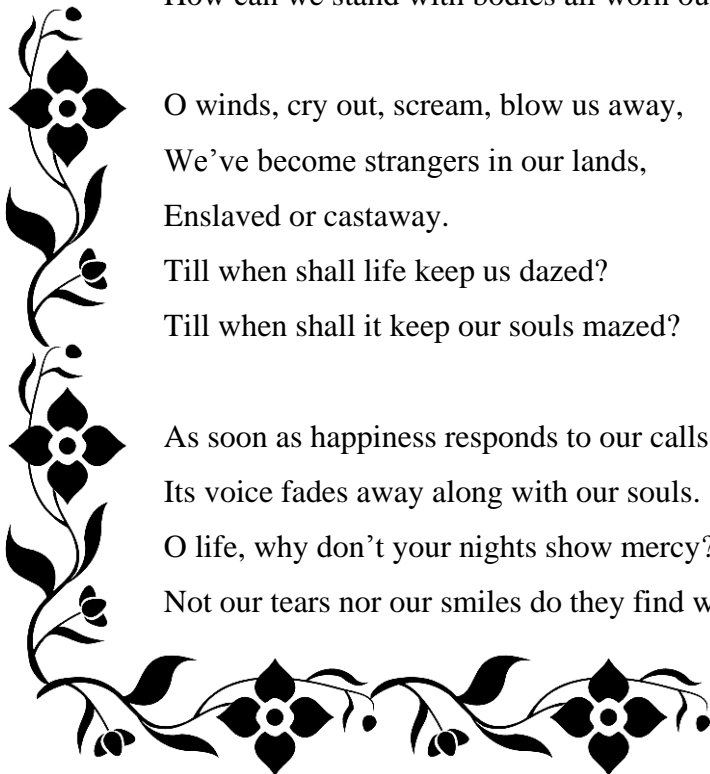
## SLAVES' SCREAM

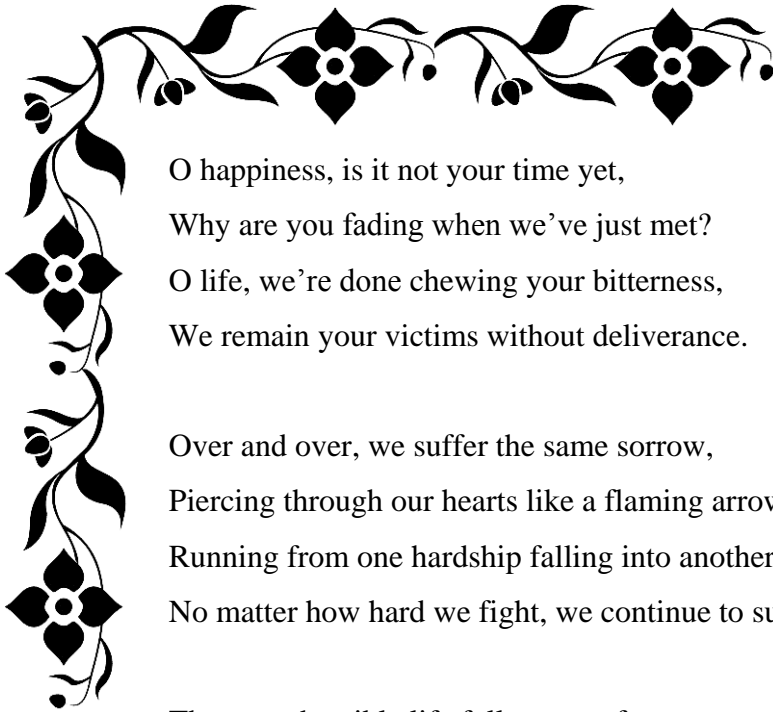
O deficient times, O ribald days,  
What a life flipped, its nobles are at the base.  
They have stolen our land, and we stand accused!  
Their soldiers are thieves,  
And their chiefs stand amused.

Strangers eat our flesh and feed us mud,  
They drink our sweat and toast with our blood.  
We fall and their whips force us to hold out,  
How can we stand with bodies all worn out?

O winds, cry out, scream, blow us away,  
We've become strangers in our lands,  
Enslaved or castaway.  
Till when shall life keep us dazed?  
Till when shall it keep our souls mazed?

As soon as happiness responds to our calls,  
Its voice fades away along with our souls.  
O life, why don't your nights show mercy?  
Not our tears nor our smiles do they find worthy.





O happiness, is it not your time yet,  
Why are you fading when we've just met?  
O life, we're done chewing your bitterness,  
We remain your victims without deliverance.

Over and over, we suffer the same sorrow,  
Piercing through our hearts like a flaming arrow.  
Running from one hardship falling into another,  
No matter how hard we fight, we continue to suffer.

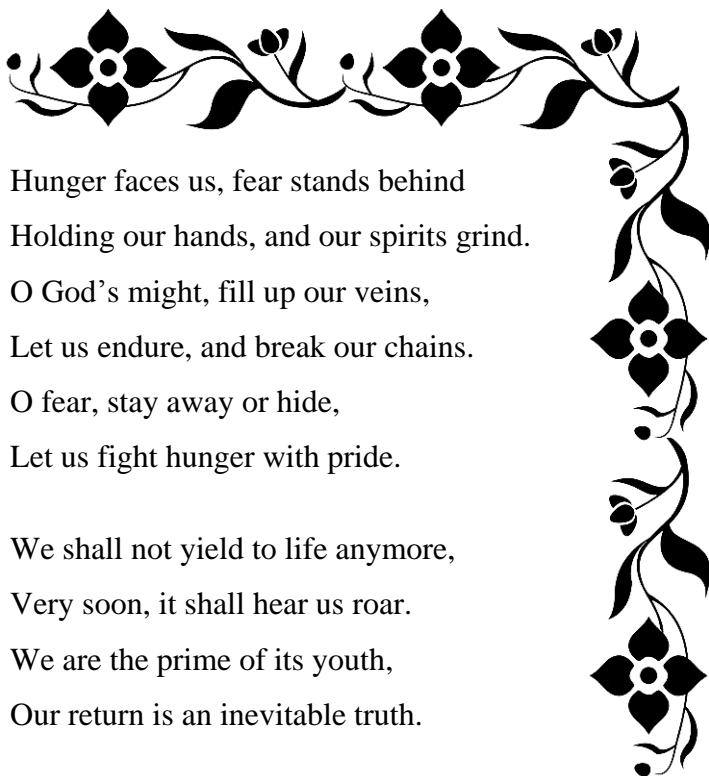
The same horrible life follows our footsteps,  
Tangling our legs in endless dips and slips.  
Wherever we go, we find the same darkness,  
As if, we're destined to live life comfortless.

Injustice persists; poverty coexists  
Worshiped and filling all records and lists.  
Till when shall we struggle blind eyed?  
What's right is manifest but its tongue is tied.

The difference between us and the sons of modernity,  
They seek life's ownership while we seek fraternity.



*In memory of the Great Egyptian Poet, Sayed Hegab.  
Inspired by his great Arabic poems for "Al-Weseyyah."  
Recomposed and written in English by Ehab Shawky.*



Hunger faces us, fear stands behind  
Holding our hands, and our spirits grind.  
O God's might, fill up our veins,  
Let us endure, and break our chains.  
O fear, stay away or hide,  
Let us fight hunger with pride.

We shall not yield to life anymore,  
Very soon, it shall hear us roar.  
We are the prime of its youth,  
Our return is an inevitable truth.

Shoulder to shoulder, hand in hand,  
We shall break all chains and make our stand.  
We shall redeem our age and open its door,  
We shall retrieve our rights, of that we swore.

Dying for freedom is birth.  
For every bit of what it's worth,  
Enslavement, we shall stand defying,  
Till we earn our freedom, or die trying.

*When those in power take democracy as a ride  
To control the weak, then this is "Modern Slavery."*

## HOW I DREAM

“How I dream, old friend,  
Of a world that can mend  
Broken pure hearts,  
Gathering scattered parts.  
A world that knows no destruction,  
That knows fair construction.  
Love, sowed all around,  
Hatred, no longer found.  
We’re no longer bound  
To sorrows of the past,  
Nor are we downcast.  
I dream day and night.  
To my dreams’ light,  
I escape from reality’s darkness,  
I search for goodness,  
For warmth and beauty,  
Whose finding is a sacred duty.  
It’s a world possible to reach,  
A world I’ll never cease to preach.”



“This dream my friend,  
Your life will surely end.  
It’s like a rose amidst the desert,  
It won’t live, save your effort.  
Such dreams are destined to perish;  
Such dreams, people don’t cherish.  
You shall be forsaken by the majority,  
Mocking your effort will be their priority.  
I hate to see your heart  
Getting torn apart  
By reality’s blunt knife,  
So don’t waste your life.  
Let the world be;  
It won’t change, believe me.”



Faraway, from beyond a mountain,  
Came running a bunch of children,  
Chasing their loose kite, shouting ‘FLY,’  
Their eyes attached to the sky,  
Their hopes aimed so high,  
All odds, insisting to defy,  
Trying to outrun the wind  
And their dream defend

With magnificent persistency,  
With perfect consistency.  
While the elders continued to debate,  
The youngsters overlooked the bate.  
They carried out the task  
With no question to ask.  
They strove with a pure passion,  
Seeking to make the impossible happen.

*Youngsters have purer hearts.*



## THE LUMINOUS HEART

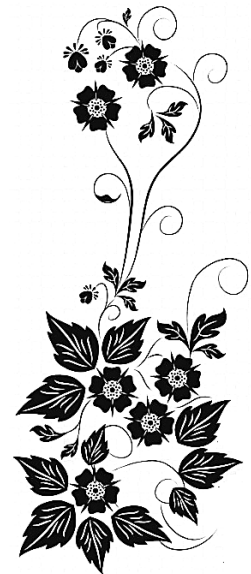
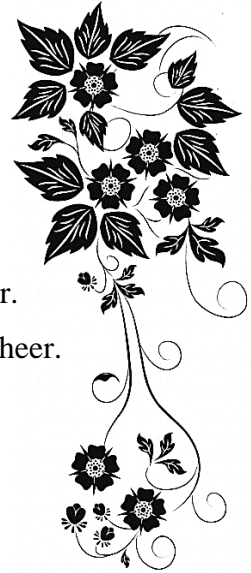
Light resides within hearts  
Deeply buried amidst its parts.  
Let it shine through before its sun sets  
Or you shall live trapped in life's nets.

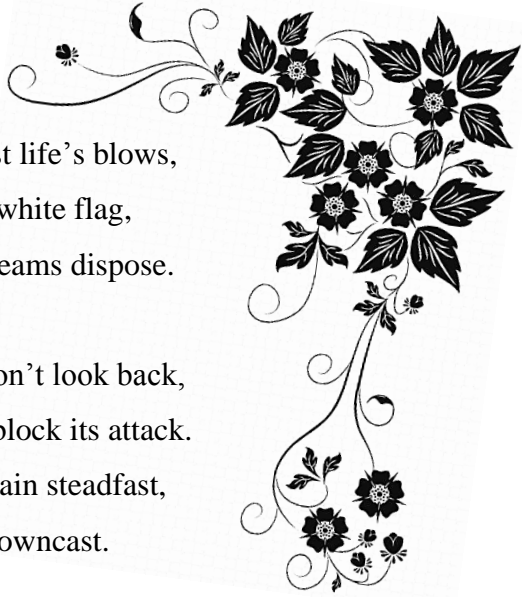
Despair is weakness and a cowardly fear.  
Hope opens locked doors, and dreams cheer.  
You either remain steadfast  
Or live trapped in your past.

Touch the greenness of the trees,  
Feel the moon's light and its cool breeze.  
Carve hearts on senseless stones,  
Radiate life into decaying bones.

Ahead of you, hurry, crossover,  
Walk the distance, it's not yet over.  
Nothing could bring your dreams near,  
Save a heart, that knows no fear.

Many people accept their fate,  
They blindly catch its bate.





Swaying amidst life's blows,  
They raise the white flag,  
And of their dreams dispose.

Toughen up; don't look back,  
Fight despair; block its attack.  
You either remain steadfast,  
Or live alone downcast.

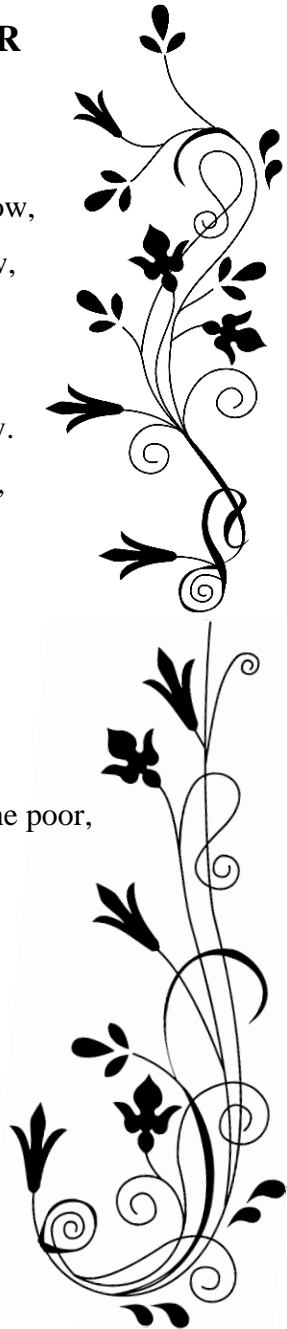
Sweeten the bitterness of the days;  
Seek to make your life blaze.  
Getup, color your dreams;  
From dark clouds, create rainbow beams.

Inside your body, there's still a soul,  
Capable of filling your heart's hole.  
Of your weakness, stop screaming,  
And don't you dare stop dreaming.

*In memory of the Egyptian Lyricist, Magdy Kamel.  
Inspired by his Arabic lyrics for 'An-Nour Makanu Fel-Qoloob' song.  
Recomposed and written in English by Ehab Shawky.*

## MOUNTAIN CLIMBER

O Mountain climber,  
Bring me with you a new tomorrow,  
Free from stress, free from sorrow,  
Different from yesterday,  
Colored and shiny,  
No longer gloomy, no longer grey.  
A tomorrow fit to hold my dream,  
Able to make the future gleam.  
Sun runs in its face;  
Justice forms its base.  
Let it be easygoing,  
With kind hearts growing;  
Smiling to the weak, smiling to the poor,  
For their pains, bringing a cure;  
Green as a grass field,  
Holding enough yield  
To feed the hungry,  
To hasten their recovery;  
Pure like moon's light,  
Lighting our dark night.  
Governed by conscience,  
Able to create a difference.



O mountain climber,  
Will I live to see your tomorrow?  
Will it put an end to my sorrow?  
Will it bring my dreams to life?  
Will it 'merrily' end the strife?  
O mountain climber,  
Will you arrive in time?  
Will your tomorrow with my dreams chime?  
Will it bring my dreams any closer?  
Or will it disappoint me over and over?

*In appreciation for the Egyptian Poet, Muhammad Abd El-Qader.  
Inspired by his Arabic lyrics for 'Ya Tale' El-Shagarah' song.  
Recomposed and written in English by Ehab Shawky.*

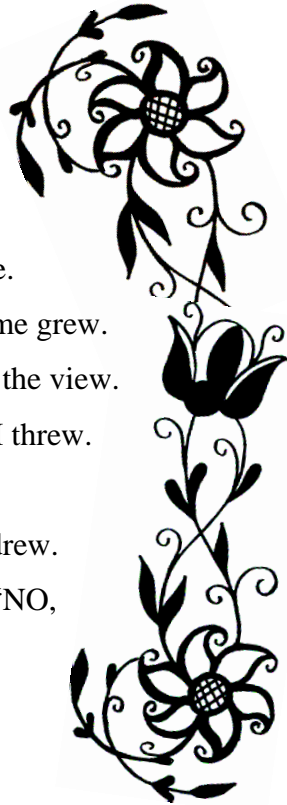




## HIGH HOPES

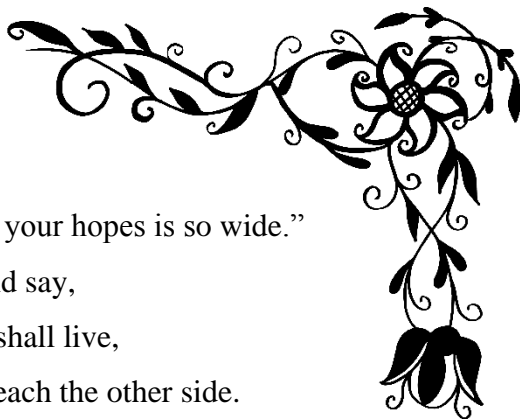
*Poetic Prose*

To see a dream come true,  
How would it feel?  
To see a dream come true,  
What distances shall I walk, in which ways,  
And what should I do?  
Where is fate leading me?  
I don't have a clue.  
Do I have more chances  
Or all my chances, I blew?  
If I knew, I wouldn't be so blue.  
I got older, and despair inside me grew.  
My defenses disappeared from the view.  
My weapons, into a deep well I threw.  
Hope, I try to eschew.  
Towards my last castle, I withdrew.  
Resorting to my heart, it said, "NO,  
I won't give up,  
We can have victory, I know."  
A faint light starts to glow,  
It starts resisting and struggles ensue.  
I may lose a battle, but striving is a must.  
My soul may be lost



But in my heart it puts all trust  
To shake off defeat's dust,  
To give desperation a strong fight,  
Till it retrieves hope's light.  
Drawing my weapons with might,  
Standing firm for what's right,  
Sending strike after strike,  
Building dike after dike,  
Strengthening my defenses once more,  
There's still hope worth fighting for.  
Depression I shall tear down,  
Hope shall breakthrough,  
Desperation, I shall subdue,  
My youth, I shall renew.  
As the trapped bird once flew,  
Again it can fly  
And its freedom dream shall come true.  
As long as my heart beats,  
I shall learn, strive, and my best do.  
Time is a cunning sword,  
Strike first or it shall strike you.  
I won't give in to life,  
I shall tame the shrew.





Deniers say,  
“The River of your hopes is so wide.”  
I look back and say,  
“As long as I shall live,  
I shall try to reach the other side.  
I shall row against the stream  
Seeking those who share my dream.  
Shoulder to shoulder, hand in hand,  
Together, we shall make our stand  
Till we see our dreams come true.  
In good company, all dreams are possible;  
With my brethren, we’re undefeatable.  
Only the stray lamb gets eaten by the wolf;  
Amidst my lot, I shall protect myself.  
I won’t let my life pass through  
Till I see my dream come true.  
Deniers say,  
“Those are very high hopes to hold on to.”  
And I say,  
“They are my hopes, and I shall never let go.”

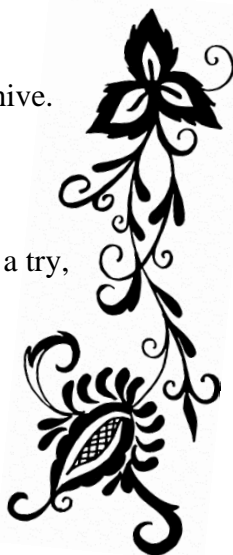


## FOR DREAMS TO COME TRUE

How I long for a journey beyond my imagination  
To a world whose wonders surpass all inspiration.  
From my world, I long to get away,  
In faraway lands, I wish to stay.  
Lands which man has long ago abandoned,  
Leaving traces of what his hands had sculptured.  
I dream of a big change,  
At a world that feels less strange.  
A world in which I'm a stranger no more,  
A world I have always hoped for.  
These wishes struggle inside my head  
With what a wise man once said,  
"Dreams are sometimes out of reach,  
They cannot escape reality's siege."  
His words touched on my wound;  
With my case, they were perfectly tuned.  
My dreams are like birds flying high in wide skies  
Snipped one after another in front of my eyes  
Ensuing more rage in the storm of my soul,  
Agitating more pain in my heart's hole;  
Creating a void amidst my feelings,  
Waiting to be revived by miracle healings.



The wise man's voice echoed again,  
"Free yourself from dreams' chain;  
Strive till your last breath,  
Strive till the moment of your death.  
Don't you remember our mentor's words?  
Your good deeds are your treasured hoards."  
Pondering over what he said,  
To myself, I had to admit,  
Hope is a double-edged sword,  
You have to unhook yourself from its cord.  
You either use it to push yourself forward,  
Or out of life's ocean, it shall drag you shoreward.  
Never lose heart; continue to strive.  
If it's honey you desire, build your own hive.  
Hope for your dreams to come true  
But strive hard and your dreams pursue.  
True failure is to live without giving risk a try,  
Striving and Hope  
Are the wings with which dreams fly;  
The stronger they are,  
The further shall your dreams reach,  
A lesson that most parents fail to teach.  
Strive no matter how impossible things may seem,  
Strive and you shall reach the world in your dream.

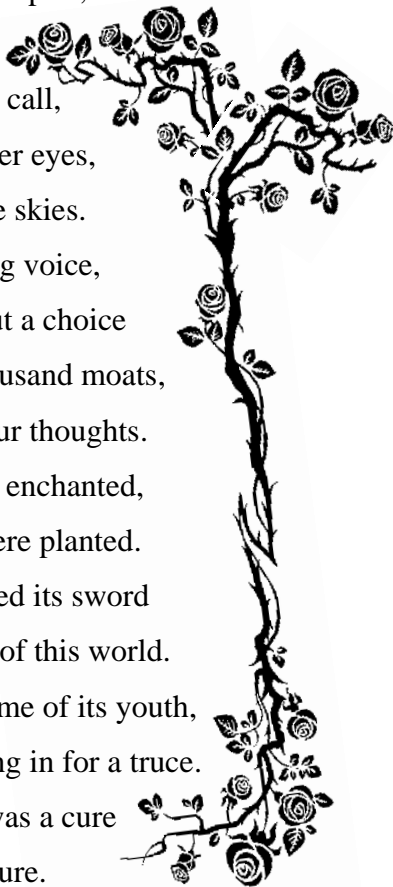


## LOVE DREAM

Wandering at night, following my feet,  
She passed by me in that empty street.  
Our eyes met in a quick glance.  
My soul fell in a state of trance.  
They were like a deep dark well  
Whose secrets no one can tell.  
Mysterious as the night,  
Soft with a catchy sight,  
Sparkling with tears that never fell;  
In their ocean, sorrow seemed to dwell.  
Taking sadness as her friend,  
Slowly, she continued to wend.  
In her looks, I saw my soul's reflection.  
In her sadness, I felt my own affection.  
Her beautiful eyes, her sad smile,  
Her shining face, her simple style,  
All made me recall an old dream.  
A beautiful memory started to gleam.  
Is this her or is it an illusion?  
My mind couldn't tell after years of seclusion.  
Are you an image my heart resorted to draw  
Escaping from loneliness, clutching at a straw?



The girl who sees through her heart,  
Whose smiles, her face never depart;  
Who loves with her soul,  
Whom in my dreams I always call,  
Who cures with a look from her eyes,  
Whose eyes are wider than the skies.  
Ever since I heard your singing voice,  
My heart was captured without a choice  
By a spirit mightier than a thousand moats,  
Emancipating my mind by your thoughts.  
Whether I were hypnotized or enchanted,  
Your words inside my soul were planted.  
Since then, my heart has carried its sword  
Defending you from the evils of this world.  
It remained so through the prime of its youth,  
Sincere to its love, never giving in for a truce.  
Merely passing by my mind was a cure  
Urging my soul to further endure.  
Without you, I'm an empty boat waiting to sail,  
Without you, this entire world is just a big jail.  
How I long for your tender touch,  
How I long to see your face so much.



Remaining sincere, I paid the price;  
My own life, I had to sacrifice,  
Hoping for our union,  
Under love's dominion,  
When we shall sail in restless oceans  
Between waves of endless emotions;  
Blessed by our Creator,  
Our souls' liberator.  
With your hand in mine,  
My pledge of love, with my blood I shall sign.  
My hand is waiting for yours,  
"I shall never let go," my heart roars.

Feeling afraid, I slowly turned around;  
There was I, listening to my heart's sound.  
With my soul, my heart continued to talk,  
And in the empty street, alone, I continued to walk.





## HOW I MISS YOU O FATHER

He sat beside his father's bed.  
Towards him, the old man tilted his head.  
He looked into his father's eyes  
Forcing his tears to hide in disguise.  
The respirator didn't allow the man to speak.  
How distressful it was to see his father that weak.  
The boy endured the harsh situation,  
Neglecting the burden of his tribulation.  
He never thought this day would come;  
His mind felt shattered, his limbs went numb.  
He thought he'd die before his father,  
He imagined him comforting his mother.  
Knowing his father's perseverance,  
Filled with respect for his valiance,  
He felt betrayed by fate,  
The fate stealing his truest mate.  
Afraid to hurt the man's pride,  
His tears, he tried to hide.  
The old man looked away,  
For the imprisoned tears making way.  
A boiling tear escaped from its prison;  
The boy wiped it keeping his tears hidden.

Knowing how his boy felt,  
Sensing his powers about to melt,  
Inside his magnificent heart,  
That was getting torn apart,  
The man concealed the knowledge of departure,  
He showed no signs of his heart's fracture  
Out of sympathy for his beloved student,  
Sparing him the pain of that moment,  
When the soul returns to its maker,  
And there remains his caretaker,  
Motionless and cold,  
Awaiting a shroud to hold.  
Seeking to comfort his child,  
The hazel eyes gently smiled.  
In surrender, the boy shook his head,  
"I shall leave you to rest," he said.  
He bowed and kissed his father's hand.  
He got up barely able to stand.  
He walked away with heavy steps,  
With weeping eyes and shaking lips.  
Unaware he just lost the only man  
Who gave him what none other can;  
Whose absence could never be compensated,  
Whose love was never properly expressed or stated.



## THE SAD SMILE

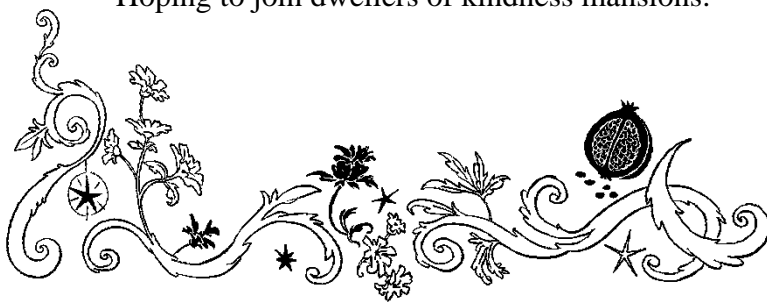
I smile even if my heart cries,  
I continue to live in disguise.  
I try to make people happy,  
Their smiles make my pains nappy.  
Without them I cannot live,  
My show is all I can give.  
I jump and giggle,  
I shout and jiggle,  
I stumble and crawl,  
Throw ball after ball.  
They yell and cheer,  
They laugh and jeer,  
They smile and clap,  
Throw slap after slap  
At a heart swelling with pain,  
By its blunt edge slain.  
They see me on a stage  
But never in a cage.  
They see me smile,  
They fall for the wile.  
They see what their eyes catch  
But their hearts, they never unlatch.



They never wish to see my real face,  
The red nose is what they embrace.  
They bring their children to my show  
But teach them never to be like me when they grow.  
I do not blame them,  
Leaves scatter around the stem.  
Who'd want his child to become a clown,  
To become the joke of the town!  
On stage, I'm a king;  
To real life, I barely cling.  
I'm a feather in the wind;  
My aspirations, I can't defend.  
I don't control my life;  
My dreams with fear are rife.  
I live day by day;  
Amidst daily blows I sway.  
A day without a blow is a grace;  
A day without pain has no trace.  
With sadness, I have to cope;  
For goodness, I continuously hope.  
Soon I won't be able to jump like before,  
Soon I won't be able to catch balls anymore.



Soon I won't be receiving any smile,  
I'll only have my room as an exile,  
Dreaming of a miraculous chance,  
Waiting for happiness to glance  
At a soul falling in oblivion,  
Eager to escape life's dominion,  
Seeking to flee solitude's dungeons,  
Hoping to join dwellers of kindness mansions.

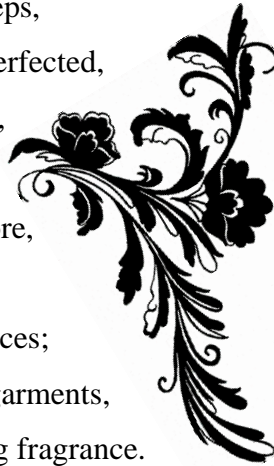


## BEYOND THE ROAD OF LIFE

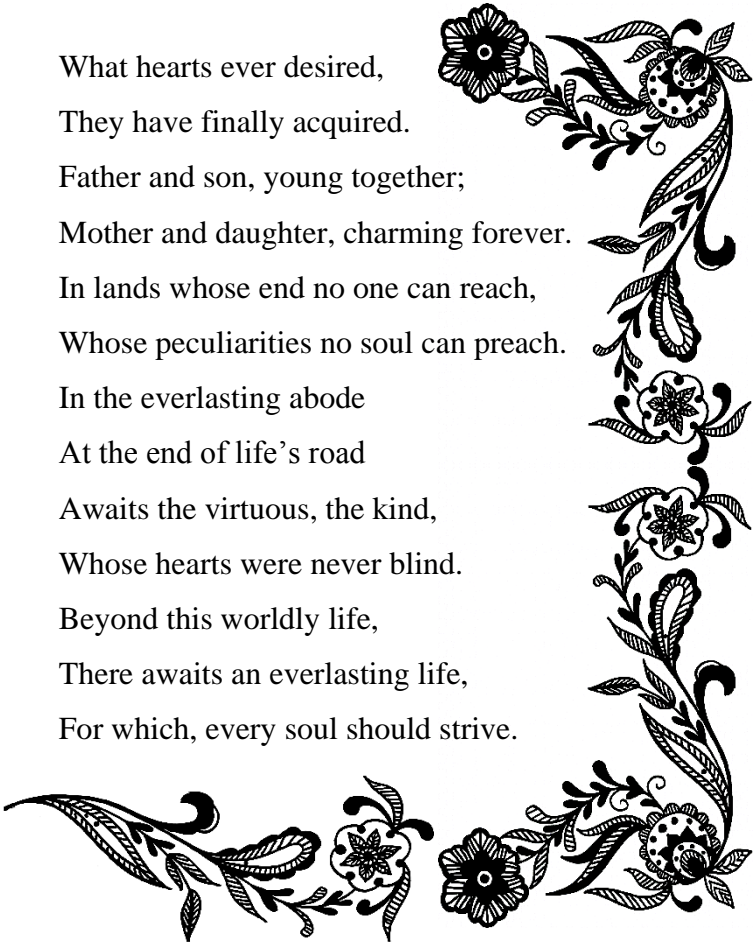
Beyond the road of life,  
Roses on both sides,  
Waving in soft tides,  
Stairs, wondrous high,  
Reaching into the sky,  
Silvery grey,  
Overlooking a bay,  
Adjoining gigantic trees,  
Swaying with every breeze,  
Creating a marvelous dance,  
Singing glorious chants,  
With angelic voices,  
Creating beautiful melodies.  
All inhabitants rejoice,  
Free from all worries.  
Up the emerald stairs,  
Travels immortal heirs,  
Reaching for the light  
Whose magnificent delight  
Surpasses all imagination,  
Heading for their coronation.



Stars shine on the steps,  
Sparkles salute footsteps,  
Youth, restored and perfected,  
Backs, ideally erected,  
All standing tall,  
Strong like never before,  
With luminous faces,  
Holding no sorrow traces;  
Dressed in brocaded garments,  
Emanating an amazing fragrance.  
No more maladies, no more pains,  
Joyfully, dwells married twains.  
Rejoicing with what no eyes have seen,  
Not even in the wildest dream.  
Lovers walk side by side,  
Holding hands in pride,  
Above soil of topaz,  
Of ruby and sapphire  
Crooning in the choir,  
Beside the endless river,  
That ceaselessly deliver  
Water sweeter than honey,  
Smelling like Oriental lily.



What hearts ever desired,  
They have finally acquired.  
Father and son, young together;  
Mother and daughter, charming forever.  
In lands whose end no one can reach,  
Whose peculiarities no soul can preach.  
In the everlasting abode  
At the end of life's road  
Awaits the virtuous, the kind,  
Whose hearts were never blind.  
Beyond this worldly life,  
There awaits an everlasting life,  
For which, every soul should strive.





## TEST DAY

### *Poetic Story*

He watched her stumble for a while;  
At her age, a foot feels like a mile.  
He looked around searching for a way  
In which he may help her on that cold day.  
He saw a driver sitting inside his car.  
He approached him and said, "Peace be upon you sir.  
Will you drive that old lady to her destination?"  
Handing the man the few pounds he had without hesitation,  
And promised to pay him the remainder of his fees  
If he would meet him the next day at the same place.  
Admiring the kindness of the stubborn boy,  
The driver accepted to be the woman's convoy.  
For the sake of goodness, he decided to strive.  
Politely, he offered the old lady a drive.  
Like a drowning person receiving a rescue offer,  
She accepted unable anymore to suffer.  
Looking for the boy to return the money,  
The driver saw him take off in quiet a hurry.  
After giving up his allowance, he had to walk without rest  
In order to reach school before the beginning of his test.  
At a crossing point, he stopped waiting for the green light,  
He saw a disabled man who didn't have enough might



To roll his wheel chair,  
But no one seemed to care.  
Imagining himself helpless at that age,  
He ran towards the man in a burst of rage  
To help him reach his destination neglecting his own,  
Stepping on the fears that inside his chest have grown.  
He pushed the heavy seat up the steeping street.  
Ten minutes later, he was sprinting back to his route;  
With that pace, reaching school on time was absolute.  
One Kilometer away from the door, he saw a crowd;  
Some people were shouting aloud.  
There seemed to be a car accident,  
A young lad was injured and needed urgent treatment.  
A few feet ahead, there was a child screaming  
And tears soaked his face.  
Feeling alerted, our boy slowed down his pace.  
“Are you injured? Why are you crying?”  
He asked the child in wonder.  
“That’s my brother,” was the child’s answer.  
Medics were carrying an injured teen into an ambulance.  
Making a quick analysis,  
He carried the child and ran towards them.  
The medics tried to stop him.

“I’m their older brother,” he said with shaking confidence.

The medics helped them in on hearing the sentence.

He didn’t know what else to say

So that they would let them with the injured lad stay.

“This boy needs immediate blood transfer,” shouted a doctor at the hospital,

Alas, the matching blood type wasn’t available.

Learning the blood type needed was the same as his,

“Take blood from me,” the boy said resolving the crisis.

Fifteen minutes later the boys’ mom arrived,

Looking around, hoping her children have survived.

On spotting her child, she ran and took him in her arms, kissing and checking his little body, trying to make sure he was safe from all harms.

The child informed her of his brother’s injury.

She ran towards the ER doctor in great worry.

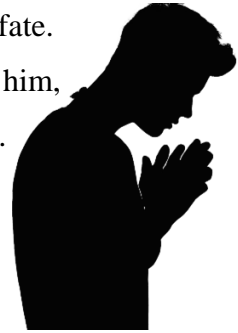
The doctor calmed her saying, “Don’t worry, ma’am;

Your son is going to be okay, thanks to his older brother.”

“What older brother?” asked the mother.

The doctor told her what happened looking around, searching for the rescuer, but was unable to spot him anywhere.

At that moment, he was running as fast as he can,  
On the way to his test, running like a mad man.  
All he could see was his mother's tears.  
She has been taking care of him for years.  
After his father passed away, he was all she had.  
She was his most beloved, he hated to see her sad.  
Failing the test would break her heart.  
How could he bear to see her hurt?  
*They may still let me in*, he hoped.  
With his pains, like a real man, he coped.  
He was looking at the door as he crossed the street.  
Suddenly he heard a loud squeak.  
He turned but it was too late.  
There was nothing he could do to alter his fate.  
Quick scenes of the day flashed in front of him,  
While the light in his eyes was getting dim.  
He made one final look towards the skies.  
A faint smile appeared in his eyes.  
He took one last breath and said, "O Lord,  
Let mom know that from now on I shall be your guest.  
Let her know that —with honors— I have passed my test."



*It's not about how long one lives,  
It's about how much one gives.*

# GOODBYE

## *Poetic Story*

Kissing the Rosy cheeks of his child,  
The little girl to her father smiled.  
She stretched her arms towards her mom,  
Longing for her hug, for her soft palm.  
The child's laughter mingled with her mother's,  
Creating a symphony, whose beauty surpasses all others.  
Spending a calm day in the forest,  
The nature beautiful, the day the fairest.  
Sitting in a cradle of cedar trees,  
Surrounded by waves of flowers stretching in green seas,  
Wrapped in nature's beautiful sound,  
And colored birds flying all around.  
Suddenly came hawks with thunder squeaks  
Attacking the little birds, pecking them with their beaks.  
In the dark searching for her body,  
The soil felt warm and muddy.  
The laughter once loud silenced,  
The peace once around distanced.  
The hugging bodies were motionless,  
A loud scream clove through calmness.  
Calling onto his child's name,  
The answer remained the same.



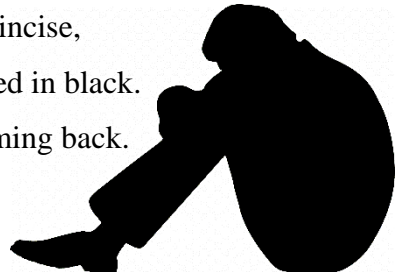
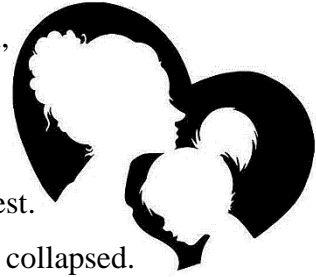
The heart once happy shattered like glass  
By criminals whose hearts are rusty brass.  
The soul once peaceful was on fire,  
Occupied by a vengeance desire.  
What can a man so helpless do?  
Through darkness, how can he break through?  
Hot tears fell deep inside  
As he held the remnants of his bride.  
“In this life and the next,” was his promise,  
But destiny had another premise.  
What’s more painful than his loss?  
Waves of pain mercilessly toss  
His heart and drown his soul,  
He will never again be whole.  
*Why am I alive?* He wondered.  
*Am I cursed?* In his mind thundered.  
*Take me with them,* he begged.  
Into despair, he got bogged.



“How can I live not hearing their voice?  
When will my anguished heart with its end rejoice?  
How can I endure not touching her face?  
For a man whose soul is slain, death is a grace.  
Beside your remnants I shall wait  
For death to accept me and open its gate.”

With a heart grinded by destiny's mill,  
Beside the crushed roses he sat still  
Holding their hands close to his chest  
Like a bird holds its children in the nest.  
Hours passed before the injured body collapsed.  
Finally, the hours of pain have elapsed.  
It's now time to join your beloved ones.  
Your pain was an atonement of your sins.  
Look, they are waiting dressed in shiny green.  
Look where they are, what an amazing scene.  
Prepare the groom; it's time for his procession.  
The golden doors are opening for his admission.  
    "I can almost see their faces through the light.  
    I want to hold them in my arms so tight.  
    Fill my heart with joy, let there be no more pain.  
    Let me with my beloved ones reunite again."

Their shiny hands are about to touch his...  
"Check his pulse," an echoing voice says.  
Slowly he opened his aching eyes.  
Through darkness, he tried to incise,  
But the scene remained covered in black.  
Light, to his eyes, was not coming back.  
Unable to say goodbye,  
The blind man started to cry.



# THE LAST PETAL

## *Poetic Prose*

Memories, that's what's left for me of happiness. But memories with one's beloved, whom death has taken away, only bring sadness.

Happiness seems to be an enemy now for me. Loneliness, for my future, seems like what is meant to be.

Everything has changed so fast. I only live in the shadows of my past.

Nothing is left for me to live for. I breathe in, breathe out, and I'm alive, but the feeling of life exists no more.

I live like a dead man whose grave's door in his face has been shut. After all, who can tell whether a standing tree is alive or not.

The wound of departure nothing can mend. Yourself, from its pain, you can never defend.

I'm lying on its rails, wrapped by its chain, so weak and helpless in a way I could never express or explain.

It keeps on coming till it passes with me right under. Still, I'm alive, and the wheels continue striking like thunder.

I breathe heavily, but neither does my life end, nor does the pain train, my wretched self, to the next life send.

Of your face and smile, my love, I always dream. I wave my hands and your name I scream.



But never does my voice leave my throat. All my hopes by desperation are caught.

The pain grows stronger, mercilessly crushing my heart, pushing me to wonder,

Why do we love? Why do we have to hurt? Why do we have to suffer? Life is too short!

Why is it always the right person at the wrong time, like good words with bad rhyme?

Why do I always have to lose the ones I love, though I would give any and everything I have—just to make them happy in this miserable life. My heart is growing weaker; I can barely feel alive.

So is that it? Is it the end? If it is, then it's god's mercy, as this crippled heart nothing can mend.

I can't take any more of this pain. The pain that hurts the most is the one that attacks both, the heart and the brain.

I can't go back in time to when I was young, and I can't bear this anymore, I'm not that strong.

Tomorrow everything is going to end and I'll be gone. All my chances, along with my days have run.

Joy, happiness, love and everything I once hoped for, now just cross my mind, leaving me nothing but sadness and sore.

Sometimes I wonder, am I the only human being suffering this way? Am I the only one whose life in destiny's blows sway?

Am I the only one whose chances are all blown away? Is it my eyes, or is everything now colored in grey?

I hear nothing whenever I scream not even when I cry. Hot tears keep on falling through my heart, but my face remains dry.

For my sins I must pay. There is nothing I can do or say.

I've turned to a cold lifeless statue, waiting behind loneliness bars, looking from sadness window.

Between hope and desperation I'm swinging. The days of my life, towards their end, are rapidly approaching.

I only have one last hope before the sealing of my fate, that my beloved and me will once again — in a better place — meet.

Suddenly the wind strongly blew, and ironically, after how loud and clear I've lived my life, my last petal, away, silently flew.



## THE GIRL WITH A DREAM

There was once a girl who had a dream,  
A dream based on a noble theme.  
There she stood reciting the words,  
Hoping they would fly like birds  
Reaching people everywhere,  
May they listen, may they care  
To reunite the torn parts,  
To heal children's broken hearts.  
"My dream can and will come true,"  
Was a belief she lived to pursue.  
So young and faithful,  
Sincere and thoughtful,  
With a heart of gold,  
Courageous and bold,  
Standing firm in truth  
Since the prime of her youth.  
"I'm here for other children,  
I'm here because I care."  
Her words shall forever glare  
Guiding hearts & minds,  
From upon them removing the blinds.



“I’m here because children everywhere are suffering”

A truth most people ignore even uttering.

They only look beneath their feet;

They live enslaved by self-conceit.

“My dream is to give the poor a chance.”

Striving for her dream was her adopted stance.

Her understanding of life was amazing.

Her outstanding strife remains blazing.

Rest in peace precious dreamer.

Your dream lives through your deeds.

You reclaimed the land; you sowed the seeds.

Your blood was the price you had to pay.

Rest in peace; we shall continue the way.

We won’t stop till your dream comes true,

For your dream is our dream too.

We shall fear no darkness; we shall always fight

Till we have victory, till we see freedom’s light.

Life without a dream is a waste.

Life without striving has no taste.

Rest in peace precious dreamer,

Your strife was your dream’s redeemer.

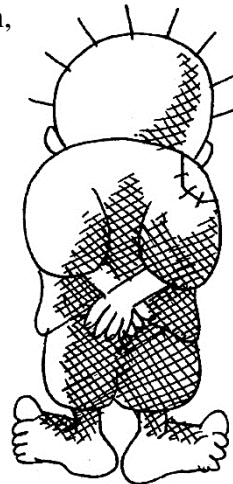
*Rachel was killed while defending a Palestinian house from being  
demolished by an Israelian bulldozer.  
Rachel Corrie (1979-2003). R.I.P. dear sister.*

## PALESTINE

They face it with silence,  
 They couldn't speak anymore.  
 Words are heavy with a faded existence,  
 An existence that most people ignore.  
 I can hear their screams from a long distance,  
 The screams of what they hope for.  
 Why don't we end our absence?  
 Why don't we open the door?  
 When will we end the misguidance,  
 And realize that this is war?  
 When will our voices strike like thunder,  
 With "God is greater," roar?  
 When I remember my land, I'm speechless,  
 I let my imagination soar.  
 When will our sun shine through the darkness?  
 When will our lines from traitors be pure?  
 Their intentions are sacrilegious,  
 And our dead bodies are the door.  
 Our revolution they must never suppress,  
 We must get back; we must shake off the bore.  
 No matter how cunning they are,  
 Our resistance shall endure.



It'll remain their worst nightmare;  
 Of that, they can be sure.  
 Dying young is painless  
 But doing nothing is a sore.  
 We'll resist till we triumph or die.  
 Tides rest not till they reach the shore.  
 We won't rest till what's right prevails;  
 Of that, in the lord's name, we swore.  
 We shall fight for what we believe in,  
 We'll be strong enough to fight and win.  
 We shall make our swords with our own hands,  
 We shall retrieve every grain of our sands.  
 From the enemies' traps, we shall get out,  
 We shall crush their arrogance without a doubt.  
 The righteous shall once again reign,  
 And break the occupation chain.  
 No matter how dark our way is,  
 Its end we shall seek, nothing less.  
 Our enemy, we shall face  
 With no fear on our place.  
 In ranks, we shall fight;  
 We shall stand with pride.  
 We shall never run or hide;



We're not alone, God is on our side.  
 Our land, we shall redeem,  
 For martyrdom is our dream.  
 Blood shall quench the thirst of the sand  
 Till we retrieve the freedom of our land.  
 Born in the land of the prophets is a grace.  
 In their honor, the mottos of freedom,  
 We shall forever raise.



*Palestine's freedom has always been and shall always be our cause.  
 Despite all of what Zionists have done, Palestinians are still there;  
 they know what's theirs, what Zionists have stolen and the crimes  
 they have committed. They know it and they teach it to their children,  
 and so will their children teach it to theirs until what's right prevails.  
 Nations don't die.*

*Selected drawings are in remembrance of Nagi El-'Ali.*

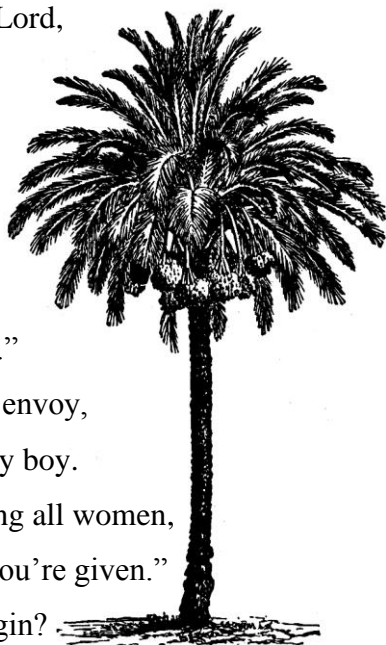
## MARY'S SYMPHONY

There she stood supplicating  
To her Lord and imploring:  
“O Lord grant me a righteous son,  
Who would serve you and all sins shun.  
I have pledged for you what's in my womb,  
To strive in your cause from birth to tomb.  
O Lord, with your grace accept what I conceive,  
Set him as an example for those who believe.”  
Allah heard her, He is All-Hearer;  
He destined the baby to become the keeper.  
The baby was born, a blessed daughter;  
She came to earth like rainwater,  
Pure and clean reviving faith;  
May all deniers realize their wraith.  
“O Lord I gave birth to a female,  
I named her Mary, may she avail  
Believers throughout the ages,  
May her story be told in their holy pages.  
O Lord protect her and her progeny from satan,  
Keep their hearts with faith awaken.”  
So grew Mary under Zechariah's care,  
The most pious, the most fair.





Loving solitude, devoted to her Lord,  
Taking her faith as her hoard,  
She withdrew towards the east,  
Seeking to pray  
And on her Lord's words feast.  
There startled her the archangel.  
"Fear Alaha if you were faithful."  
"Have no fear; I'm Your Lord's envoy,  
Giving you glad tidings of a baby boy.  
Allah has chosen you from among all women,  
Fear not and rejoice with what you're given."  
"How can I give birth; I'm a virgin?  
No man has touched me, that's certain."  
"If your Lord desires a matter,  
'BE,' is all He needs to utter.  
He is Omniscient, He is Benevolent;  
He is The Creator, He is Omnipotent."  
So it happened and Mary conceived the child,  
Till delivery, she sought seclusion in the wild.  
The archangel visited her frequently,  
Giving her comfort, advising her gently.  
"Eat dates from palm trees,  
It shall help you give birth at ease."



So did Mary give birth to a baby boy,  
Peace be upon him, Our Lord's Envoy.  
"It's time to take him to his people,  
He'll renew the laws for the faithful.  
If you encounter a soul, don't talk,  
Gesture that you're fasting  
And continue to walk."



Mary returned to her people carrying her child.  
They looked at her suspiciously; their looks were wild.  
"O Mary, you have committed a grave sin,  
You have defiled the lineage of your kin."  
She beckoned towards the child in a strange way.  
"How can we speak to an infant, what can he say?"  
And the miraculously born child responded,  
"I am the servant of The Lord,  
I am His word.  
He gave me The Gospel  
And sent me to the lost sheep of Israel.  
He made me blessed wherever I may be,  
And bestowed upon me His miracles,  
May blind hearts see.  
I am The Lord's messenger,

I am His shepherd.  
A confirmation for the Torah  
And what's not yet delivered.  
I bring glad tidings of what's yet to come,  
And I shall tell you of Alaha's kingdom.  
Heavens shall not pass till all I speak is fulfilled,  
Then again, I shall return, and true faith, I shall rebuild.”



*Inspired by the Qur'anic account about "The family of Imran,  
Virgin Maryam and the Messiah Jesus P.B.U.H."*

## THE SHEPHERD

### *Poetic Story*

Seeking a better place where I can forever stay,  
A place for which my generation always pray,  
I passed by a pasturage next to a lake,  
A perfect place to rest and have a break.  
As I approached, I saw an old man sitting under a tree.  
He was so still like he were dead; I wondered, *could it be?*  
I got closer to check on him. The way his chest moved  
made me realize he was just asleep.

Around him were the tall palm trees, the green grass, and  
his sheep.

When he sensed my presence, he raised his head slowly.  
On seeing his eyes, I panicked; his looks were holy.  
“May Allah’s peace and blessings be upon you, old man,”  
I said trying to hide my worries as hard as I can.  
“May Allah’s peace and blessings be upon you my son.”  
He said brooding over my appearance as if saying, *what  
are you trying to outrun?*

“Where is the traveler headed in this fine day?”

“To a better part of the world and finding it I may.”

His eyes glowed and he smiled without uttering a word.

His silence and sharp looks shredded my courage apart.

He said, "No doubt this place is from your home far away."  
I answered, "That's right old man; it's exactly as you say."  
For a while his eyes were like a deep well;  
I felt hypnotized, and in its darkness, I fell.  
"Why don't you dine with me and have some rest?  
I shall roast you some meat; in roasting I'm the best."  
Though I was afraid of the man, I was hoping for this offer,  
So I agreed as the pain in my feet I could no longer suffer.  
While the old man started preparing the food,  
I thought I should get as much rest as I could.  
I sat under the tree taking shelter in its shadow,  
Silence took over, which brought me back to my sorrow.  
I closed my eyes, and flashbacks crossed my mind,  
"Anywhere but here, your dreamland you shall never find."  
That's what my father always said,  
The only man I ever feared and loved.  
I recalled his death and how he died of oppression,  
I remembered how this brought me down to depression.  
All of my hopes were long gone;  
From my heart, my dreams were withdrawn.  
Behind the bars of desperation I was caught.  
Loosing hope was more painful than I thought.  
In desperation's deep dark well I fell,  
The remnants of my heart I had to sell.

In my life, there remained no guiding light,  
No more strength to try to fight.  
From the skies of faith I fell into seas of hopelessness,  
My heart grew weaker of boredom and sickness.  
I've been falling for a long time;  
The weaker one gets, the faster is the falling rhyme.  
I felt dizzy and couldn't resist the spinning in my head;  
I blacked out; it must've been me then who looked dead.  
Later, I woke up on a voice repeating, "Wake up, lad. The  
food is ready. Let's eat."

I opened my eyes slowly. In front of my face was a plate  
holding roasted meat.

My vision was hazy. It took a moment before I could see.  
The old man sat close by, leaning his back to another tree.  
His solemnity and holiness were tougher than silk.

We ate, and then he got up, brought two tin cups, and  
poured us some warm milk.

He said while handing me mine,  
"How do you imagine that place which you seek?"  
The warm milk after the good meal made me feel just fine,  
So I closed my eyes and started to speak.  
"It's a place where laughter could always be heard,  
Where every child can play and run freely like a bird.

A place where children wouldn't watch their parents cry,  
A place where smiles would make all tears dry,  
Where the youth in one's heart would never die.  
A place where people's rights no one can deny,  
A place that strangers won't invade and occupy.  
No more bombings and smoky grey images,  
Colors cover nature in all fields and villages.  
I can see the horse rides in the forest,  
The fruitful palm trees are the tallest.  
Plants all around with their yellowish green color,  
Crops fill the fields with their wonderful odor.  
Beautiful lighted houses by the side of a stream,  
Everything I have seen in my wakefulness dream.  
This is the land in my dreams, old man;  
The land I'm looking for.  
The land that I've always dreamed of,  
And having it for real, to myself I swore."  
I opened my eyes. The old man was fearfully gazing at me.  
Feeling captured by his eyes, I wished he'd look away and  
set me free.  
He never did that and asked instead,  
"What about your homeland, the land from which you flee?  
Can you picture it and tell me what you see?"

I didn't want to talk about it so I said,

"Let's not talk about what's long gone; let's not talk about what's dead."

Again, he gave me that fearful dark look.

I was utterly captured and didn't notice how long it took till my tongue's seal finally broke,

And to his will, I surrendered, and started to talk.

"I see a family working all day to cultivate the dead sand.

I see their work turning to ashes; I see their burned land.

I see a man standing against tyranny face to face.

I see him defending his land with no fear on his place.

I see children screaming and crying;

I see them getting shot, I see them dying.

I see the frightened looks in their eyes,

I hear their desperate unanswered cries.

I see youths tortured for having the courage to resist,

I see them getting shot for having the courage to persist.

I hear a disgusting voice, 'Submit or die;

Your freedom's pursuit, you must never try.'

I see the mottoes of freedom being burned,

I see people's backs to 'help' cries being turned.

I see my family's demolished house.

I see my little sister's body, and I hear my father's vengeance promise.



I remember my father's painful death,  
And how he faced tyranny till his last breath.

I remember my brother's body that up on my shoulder I  
carried;

I remember his bleeding corpse that with my own hands I  
buried.

My mother followed him shortly  
Leaving me for sorrows weak and lonely.

I see all rights being denied.

I feel dying down deep inside.”

My heart was throbbing with pain; I was choking.

Sweat was soaking my face so I stopped talking.

The old man was still gazing at me in a fearful way.

In a childish reaction that now I deem unwise,

I looked around trying to escape from his eyes.

“Look how the lambs together play. Look how secure and  
happy they feel.”

My words seemed to have finally broken his look's seal.

He turned around to check on his flock,

“I wonder if I weren't here, how they would look.

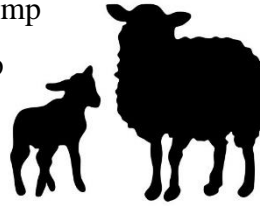
They know that while I'm here, the wolves dare not attack.

They won't play so freely the moment I turn my back.

Wolves are always watching, aspiring for the right moment

In which they can attack, and destroy their opponent.

In to my pasturage they want to jump  
And turn it in to a destroyed dump  
Making my sheep their victim  
And eat every last one of them.



I assure you, it's all up to the Shepherd.  
His presence keeps the valley with serenity covered.  
His flock knows that he's there for their defense,  
That he'll prevent the wolves from jumping the fence.  
It's been like this since eternity; it's an everlasting brawl.  
It won't end till death has gathered us all.  
Sheep and lambs know so.  
Inside your heart, you believe it too,  
You and many others just like you.  
You're afraid to let your feelings show,  
Especially after the injustices you saw.  
Hold on to your identity and never let go.  
Behind your back, your sorrows throw.  
Get back on your feet after every blow.  
The more you persevere, the stronger you'll grow.  
In your enemies' face, always stand tall.  
Never let your wounds force you to fall.  
It's your enemy's dream to see you crawl.  
You must never let them destroy your striving soul.



Against Satan's temptations, for Allah's help call.  
Before all inhibitors, build an unreachable wall.  
Don't think that if you run you shall lead a happy life;  
Happiness could only be felt when in your cause you strive.  
Dying as a stranger is worse than dying young,  
Or for a scream of freedom being hung.  
Go back or else your father's deeds were in vain.  
Go back and strive; break your fears' chain.  
You are the bridge between this world and your dream.  
Never lose heart, or the freedom of your land, who else  
would redeem?

Go back before it's too late.  
Go back, may this be your twist of fate.”  
I felt like I were stung by a snake;  
From unconsciousness, I started to wake.  
The man's words sounded like a voice from a deep dream.  
“Never forsake our land or who else would redeem.”  
These were my father's last words,  
The words whose remembrance always hurts.  
The old man got up and attended to his sheep  
Leaving me to my thoughts unable to sleep.  
My ancestors' legacy through centuries  
Was the courage to face setbacks, and defeat all enemies.

I must go back, I must not run;  
I must be my father's son.  
My homeland, I must never forsake or forget.  
Leaving is willingly falling in our enemy's net.  
There is no place like home. This fact shall forever remain.  
It sticks in our souls and on our minds like a stain.  
At that moment, it hit me like a thunder strike,  
The old man's eyes and my father's looked exactly alike.  
That's why I had that feeling when he was gazing at me.  
They were like two branches from the same tree,  
Their roots were deeply entwined.  
I don't know how but in my heart, light once again shined.  
I decided to go back and take matters into my own hand.  
I shan't live as a migrant and let strangers occupy my land.  
I got up, turned around, and I panicked,  
The old man and his flock have completely vanished.  
I looked all around and cried, *hey old man, hey shepherd,*  
But I got no response, and myself, I felt shattered.  
*Was this all real, or was I dreaming?* I wondered.  
Over what has happened, I pondered.  
I had been suffering a shameful feeling, a feeling of defeat,  
Not by my enemies, but by losing hope, and the weakness  
in my heart, failing to treat.

That's the truth that up until that moment I never saw.

Things in my mind were starting to glow.

In hardships, a man may lose the ability to differentiate  
between wrong and right.

He may still see with his eyes, but lose his heart's sight.

Seeing solely through the eyes doesn't really matter,

Only a truthful faithful heart will all enemies batter.

Was the old man a ghost, a spirit, or a real mentor?

Questions were crossing my mind but I couldn't answer.

In my ears, the old man's voice kept on repeating his words  
urging me not to wait.

*Go back before it's too late.*

*Go back, may this be your twist of fate.*

I thought to myself, *the old man is a shepherd all right,*

*He's a shepherd for the lost like myself. We are his herd.*

*In our way, he's trying to flash some guiding light.*

*To our hearts, he's saying the unheard.*

*We shall always love our countries, even if they hold  
nothing but rocks and sand.*

*We must strive for their advancement, and make an  
unshakable stand.*

*Honor and freedom are men's most treasured hoard.*

*Living without them, no real man can afford.*

*From one generation to the next, that's a fact that we must fully understand.*

*Earning them is in our own hand.*

*To maintain them, we wait for no one's command.*

*Only this way, shall our legacy be nothing less than grand.*

I looked around one last time, took a deep breath, and then started my journey back to my homeland.



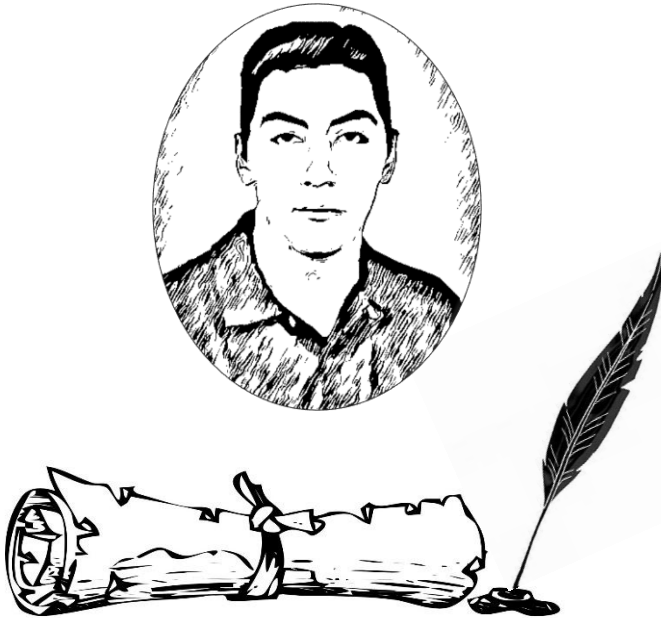
*To all Middle Eastern men and women who live abroad,  
Your homelands are your responsibilities. There is no honor in  
forsaking them and your people in search for an easier better life.  
The greatest shame in this life or even the next shall be in forsaking  
your homelands for gangs of traitors serving the very same countries  
that took you in. Come back home.*

**F A R E W E L L**

Farewell faithful friend,  
Alone I shall have to wend.  
Farewell beautiful nature,  
You were my soul's preacher.  
Farewell pure rains,  
In my land awaits fruitful grains.  
Farewell cloudy skies,  
You always caught my eyes.  
Farewell Egypt's sun,  
In your light, I shall no longer run.  
Farewell River Nile,  
You always made me smile.  
Farewell beloved Mediterranean,  
I shall walk no longer in your dominion.  
Farewell my poetry,  
You were my soul's remedy.  
Farewell my pen,  
I shall never hold you again.  
Farewell my words,  
I wish you soar high like birds.  
Farewell my life,  
May others continue to strive.

Farewell horrible stress,  
My soul, you shall no longer suppress.  
Farewell silent sadness,  
I hope never to taste again your bitterness.

*Ehab Shawky  
Manial Er-Roda Island,  
Old Cairo, Egypt  
October 2020*





## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Greetings dear reader. My name is Ehab Shawky. I am an author and self-publisher. I live in Cairo, Egypt. I have two Bachelor degrees; the first is B.Sc. in Mechanical Power Engineering, received from Cairo University, class 2002. The second is BA in Islamic Studies, received from the Higher Institute for Islamic Studies, class 2016. Getting the chance to spend a lifetime learning about science and religion had its impact on my thoughts and perception. Although I worked in the engineering field for over a decade, and my peers and mentors have well recognized my achievements, I have always had a desire in my heart to dedicate most of my time to writing. Becoming a writer has always been my dream. I started writing very early at the age of ten; that was when I had my first article published on my school's billboard. Ever since that day, I never stopped writing. On my blogs, you can read poetry, prose, intellectual articles, historical narratives, spiritual and religious commentary, etc. I have written and self-published three books. The first was an academic book titled 'Islamic Methodologies Made Easy.' It came among the best sellers in the non-Fiction genre back in 2015 and 2016. The second is a fiction novel titled, 'The Lost Way to Misrost,' published in 2018. The third is the poetry and prose works between your hands. Visit my blog on WordPress or Goodreads for more info and direct contact. Your interaction and feedback are always welcomed and appreciated.

## OTHER WORKS BY THE AUTHOR

**“Islamic Methodologies Made Easy”** is an Islamic academic book intended for provident Muslims. It is divided into three parts. The first is a simplified made-easy compilation including general knowledge about the main branches of the Islamic sciences. It is written in a simplified manner that allows the reader acquire basic knowledge about the emergence of these sciences, the most notable figures in their development and the urge behind that. This is followed by some introductory knowledge about the methodologies developed under the spotlight of these sciences. In the second section of the book, the issue of preaching Islam is discussed, followed by a detailed explanation of the most common misconceptions and accusations held against Islam. This section tackles many of the laws included in the Qur’an and Sunnah. The final section is a concise chronology for the history of the people of the book. The main stops in their history, among other information deemed important for Muslim students to know are included. The knowledge presented in this book is semi preliminary, semi inclusive, fashioned in an amiable manner to suit all readers. In short, this is a concise compilation of general Islamic knowledge that could benefit provident students and laymen evenly.

**“The Lost Way to Misrost”** is a medieval trilogy revolving around the strife of ‘Al-Misrosty’ Family throughout three generations. Part one, “The Legacy,” is about ‘Qotazio Al-Misrosty,’ a sailor who returns home after spending many years at sea, only to find his country in a terrible mess. It is nothing as he remembers. Deciding to mind his own business, he seeks his family’s help. All he wanted was to lead a peaceful life on his late father’s farm, find a suitable wife, and raise a family. He receives great help from his uncle and life begins to open its arms for him. However, things go awry when a childhood friend is accused of treason. Believing that his friend was innocent, Qotazio starts digging into the matter. Day after day, he learns secrets that rattle his hopes; secrets that turn everything he knew about his family, his friends, and the girl he loves into a lie. Hence, winds do not blow as Qotazio wished. Deciding to make what’s right prevail, a long, arduous struggle ensues. The storyline is full of surprises, restless adventure, romance, and tragedy.

## NOTES

[illegible]



## TEENAGE PROMISSES

No matter how far are the sides,  
No matter how high are the tides,  
We won't give-up without a fight,  
Together we'll sail day & night.  
No matter how dull & gloomy it gets,  
We'll endure till we see sun's light.  
Depression, we shall tear to pieces,  
Our hopes shall breakthrough.  
Desperation, we shall subdue,  
Our youth, we shall renew.  
For as long as we shall live,  
We shall learn, give, and do.  
We won't give up to life,  
We'll surely tame the shrew.  
We'll row against the stream,  
Seeking those who share our dream.  
Shoulder to shoulder, hand in hand,  
Together, we shall make our stand.  
In unity, dreams are possible.  
Together, we're undefeatable.  
We won't let life pass through  
Till our freedom dream comes true.