

GREATER THAN PATIENCE

Poems by Azam Abidov in English

AZAM ABIDOV (Aazam Abidov), poet, translator, born on November 8, 1974 in Namangan, City of flowers, Uzbekistan. A Creative Writing Fellow at the University of Iowa in the USA (2004) and one of the founders of the Creative Writing and Translation Club in the Uzbek capital, Azam tries to become a bridge between world and Uzbek literature. In 2004, he translated and compiled an anthology of Uzbek poetry in English, *Tunes of Asia*. Earlier, he translated some of the best poems by famous Uzbek poets Usmon Nosir and Chulpon and published *Dream of Lightsome Dawns*, as well as *A Miracle Is On the Way*, which comprised his own poems translated into English by himself. His poems and translations have appeared in numerous anthologies in Uzbekistan and abroad. He is the co-author of two international poetry anthologies, *Fish and Snake* and *The Language of the Birds*. He basically writes in Uzbek, but the present collection consists of Azam's poems originally written in English. He believes writing in a foreign language is not a sin, but a boon, especially if you have something essential to tell to a wider

audience in our small world we all share together to make it a better place for more creative generations to come.

ENTREATY

Be a skillful finder, my sad lot –
While you have a moving helping hand.
No happy life - for sure - could be bought,
Your misfortune - no one - could amend.
Be a skillful finder, my sad lot,
Open wider your wise-looking eyes.
Put my blessings to your heart a lot,
Don't take my hurt before demise.

A READING WOMAN

A woman's sitting in a slum
The slum is in a dump.
As she gets the hump:
The woman is reading.

It is dark in the dump,
There is a dim light
Inside the slum.

The woman is reading
Under the wan candlelight.

Her hope from life is dim, dim...
The reading woman
of my dream!

GABREL, TOUCH ME GENTLY
(Ghazal)

Gabriel, touch me gently with your wings,
Oh, my gracious - from backstage - woe
stings.

Graves are either gardens of endless delight
Or deep holes down to hell, where evil
flings.

I want to be a spot in the hair of a camel,
Like a leaf, my life in windy weather swings.

The task of time is killing off all lavish gifts,
It never comes anew – life chimes – it never
rings.

Among the dead, be the most attractive,
Aazam,
As Solomon is the best of all earthy kings!

SHADE

I always look for shadow
Everything is obscure though
The sky sleeps in my eyes,
The Moon is slice and slice.
I'll find the right shadow
In the doomsday meadow –
When everything fades,
Will be seen God's shade.

PRIORITY

What I've already seen,
White and black or green
Is nothing at long last,
We're still on the go.

A dead ant in the grass,
Without any fuss
Had experience so vast
Of things
Ages ago.

LIE

Referring to the Lord
A worshiper cries:
“See, there are such a lot
Of wherefores and whys.”

Referring to the Lord
A worshiper cries:
“I can not afford
To tell you lies.”

Angels in the sky
Look at the earth:
“If there is a lie,
There’s no happiness or mirth!”

FORMULA

Here is the formula:

“Life = Plus + Minus”

How can I see the right way

If I am eyeless?!

I AM CLAY

I am clay –
Liquid and weak.
I have neither tongue
Nor mouth, to speak.
Everyone likes
To make some figure
To make a shape
From me.
I am clay –
Liquid and weak.
I always go
Through palms.
I leak...
I leak...

A POEM OF EQUALITY

Who you are –
A white man,
black
or red,
You are a boon companion or a threat.
To put yourself first
how can you well afford,
But look here –
You're a human being from the Lord!

Who you are –
A Muslim,
Christian,
Sikh,
You adore –
On men -
To play a trick,
With the others
will you not accord,
But remember,
You're a human being from the Lord!

You are my brother,
You are my sister,
darling,

God will look at
not your varied colors, -
But at your heart
And at your good intentions
So, why kill each other,
Why fight,
We are equal
and we all have
the same right!

May God take
in due course
our lives.
Just tell me,
does friendship
have a price?
We were given time –
Very short

Remember,

we all return back to the Lord!

Who you are –
A white man,
black
or red,

You are a boon companion or a threat,

Pass these words
to others in a cord:

We're one human being from the Lord!

IN YOUR SOUL

(ghazal)

Tell me, o devoted, who else is in your soul?
Do you really want me to go hence in your
soul?

I wear my sunglasses to hide myself from a
rival,
It seems there is not contact lens in your
soul.

You hurt my pride; however, I'm not
domineering,
I found the face of shame is too dense in
your soul.

It's my fault - to ring aloud - before you fell
in love,
I could not hang acoustic bells in your soul.

Belief's in blood, no mercy, again to whom I
cry,
Aazam, poor and naïve, is on sale in your
soul.

TOO LONG

We
strive to go to rich countries
send our husbands and wives
they do hard work
or sell themselves

The other people in this country
have luxurious weddings
from the sent money
and sing a song of happiness

We all work for the government

The tongue of the government is too long.

NEAR AND FAR

Dread is near to me
Near to my soul, as I am afraid of it
I run away
I flee
And I am far from wit

There is only one thing:
When I fear Him
I will come so near
With my everlasting fear.

BRIBE

It is understandable
To accept a bribe and to give it
In business or social life.
However,
People kill me with a blunt knife –
They give and take bribes
To go to Mecca
For purification.

Horned pilgrimage.

DO NOT LET ME DREAM

Do not let me dream, my dear fellow,
Do not help me when I faint away.
Those past years have made me mellow.
Let me please inspire your intentions,
I kindly ask to let my hands aid
What you need, take, do not be afraid...
Feathers of my wish I start to trim –
To let others have a long, long dream.

GOD IS SLEEPING

The old serpent is sitting on my shoulder,
I cannot open my eyes,
I cannot open my lips
to thank God.

In addition to this it's raining.

I am growing stout – what is more.

God is sleeping in my heavy heart.

The soul fills with liberty
Keen light looks like your sad hope
You never dreamt of.

I MISS

I miss,
Trees begin to sing,
The Sun proceeds swimming.
Time goes on again on the terrace.
Do you remember me, bliss?
How can I get rid of this mortal music
Which makes me recall the past?
Even without any arid pleasure
I miss,
I miss...

VIRGIN DREAMS

Every night a star touches my eyelash,
The Moon comes out of my eyebrows,
Having knocked at the door of my soul
The sorrowful night becomes a guest of my
eyes,
where there is love.

Every night, I cannot ignore that virgin
dreams
Press my chest and pull me to the sky.
Virgin dreams revolve here and there and
say
"You are not with us, sorry, we, ourselves,
cannot fly."

OH, MY BLOSSOMING SOUL

My strength is enough to shed tears from
my eyes,
I tie up chains to my hands,
I always drink love
And eat a love-thorn with great pleasure.

To our life that is mournful and brilliant
Phoenix comes asking refuge
We fly, and to our wings
The sky comes closer and closer.

I don't care about my body,
Oh, my blossoming soul is the capital of my
spirit.
In the slum which is unseen and full of love
A pregnant Happiness bears a child.

GOOD-BYE

Let me go, take your hands out of my heart,
Set free my soul that is on your way.
Good-bye to you, dream, which helped me
recognize myself,
Good-bye, this place, which is full of grief.

Let me go, I have to avoid delight,
After all, our ways will become different.
I know, you will stay like a virgin, very pure
like you are now,
Perhaps I will not be able to live in liberty.

Let me go, and I will ask God to give you
long innings,
Let me go, I wish to get rid of everything.
My heart, having stumbled at your
permission,
Even if I die with my white and pure love,
Let me go!

I WILL FIND A BELOVED

Night falls and my soul worries,
Hey, miracle, please show your face,
My exhausted feelings are confused,
I am poor, I am alone.

My eyes, please cry bitter tears,
You may become blind; it is alright for me,
There is no room on this earth for me,
Will the sky take me to its bosom?

Hey, Moon, do not hurt my heart
Do not hide yourself behind the night
Please be a window
To the country of miracles.

Through the lights of stars
I will reach to you
And when I go further
I will not become a man from the earth.

I will find a beloved there
The purest and the cleanest
I will give her a name - Faithful,
Her surname will be - Miracle.

Night falls, and my heart hurts...

THIS YEAR

I wanted to kiss hands of Rashidah Ismaili
For she dreamt of bringing some warm
clothes

To an Uzbek poet in prison.

I wanted to bring a fan to Usha
So that she would visit India often.

I wanted to bring the first Uzbek
To that land and to let them see.

I wanted to hug people
Who look like my late relatives
In the other part of the earth...

However,

With this poet's heart of mine

I cannot go to Nicaragua.

I cannot go there

With my empty pocket.

I shall better adopt a child

From Haiti.

It will be the best celebration of poetry

For me

This year.

TOWARDS THE BIG SMOKE

You shifted from my soul, can you seize
On my spirit through volcanic stroke?
If slumber lulling grants us ticket-fees,
Can you - with me - fly to The Big Smoke?
The Millennium Dome would long for us,
It wishes we touched it gently with our
hands,
That our love would light up and caress
The lives of over tens of lover friends.
If London Eye looks closely at your flight,
And Albert Hall embraces as a host,
Will at least retreat your sacred smart,
Will you feel so joyous at the most?
Say the lanterns on the Abbey Road
Summon you to the Olympic Games,
Aromatic blossoms will be thrown
At your feet to grace the blessed aims.
As Sherlock Holmes when I disclose your
mind,
Will you enliven the whole body of mine?
Will you settle down in my heart
Always treating as your timeless shrine?!

WRITER ANGELS
(ghazal)

Day is breaking in despair thinking of you,
writer angels,
I am praying, slowly crying, crowned with
rue, writer angels.

Every movement, every motion we consider
right for us,
Though in practice what you've written will
become true, writer angels.

I'm a sinner holding heavy loads on my
filthy arms,
It wishes to be so open-hearted, pure like
dew, writer angels.

The book of our deeds in whole weep or
dance in old pages,
I forgot my past betrayal; give to look
through, writer angels.

Haven't you tired yet to seat on creature's
shoulders all long life?
Let us change the place for one day, it's
Azam's queue, writer angels.