Visual Representations of the work of

Omar Khayyam



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Index

- Project Specifications
- Aim and Scope of the project
- Who is Omar Khayyam?
- Why did I select Khayyam for this project?
- Omar Khayyam's "Rubbaiyat".
- Key Subjects in the Rubaiyyat.
- Two schools of thought.
- Controversies Khayyami Theory
- Anti- Khayyami theory.
- Different forms of representations of poetry.
- Specifications of the output.
- Selected Verses (10)
- Design Characteristics



Index

- Brainstorm sessions.
- Analysis of selected poems.
- (i) Poem 1
- (ii) Poem 2
- (iii) Poem 3
- Concept generations for selected verses..
- Explorations in medium.
- Persian Calligraphy Explorations.
- Selected Medium.
- Book Layout options.
- Selected Format and Layout.
- Illustrations (1-10)(With explanations)
- Printing Specifications



Abstract

Imagery and representations of the poems that run along side Khayyam's words. Explorations in terms of mode of visual imagery, content, medium, calligraphy and typography. Calligraphy and typography that is driven by the content of his poetry.

This will act as a visual compilation of Khayyam's poetry.



Aim and Scope of the project

- Objective of this project:

Interpret the verses of the Rubaiyyat and then generate a thought provoking and aesthetically appealing visual representation of the same.

- Design Challenge

To maintain the essence of the poetry and develop a style of illustration that can be identified with the work of Omar Khayyam and the period he lived in.

- Scope of the Project

To develop a distinct style of representation. Clearly communicate the interpreted idea of the verses. Integrate the text along with the visuals in the mode of representation.

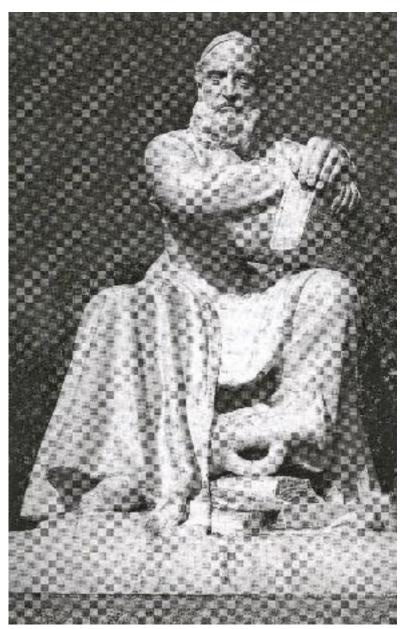
Who is Omar Khayyam?



عمر خيام

- Birth: Date: 1048 CE, Nishapur, Persia (Iran) Died in the latter half of the 12th century.
- He spent his childhood in the town of Balhi.
- Tutored by Sheik Muhammad Mansuri- one of the scholars of the time.
- Educated in Science and Philosophy.
- Arabic grammar, literature and other religious sciences.
- Diversified into the realm of mathematics, astronomy and the works of Ptolemy.
- He was recognized as one of the most gifted students.
- Advances in Algebra
- Several works including Problems of Arithmetic
- Constructed an observatory and compiled a set of astronomical tables upon which was based a new calendar era, Jalali Calendar.
- Well versed in Arabic and Persian.

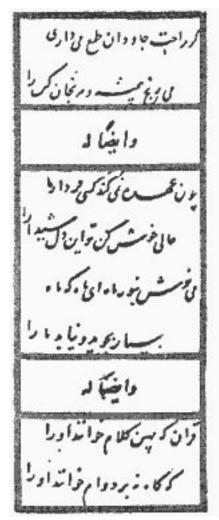
Omar Khayyam- The eloquent poet

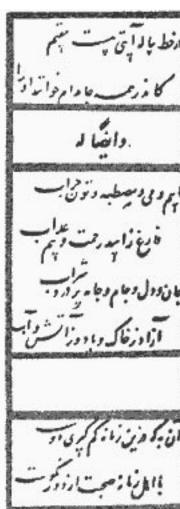


- He received subsequent recognition for his work in poetry.
- •He lived in a period of communal riots and clashes. The mesopota mian region was held captive and young Khayyam was exposed gto this surrounding. His poems very much expressed this aspect.
- 900 years ago, he dared to voice eloquent skepticism. This came alive in the most famous poem to come from an Islamic Land.
- Sufi Poet.
- "The Rubaiyat"



"Rubaiyyat"





Rubaiyyat is a Persian poem structure known for its conciseness.

Each stanza or "ruba'i" contains four lines.

Structure of the 4 verses:

- First & second line of each "ruba'i" presents a statement.
- Third brings the statement to its peak.
- Fourth sums up the central thought.
- The sequence of verses is disconnected but each one is complete in itself.
- There are 600 poems as part of the Rubaiyyat.
- The Rubaiyyat gained it popularity after it was translated by the English poet, Edward FitzGerald.
- Translated into Sanskrit, Urdu, German, Italian, Russian, Chinese.

Khayyam's Rubaiyyat



- Omar Khayyam's poetry speaks of many aspects in his life, from political to profound and from light-hearted to spiritual.
- He presents two contrasting visions in the Rubaiyyat:
 - Images of pleasure and life. (wine, dough, love)
 - Death and total destruction (darkness, dust, veil).
- Cast doubt on heaven and holy men.
- Eternal, internal struggles of sin against holiness, wisdom against lack of knowledge, and faith against unbelief.
- Khayyam challenged religious doctrines, he doubted many aspects of religious rituals and practices.
- He was claimed as the "poet of destiny".
- Khayyam having lived in a time of strict religious and political doctrines, probably found poetry as a means to communicate his strong opinions and raise questions.
- The best translation was in 1868 by Edward Fitzgerald.

Rubaiyyat- Major Symbologies- Analysis

Key Subjects	Symbology				
Question of Existence	Holiness	Seed/grow	Flowing		
Constraint of time (pleasures of Life)	Wine	Divine Love	Bread/ dough	Desires	Reward
Shortness of Life	Blown/ carry/ fly	Evil/ Hell/ Sins	Road/path	Door	
Helplessness of Man	Death	Darkness	Hidden	Sin	



Theme interpretations

"When grief and difficult problems beset the good worldly man, he can learn to fine confinement and refreshment in the simple joys of life.",Sri Paramahansa Yogananda.

Material happiness is not the route to happiness. Pleasures of materiality are not long lasting.

Uncertainty of tomorrow.

"Be happy in the present and then it wont matter if we die tomorrow. We carry with us priceless treasures of peace, faith and happiness.", Sri Paramahansa Yogananda



Schools of thought

- Claims that he was highly influenced by Islamic mysticism. Diverse and intellectually provocative subjects.
- •One side of the controversy:

 "a man of rudest wit and shallowest reputation"

 "a poet of rationalist pessimism"
- On the other hand:
- " a poet of deeper symbolism"
- "Many people found him as a voice they needed to hear and centuries after he died he became vehicle for those experiencing the same trials and fear."



Anti Khayyami Theory

Paul Elmer More, was one of the people who rejected the khayyami philosophy. His criticism was based on Khayyam's "advocacy of determinism and absence of free will."

Comparison with other intellectual figures such as Lucretius.

Khayyam was considered to be a pessimist.

Article named "The Harm of Omar".

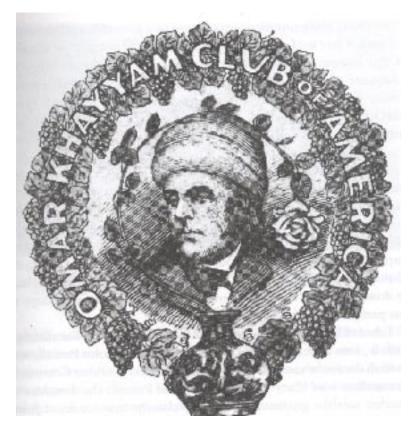
The article stated, "There is real and deadly harm in Omar if he is taken too seriously."

"The cause of Omar's Popularity", Gentleman's Magazine.

Robert Graves, "Omar Khayyam's mystical poem has been accepted throughout the West as a drunkard's rambling profession of hedonistic creed: "Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die."



For the Khayyami Theory



The Omarian Community: Walter Crane

Edward Allen

T. S. Elliot

Most famous member: George Bernard Shaw.

Omarians produced material that supported the Pessimism that was being revolted against.

" No poem had given me so much pleasure before," Mark Twain.

"It is the only poem I have ever carried about with me; it has not been from under my hand for 28 years.", Mark Twain.

Dr. Harivansh Rai Bachchan wrote the "Madhushala", which was inspired from the Rubaiyyat.



Output Specifications

- Hardbound book: 6 inches/ 12 inches
- Bilingual book:

Arabic/ Pharsi text (Calligraphy) English text



10 selected verses- Rubaiyyat

Time

- Dreaming when Dawn's Left Hand was in the Sky
 I heard a Voice within the Tavern cry,
 "Awake, my Little ones, and fill the Cup
 Before Life's Liquor in its Cup be dry."
- Up from the Earth's centre through the seventh gate
 I rose, and on th throne of Saturn sate,
 And many knots unraveled by the road;
 But not the knot of human death and fate.
- 3) There was the Door to which I found no Key:
 There was the Veil through which I could not see:
 Some little talk awhile of Me and Thee
 There was -- and then no more of Thee and Me.
- 4) Were it not Folly, Spider-like to spin
 The Thread of present Life away to win -What? for ourselves, who know not if we shall
 Breathe out the very Breath we now breathe in!



10 selected verses- Rubaiyyat

Paradise

5) Look to the Rose that blows about us—"Lo, Laughing," she says, "into the World I blow: At once the silken Tassel of my Purse Tear, and its Treasure on the Garden throw."

Clear Past Regrets

- 6) Ah! my Beloved, fill the Cup that clears
 To-day of past Regrets and future Fears
 To-morrow?—Why, To-morrow I may be
 Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n Thousand Years
- 7) Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend, Before we too into the Dust Descend; Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie, Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer and—sans End!



10 selected verses-Rubaiyyat

Destiny

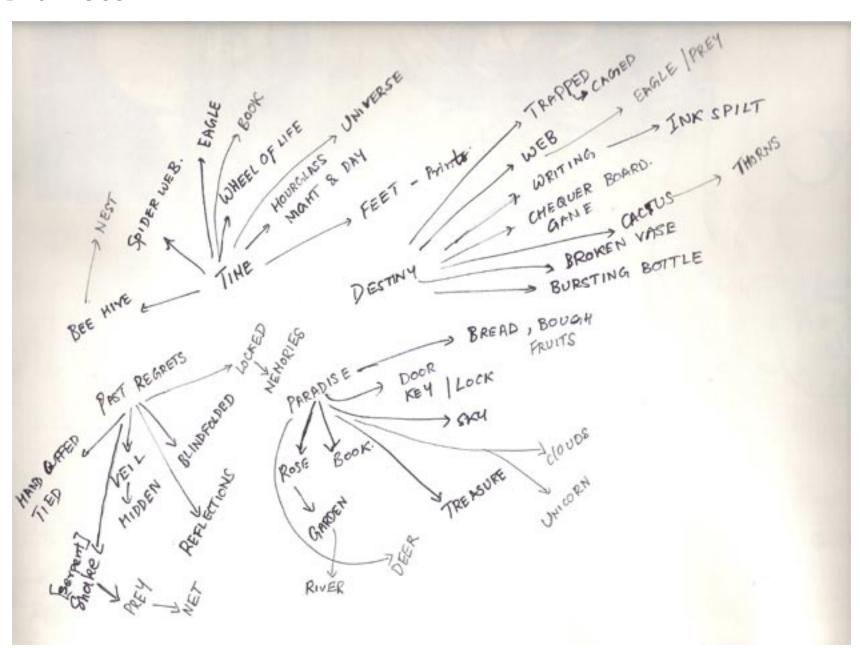
- 8) 'Tis all a Chequer-board of Nights and Days
 Where Destiny with Men for Pieces plays:
 Hither and thither moves, and mates, and slays,
 And one by one back in the Closet lays.
- 9) The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ, Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line, Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it
- 10) Oh, Come with old Khayyam, Leave the Wise To talk; one thing is certain, that life flies; One thing is certain, and the Rest is lies; The flower that once has blown for ever dies.



Design characteristics

tucvgjhb

Brainstorm





Poem Analysis: Poem 1

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend, Before we too into the Dust Descend; Dust into Dust, and under Dust, to lie, Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer and—sans End!

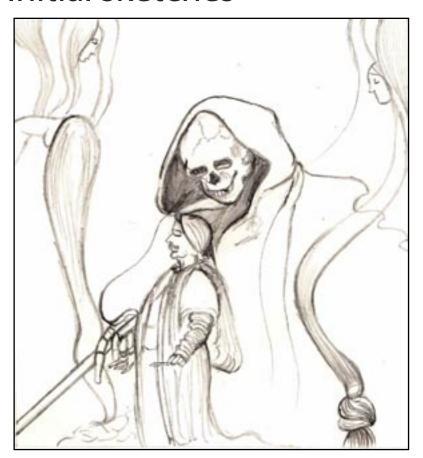
Interpretation:

- Make the most of the time available.
- Before we are snatched away by death.
- Dust symbolises the body made up of earth.
- The mortal body will no longer have pleasure.
- Coming and going- One after another

Single line interpretation:

Make the most of the time remaining, before we also like others perish and dissapear into the oblivion.

Initial sketches







In my initial sketches I started off by using direct symbolisms of death such as skeletons, darkness and shadows. Then I considered objects to try and represent the same. For example: the broken pot represents the aspects of collapse.

The inverse of this is the splatter ink, which shows the disperse or dissapearance.

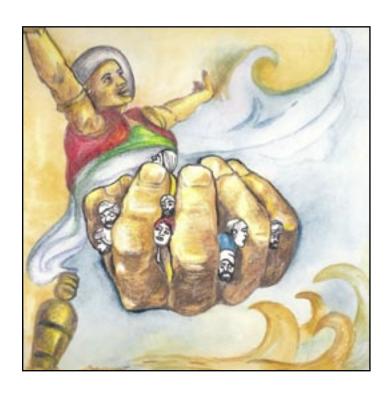


Poem Analysis: Poem 1



This image shows a hand grabbing people. This is to show the existence of an external being. This is to show that we should make use of the time available to us in our hands.

Media Explorations







Colour pencils and Watercolor

Charcoal pencils

Mixed media



Poem Analysis: Poem 2

'Tis all a Chequer-board of Nights and Days Where Destiny with Men for Pieces plays: Hither and thither moves, and mates, and slays, And one by one back in the Closet lays.

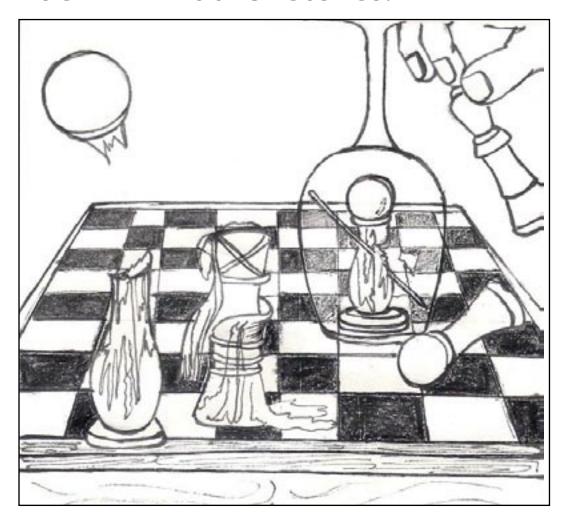
Interpretation:

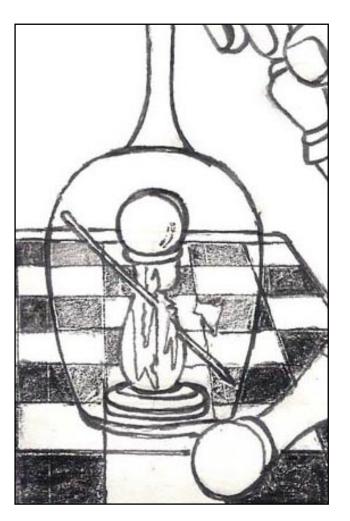
- Symbolises the world with Human beings acting as chessmen
- Represents the ruler and their subordinates
- Speaks about destiny and the manner in which the men move
- Man is moved from one state to another.
- Just as each chess piece is put in the closet after being played-Man is also made to retire.

Single line Interpretation:

Men come into the world in turns, play their game with fate/ destiny and then they are eventually made to return back to the chest of God.

Poem 2- Initial Sketches.





For this verse, I transformed the figure of the chessmen to represent actual human beings. The scene of a battle on the earth is being represented.

The attempt has also tried to use other prominent elements of Khayyam's poetry such as the wine glass which acts as a trap in this imagery.



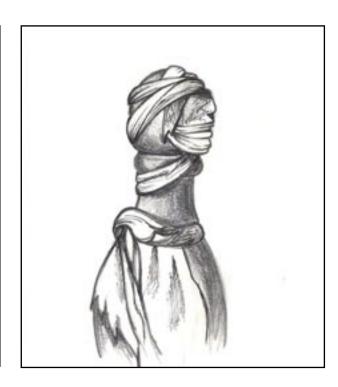
Poem 2- Media Exploration



Colour pencils and Watercolor



Charcoal pencils



Mixed media



Poem Analysis: Poem 3

Were it not Folly, Spider-like to spin
The Thread of present Life away to win -What? for ourselves, who know not if we shall
Breathe out the very Breath we now breathe in!

Interpretation:

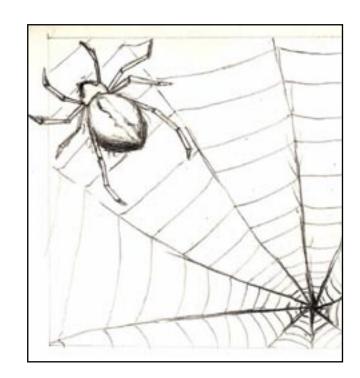
- Comparison between the present life and the past.
- Forgoing the present in search of one's past.
- The time spent in this journey- lost
- The end cannot be predicted.

Single line Interpretation:

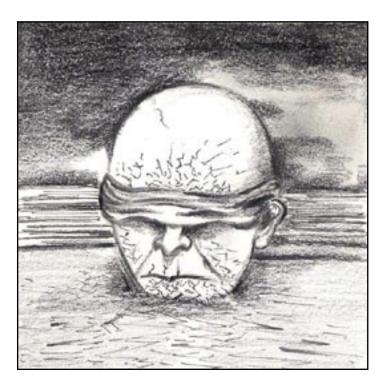
Everything in life is of a transcient nature and hence one must not waste our time in activities that we know will eventually be a waste of time.



Poem 2-Initial sketches







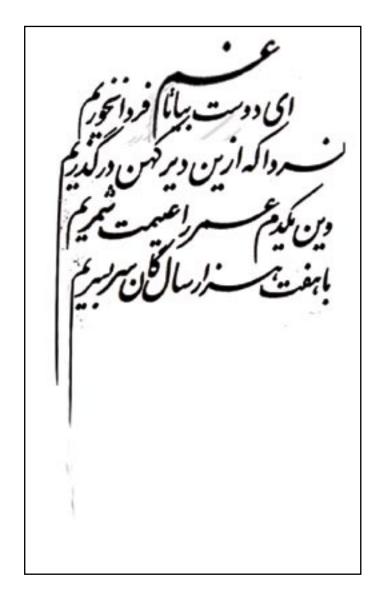
For this verse, the main image that I tried to convey is that one gets absorbed in the task that is undertaken and forgets the reality of things. For example: The image of the man blindfolded conveys that he is completely ignorant of the chaotic environment that surrounds him. This is similar to the spider who goes on builing his web despite the fact that it will be tron apart one day.

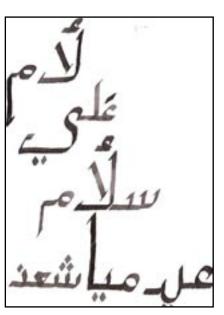


Design considerations

- Persian calligraphy
- English text on an overlay/ transparency.
- Dye cut and see throughs.
- Text intergration within the imagery.

Persian calligraphy explorations











Typeface Exploration

There was a Door to which I found no Key:

There was a Veil past which I could not see:

Some little Talk awhile of ME and THEE

There seemed--and then no more of THEE and ME.

There was a Door to which I found no Key:

There was a Veil past which I could not see:

Some little Talk awhile of ME and THEE

There seemed--and then no more of THEE and ME.

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There seemed--and then no more of THEE and ME.

Berling (Roman)

Barmeno (Regular)

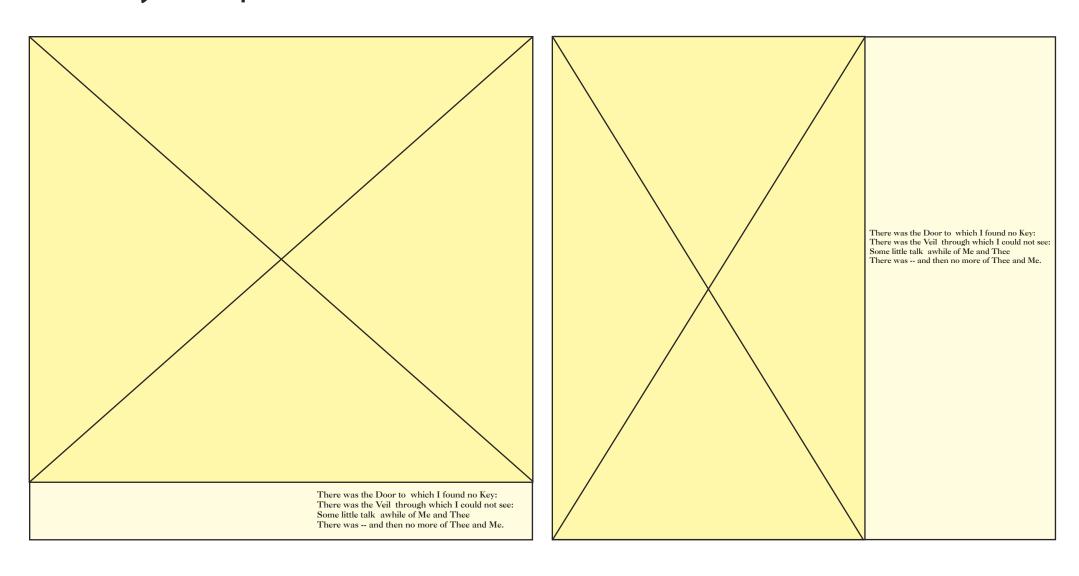
Bembo (Regular)

ITC Stone Informal (Italics)

Caslon 3 (Roman)

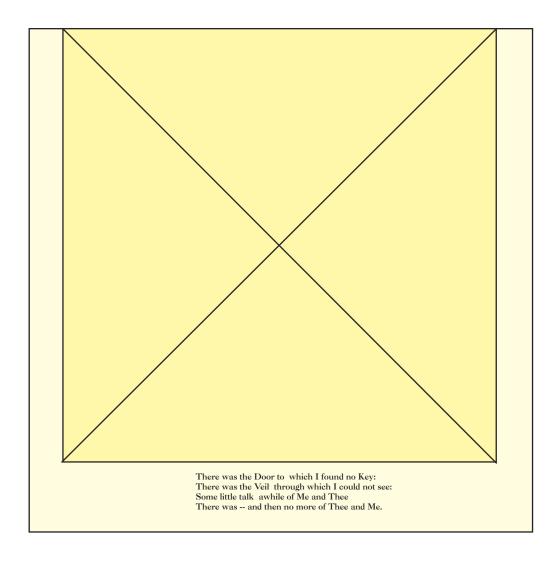


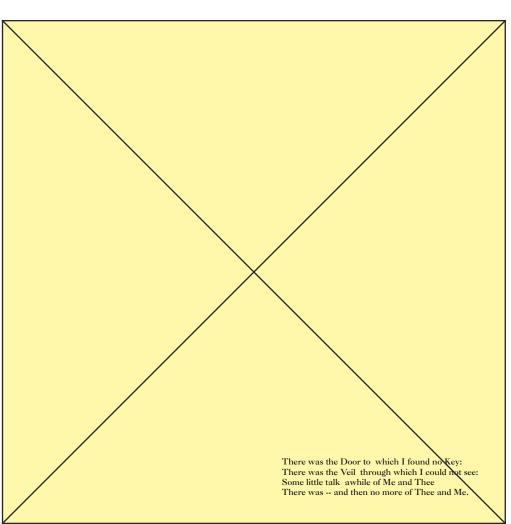
Book Layout options



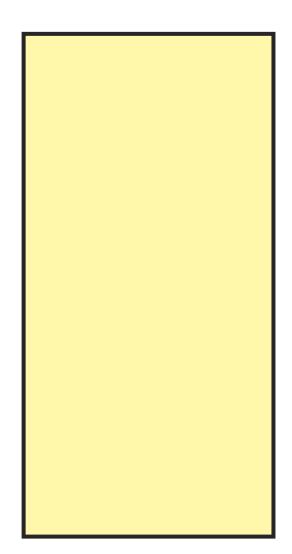


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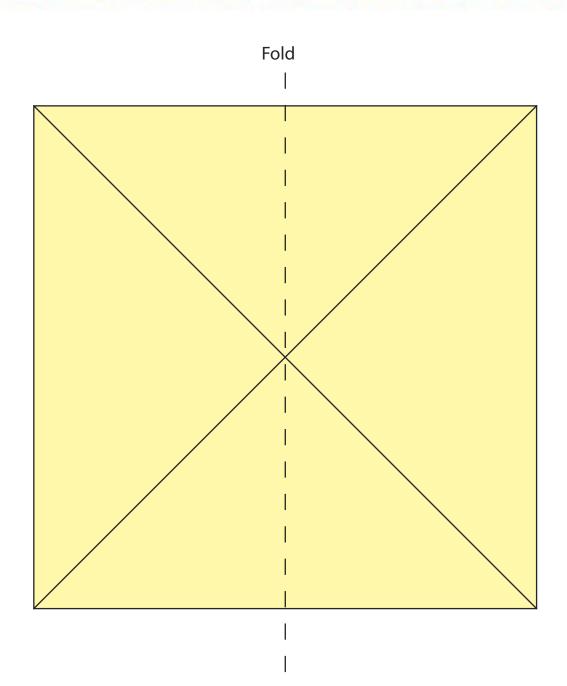








6 inches/ 12 inches.





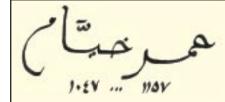
Book Content



Preface

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Index

-Past regrets

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend, Ah! my Beloved, fill the Cup that clears

- Time

Dreaming when Dawn's Left Hand was in the Sky Ah, fill the Cup: -- what boots it to repeat There was the Door to which I found no Key: Were it not Folly, Spider-like to spin

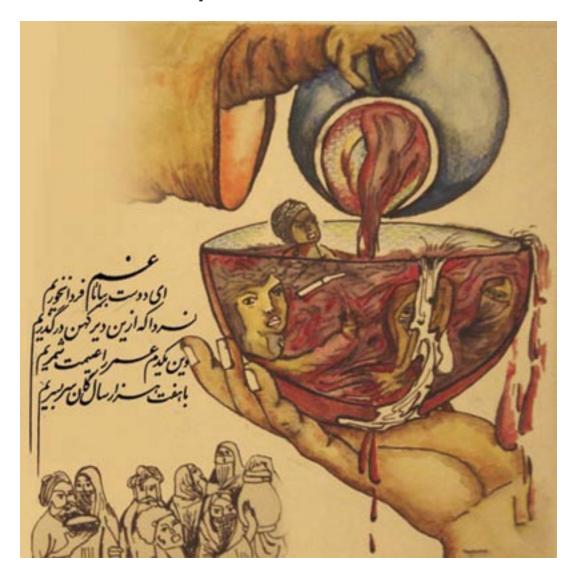
- Destiny

There was the Door to which I found no Key: Were it not Folly, Spider-like to spin

- Paradise

There was the Door to which I found no Key: Were it not Folly, Spider-like to spin





Ah! my Beloved, fill the Cup that clears To-day of past Regrets and future Fears To-morrow?—Why, To-morrow I may be Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n Thousand Years

Single Line Interpretation: Get rid of the past regrets and worries and live life in the present.

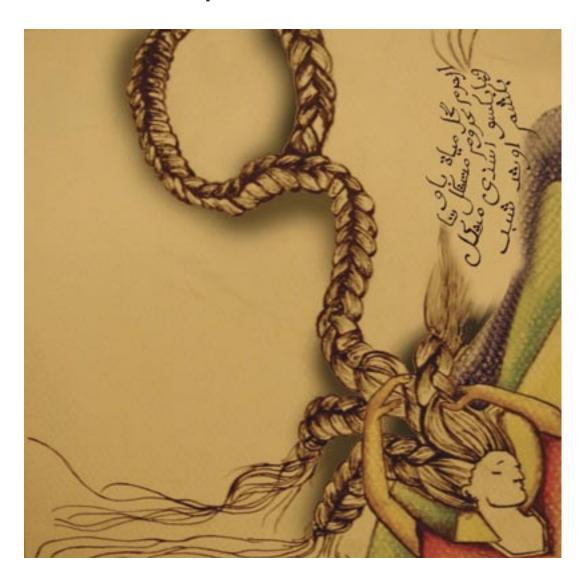




There was the Door to which I found no Key: There was the Veil through which I could not see: Some little talk awhile of Me and Thee There was -- and then no more of Thee and Me.

Single Line Interpretation: There are so many hurldes in life past which one cannot see. For sometime we try to pass those hurdles and then we become no more.





Up from the Earth's centre through the seventh gate I rose, and on the Throne of saturn sate, And many knots unraveled by the road; But not the Knot of human death and fate.

Single Line Interpretation: There are so many questions that are answered by life, but not the question of death and fate.





'Tis all a Chequer-board of Nights and Days Where Destiny with Men for Pieces plays: Hither and thither moves, and mates, and slays, And one by one back in the Closet lays.

Single Line Interpretation: Human beings are bought into this world to play the game of existence and then eventually we leave and return back to the place we came from.



Conclusion

bknjkml



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