

Sand and Glass II

In the name of Allah who is Mercy and Compassion

Canto I.

The lowly waves on a lonely shore,
And a long, long stretch of sand;
No sound save that of ocean's roar,
No creature on that strand.

A place so dreary, desolate,
A God forsaken beach,
Yet Nature e'en from that low state
Could man a lesson teach.

The Punic merchants drawing nigh,
Looked for a place to land,
And pulled their ships (God knows the why)
Upon that stretch of sand.

A blazing fire beneath each pot,
(Those pots were iron or steel)
The stew was served when piping hot,
They well enjoyed that meal.

At last 'twas time to clear the ground.
Behold: a shiny mass
Beneath each cauldron there was found:
This was the birth of glass.

From dirty, low, amorphous sand,
To polished crystal ware
We see Nature's alchemic hand
And in her triumphs share.

To sand we add metallic ore,

We boil a molten mass,
The worthless gone forevermore,
Instead is valued glass.

From that which seems a worthless state,
We upbuild Beauty's shrine,
Engender with a color chaste,
Such beauty is divine.

Cathedral windows, chalices,
Goblets for golden wine,
Mirrors and lamps for palaces
Where lights may brightly shine.

Utensils for the scientist,
Spectacles where eyes are weak,
Scopes that pierce the densest mist,
When ultra worlds we seek.

Not all light passes thru windows,
Tho much does filter thru.
An inner process likewise shows,
That Nature filters, too.

For men who are so puffed and vain,
And outwardly filled with pride,
What know they of ancestral strain?
How forbears lived and died?

For we may feel like polished glass,
And think ourselves so grand,
Beneath the surface, we find—alas!
That we are mostly sand.

So high or low or middle class
Come from the self same dust—
A dirty low, amorphous mass.
But praise ye! God is just.

Canto II.

Above the sky, below the earth,
And a long, long stretch of sand,

Hot and dry, of little worth,
That desolate, barren land.

One sees no beast, one hears no bird,
No plant springs from the ground,
Afar or near, no voice is heard
But silence—deep—profound.

Who other than the Ishmaelites
Dare venture in that world?
Where peace goes forth only at nights,
And hate its banner unfurled.

With no love for one's fellow man,
Where tribe was turned 'gainst tribe,
Or making peace with neighbor clan,
Ceased not to mock and jibe.

Where woman was a chattel slave,
Subjected to easy divorce,
Free for the lusts of each warrior brave
Who only valued his horse.

Where there was neither right nor wrong
And none knew any pity,
Justice? That belonged to the strong,
The clever or the witty.

But even in that barren land,
A wonder did God stage.
For was not man made by his hand,
And in his own image?

Above the town of Mecca lay
A shepherd with his sheep,
Yet not from pasture do they stray,
When he falls into sleep.

Arise and read, go forth, recite:
O Ahmed, Ya Amin!
I cannot read, I cannot write,
I know not what you mean.

Recite thou this, O Mahomed,
Recite in the name of the Lord,
Arise thee from thy lowly bed,
Go forth and preach his word.

God seeth all thou know and do
(There is no God but God)
Arise, O prophet, thou must show
There is no God but God.

Betake thee to the haunts of man,
Ere dawn dispels the night,
Proclaim to all the divine Koran,
That they may live aright.