

Poems read at the Mystic Poets Workshop
July 17, 2021
Facilitated by Merle Levin
For recorded version please go to www.merlelevin.com

Xāwje Shams-od-Dīn Moḥammad Ḥāfeẓ-e Shīrāzī, known by his pen name
"Hafiz" 1315 – 1390 Iran

The Earth's Silhouettes

What plant can grow if
you keep lifting it from the soil?

Let your roots expand unchecked
into a forest, a river, a song,
or some verse you hold tenderly.

You need to become quiet for this,
as roots work in silence
beneath the earth's silhouettes.

Draw from souls all you ever could
want above, below, and to the side,
and within us, within us just love.

So You Can Plant More Wheat

So You Can Plant More Wheat
I would like to remove some rock
from your field
so that you can plant more wheat.

And those hills I see that are part of you,
I have some trees in mind for them
and flowering grasses,
so that you won't erode, when the elements pour.

Are we not lovers?
Cannot I speak to you like this?
Do I need to ask your permission
to hitch up my ox and sing to him
as I improve your vast terrain?

The title to your heart came to my office.
In looking at it a great interest
in your soul developed.
The care of your soul became mine.

So I would like to remove some stones
from your meadows;
then an orchard you could grow,

and the world,
and the world then,
will come to taste your riches.

Sometimes I say to poem

Sometimes I say to poem

“Not now

Cant you see I'm bathing!

But the poem usually doesn't care and quips

“Too bad Hafiz

No getting lazy

You promised God you would help out

And he just came up with this new tune.”

Sometimes I say to a poem,
“I don’t have the strength to
Wring out another drop of the sun.”
And the poem will often respond

By climbing up on a bar-room table:
Then lifts its skirt,
Winks,
Causing the whole
Sky to fall.