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AREF QAZVINI

TULIPS BLOOM FROM YOUTHS’ BLOOD

I.
It’s the season of wine, meadows, and Rose
The court of spring is cleared of choughs and crows
Generous clouds now water Rey[1] more freely than Khotan[2]
The caged bird and I both long for our own land
How wayward are you, Heaven!
How vicious are you, Heaven!
You’re headed to vengeance, O Heaven!
You have no faith
You have no creed—no creed
O Heaven!
II.
Tulips have bloomed from the blood of the youths of our land
Lamenting those cypresses, Cypress can no longer stand
A mourning nightingale creeps under Rose’s shadow
And Rose, like me, has torn her robe in sorrow
How wayward are you, Heaven!
How vicious are you, Heaven!
You’re headed to vengeance, O Heaven!
You have no faith
You have no creed—no creed
O Heaven!
III.
Asleep are the vakeels, corrupt are the viziers
They have plundered the silver and gold of Iran
Lest they leave our home a ruin
God, judge the emirs, dry the paupers’ tears
How wayward are you, Heaven!
How vicious are you, Heaven!
You’re headed to vengeance, O Heaven!
You have no faith
You have no creed—no creed
O Heaven!
IV.
Capsize the earth with tears
If you have a fistful of Iran’s soil, pour it over your head
Manifest your honour, beware of dark days
Let your bosom be a shield before enemy spears

How wayward are you, Heaven!
How vicious are you, Heaven!
You’re headed to vengeance, O Heaven!
You have no faith
You have no creed—no creed
O Heaven!
V.
At the foe’s hands I howl in pain
Whoever fears death is by fear slain
The lovers’ dance of death is not a game of chess
If you have courage, prepare for campaign
How wayward are you, Heaven!
How vicious are you, Heaven!
You’re headed to vengeance, O Heaven!
You have no faith
You have no creed—no creed
O Heaven!
VI.
‘Aref[3] relies not on days since the dawn of days
Like Khayyam, he holds no hand but the wine cup’s
Gives his heart only to the beloved’s curls
Trades not a hundred lifetimes of shame for one with a name
How wayward are you, Heaven!
How vicious are you, Heaven!
You’re headed to vengeance, O Heaven!
You have no faith
You have no creed—no creed
O Heaven!
[1] A city in northern central Iran, to the south of modern Tehran
[2] Northeastern central Asia
[3] Literally: learned, wise, sagacious, mystic