

THE LOVER'S
RVBAIYAT



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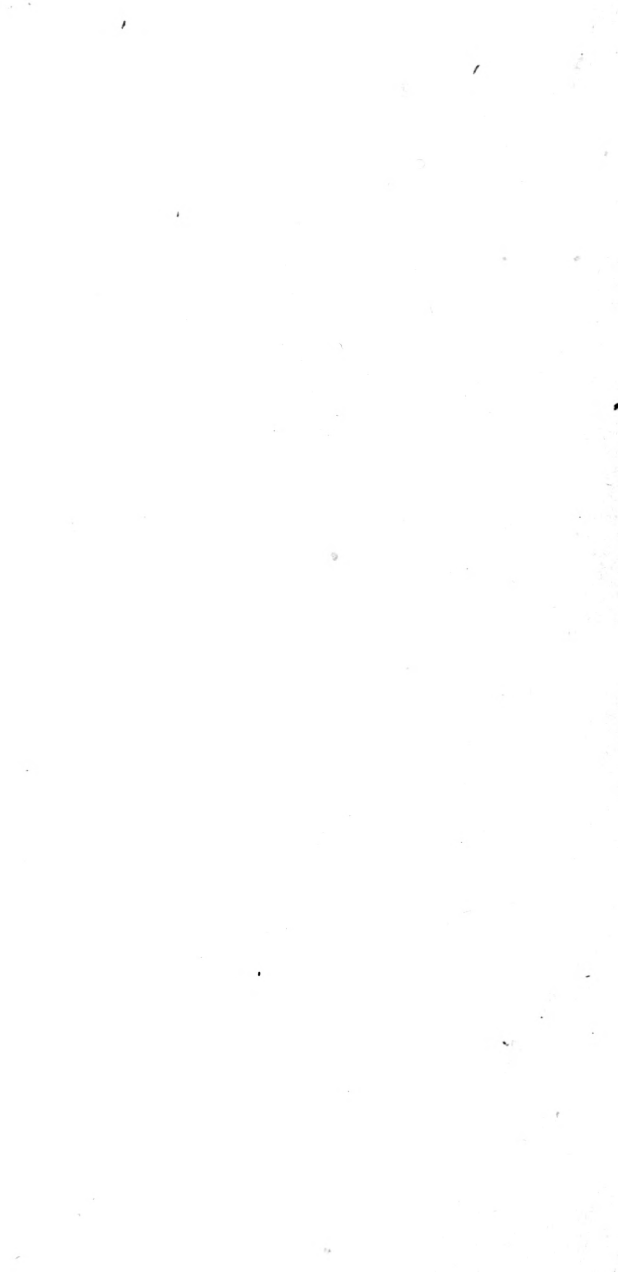
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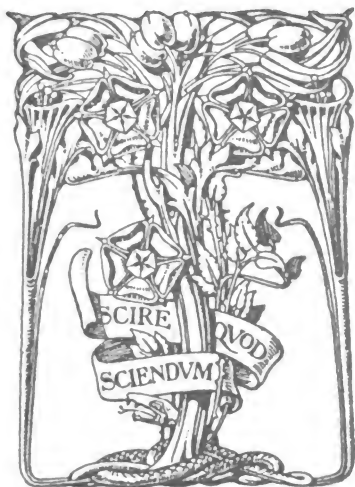
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THE LOVER'S RUBÁIYÁT

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EDITED BY
JESSIE B. RITTENHOUSE



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LOVERS ALL

To ye who walk in blossomy ways,
Acquaint with rose and song,
Within whose hand each morrow lays
The gift for which ye long, —
I, too, acquaint with Joy, bequeath
These notes of Omar's song.

To ye who walk in parchéd ways,
Bereft of rose and song,
Within whose hand no morrow lays
The gift for which ye long, —
I, too, acquaint with Pain, bequeath
These notes of Omar's song.

JESSIE B. RITTENHOUSE.



CRITICS ALL

“ Another Omar ! ” — sayest thou ? —
“ Thou ’lt cast it to the winds, I trow ! ”

Nay, good my friend, be not so fast
Thine ill-considered scorn to cast ;

But look within and thou shalt see
Foregathered a new companie :

Old Fitz is here to make his bow,
But soothly yields the foreground now,

For here are, sharing his demesne,
Le Gallienne, Garner, Stokes, and Keene ;

And Powell casts a fadeless rose
In tribute at the feet of those ;

And Cutter, Johnson, and Cadell
Have each a gracious word to tell.

While Whinfield, of the graver voice,
Adds now and then a precept choice

To counsels of the band above,
Whose jocund morning theme is Love.

You scarce will know old Omar's face
A-smiling with such pleasant grace.

The Door of Darkness now is past,
And this his counsel at the last:

To loose the latchet at Love's gate,
Unties the Knot of Human Fate ;

And in the meadows for a day,
With Beauty hand in hand to stray

Shall solve the Secret you and I
Seek, 'neath that Bowl they call The Sky.

Of voices several their speech,
Yet blended to one tone is each ;

So, good my friend, new notes be these —
Speak them good hearing, an' you please.

J. B. R.

FOREWORD

The motif of this little volume is indicated by its title, "The Lover's Rubáiyát;" — a book for sweethearts, and unforgetting folk who would gather joy's wind-strewn petals, to fashion again the rose.

The poem was mosaiced together, some time ago, as a matter of personal pleasure, with no vainglorious thought of print; the idea suggesting itself by chance, when, in preparing a three-version edition of Omar Khayyám, I came upon certain quatrains of sentiment not used by FitzGerald, and sounding a comparatively unaccented note in the more familiar translations.

The charm of these quatrains took me captive, and ere long they began shaping to a unity and sequence, drawing together by magnetic attraction, until, with such stanzas from FitzGerald as seemed their

complement in thought, they had evolved to a Persian love song, having all the coherence and atmosphere of the work of a single translator, yet blended, note by note, from that of ten.

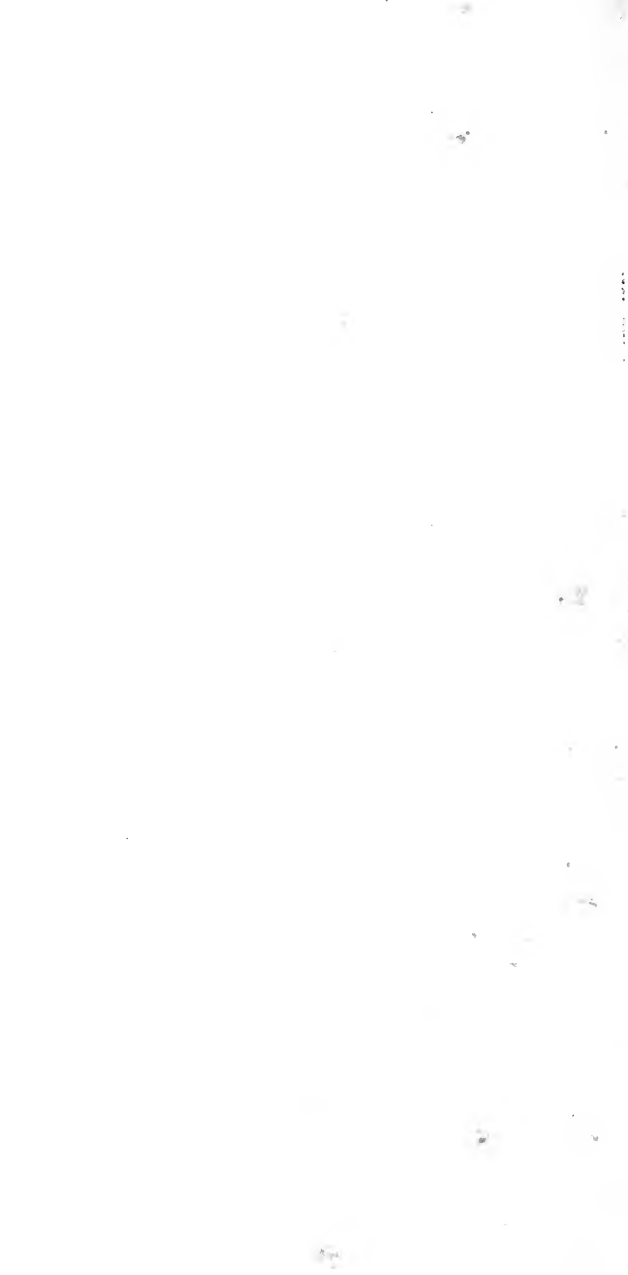
With two or three exceptions the translations from which the quatrains are taken are little known to the public, so that not only is their grouping into a love poem unique, but, except to students of Omar, the majority of the quatrains themselves will come as new acquaintances.

The stanzas are drawn from the renderings of Edward FitzGerald, Richard Le Gallienne, John Leslie Garner, E. H. Whinfield, Whitely Stokes, H. G. Keene, Jessie E. Cadell, F. York Powell, Edwin Kendall Cutter, and E. A. Johnson.

The acknowledgments of the editor and of the publishers are due to Mr. John Lane for permission to make use of stanzas from *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám: A Paraphrase from Several Literal Translations*, by Richard Le Gallienne, and from Mrs. Jessie E. Cadell's translation of the *Rubáiyát*; to Messrs. Henry T. Coates & Company for permission to include quatrains from the translation of *Omar Khayyám*, by John Leslie Garner; to Mr. Elkin Mathews for the use of extracts from *Twenty-four Quatrains of Omar*, by F. York Powell, and to Mr. Edwin Kendall Cutter for permission to include quatrains from his rendering of twenty-two of the *Rubáiyát*.



THE LOVER'S RUBÁIYÁT





رباعيات العاشق

THE LOVER'S RUBÁIYÁT

1

O love, how green the world, how blue the sky
And we are living — *living* — you and I!
Ah, when the sun shines and our love is near,
'T is good to live, and very hard to die.

2

O listen, love, how all the builders sing!
O sap! O song! O green world blossoming!
White as the hand of Moses blooms the thorn,
Sweet as the breath of Jesus comes the spring.

3

I pray you, gentle Saki, of your grace,
Carry the wine-jar to some pleasant place,
Where, in a green and rose-hung sanctuary,
I'll gaze all day on my beloved's face.

4

To-day how sweetly breathes the temperate air,
The rains have newly laved the parched parterre,



And bulbuls cry in notes of ecstasy,
"Thou, too, O pallid rose, our wine must
share!"

5

Sweet is the breath of spring to rose's face,
And thy sweet face adds charm to this fair
place;
To-day is sweet, but yesterday is sad,
And sad all mention of its parted grace.

6

Sweetheart, if Time a cloud on thee have flung,
To think the breath must leave thee, now so
young,
Sit here upon the grass, a day or two,
While yet no grass from thy dust shall have
sprung.

7

For, have you thought how short a time is ours?
Only a little longer than the flowers:
Here in the meadow just a summer's day,
Only to-day; to-morrow — other flowers.

8

Ah, loved one, when the laughing spring is
 blowing,
 With thee beside me and the cup o'erflowing,
 I pass the day upon this fragrant meadow,
 And dream the while, no thought on heaven
 bestowing.

9

A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
 A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread — and Thou
 Beside me singing in the Wilderness —
 Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!

10

Some for the Glories of This World; and some
 Sigh for the Prophet's Paradise to come;
 Ah, take the Cash, and let the Credit go,
 Nor heed the rumble of a distant Drum!

11

Think, in this batter'd Caravanserai
 Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,

How Sultán after Sultán with his Pomp
Abode his destined Hour, and went his way.

12

Long before thee and me were Night and Morn,
For some great end the sky is round us borne ;
Upon this dust, ah, step with careful foot,
Some beauty's eyeball here may lie forlorn.

13

A sighing bit of breathing clay, this vase
Once humbly bowed before a woman's face ;
This earthen handle fixed about its neck
Did oft in love a cypress form embrace.

14

For even this dust that blows along the street
Once whispered to its love that life was sweet,
Ruddy with wine it was, with roses crowned,
And now you spurn it with your eager feet.

15

When You and I behind the Veil are past,
Oh, but the long, long while the World shall
last,

Which of our Coming and Departure heeds
As the Sea's self should heed a pebble-cast.

16

Come, bring that Ruby in yon crystal bowl,
That brother true of every open soul ;
Thou knowest overwell this life of ours
Is wind that hurries by — O bring the bowl!

17

For some we loved, the loveliest and the best
That from his Vintage rolling Time hath prest,
Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,
And one by one crept silently to rest.

18

The bird of life is singing on the bough
His two eternal notes of "I and Thou" —
O! hearken well, for soon the song sings
through,
And, would we hear it, we must hear it now.

19

The bird of life is singing in the sun,
 Short is his song, nor only just begun, —
 A call, a trill, a rapture, then — so soon! —
 A silence, and the song is done — is done.

20

Ah, fill the Cup! — what boots it to repeat
 How Time is slipping underneath our Feet;
 Unborn TO-MORROW and dead YESTERDAY,
 Why fret about them if TO-DAY be sweet!

21

Were I a Sultán, say what greater bliss
 Were mine to summon to my side than this, —
 Dear gleaming face, far brighter than the
 moon!
 O Love! and this immortalizing kiss!

22

On Love's sweet path pursue the offering
 heart,
 In Love's own precinct seek a perfect heart,

A hundred temples are but beaten clay,
Let be the temple, so thou find a heart.

23

If in this shadowland of life thou hast
Found *one* true heart to love thee, hold it fast,
Love it again, give all to keep it thine,
For love like nothing in this world can last.

24

Long have I sought, but seldom found a lover ;
To love aright is to be naught but lover.
He who would love, yet eat and rest him, too,
Is still an animal, and not a lover.

25

For love is a great sleepless, floodless fire,
Love never moves his eyes from his desire ;
Were love to sleep, — awaking, love were
gone ;
And what gross sustenance should love require ?

26

I dreamt a sage said, " Wherefore life consume
 In sleep? Can sleep make pleasure's roses
 bloom?
 Forgather not with Death's twin-brother,
 Sleep;
 Thou wilt have sleep enough within thy tomb! "

27

Why at the Dawning must the cock still crow?
 It is that by his crowing he may show
 That one more Night has slid from out thy Life,
 And thou art lying asleep and dost not know.

28

To-day is thine to spend, but not to-morrow,
 Counting on morrows breedeth naught but
 sorrow;
 Oh! squander not this breath that Heaven
 hath lent thee,
 Nor make too sure another breath to borrow!

29

Whether at Naishápúr or Babylon,
 Whether the Cup with sweet or bitter run,
 The Wine of Life keeps oozing drop by drop,
 The Leaves of Life keep falling one by one.

30

Look to the blowing Rose 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.”

31

Rose, thou art like unto a Face most fair;
 Rose, thou art like unto a Ruby rare;
 Fate, thou art ever changing shape and hue,
 Yet ever hast the same familiar air.

32

Sometimes it is my fancy to suppose
 The rose thy face — so like thy face it glows;
 O woman made of roses out and in,
 Sometimes I only take thee for a rose.

33

Ah, with what skill thy Maker's hand designed
 thee,
 And with what grace and loveliness combined
 thee,
 But oft I wonder why He made thee fair
 And then in this poor earthen home confined
 thee.

34

Into this Universe, and *Why* not knowing,
 Nor *Whence*, like Water willy-nilly flowing,
 And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
 I know not *Whither*, willy-nilly blowing.

35

At the pale gate of birth an angel stands
 Singing a lying song of lovely lands,
 Sweet as a bird each worn and weary lie, —
 The soul believes and takes the angel's hands.

36

Of all the Throng that broke the Clay apart,
 Who hath fulfilled the Longing of his Heart,

Who is not weary ere his Sleep begins? —
O that we never had to make the Start!

37

If Mortals out of Loam and Rot He made,
Where should the burden of our Sin be laid?
Surely He did not hope with such poor Stuff
The Rôles of Priest and Angel could be played!

38

And if He does not know what will we gain
If we go searching to add Pain to Pain?
He has lived longer, sure, than Me or You;
Set on Your puny Task, for His is vain!

39

Alike for those who for TO-DAY prepare,
And those who after some TO-MORROW stare,
A Muezzín from the Tower of Darkness cries,
“Fools! your Reward is neither Here nor
There!”

40

A Moment's Halt — a momentary taste
 Of BEING from the Well amid the Waste —
 And Lo ! the phantom Caravan has reacht
 The NOTHING it set out from — Oh make
 haste !

41

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 !

42

Thou shalt be parted from thy soul, and then
 Enter God's veil of mystery again,
 Be glad ! For whence you came you do not
 know ;
 Drink ! For you wist as little where you go.

43

And if the Wine you drink, the Lip you press,
 End in what All begins and ends in — Yes ;

Think then you are TO-DAY what YESTERDAY
You were — TO-MORROW you shall not be
less.

44

Ah, when at last the shrouded Saki, Death
Brings me a cup so sweet it takes my breath,
Shall I not bid him welcome like his brother?
Life I have feared not, shall I then fear Death?

45

For if you cheat Oblivion of its Dread,
You need not even know that you are dead,
And rule away, although your Rule is done;
Being a King of Dreams, your Kingdom fled.

46

The Heart wherein Love's wick burns clear
and well,
Whether it swing in Mosque or shrine or cell,
If in the Book of Love it be enrolled
Is free from Hope of Heaven or Fear of Hell.

47

Although God's service has not been my care,
Nor for His coming was my heart made fair,
I still have hope to find the mercy-seat
Because I never wearied Him with prayer.

48

The impress of His hand the vessels keep
Who makes and throws them on the rubbish
heap,
But if they turn out well why are they broken,
If ill, the blame is surely His to reap.

49

Oh threats of Hell and Hopes of Paradise !
One thing at least is certain — *This* Life flies ;
One thing is certain and the rest is Lies ;
The Flower that once has blown for ever dies.

50

If grief be the Companion of thine heart
Brood not on thine own sorrows and their
smart ;

Behold another's woe, and learn thereby
How small thine own, and comfort thy sad
heart.

51

O my beloved, may your glad to-morrows
Stretch out before you, endless as my sorrows;
Haste not away, I have but wine and you,
Yea! life is naught unless from you it borrows.

52

Oh! that there were some place where man
could rest,
Some end to look for in this lonely quest,
Some hope that in a hundred thousand years
Our dust might blossom on the Mother's
breast!

53

If I were God, and this poor world were mine,
O thou shouldst see on what a fair design
I would rebuild it like a dream for thee,
Nor shouldst thou ever blush to call it thine.

54

If I were God, I would not wait the years
To solve the mystery of human tears ;
And, unambiguous, I would speak my will,
Nor hint it darkly to the dreaming seers.

55

Ah Love ! could you and I with Fate conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
Would not we shatter it to bits—and then
Re-mould it nearer to the Heart's Desire !

56

Love, the fair day is drawing to its close,
The stars are rising and a soft wind blows,
The gates of heaven are opening in a dream—
The nightingale sings to the sleeping rose.

57

With twilight dew each rose's face is wet,
Morning was gray upon them when we met,
Still must I drink, and still must drink with
thee, —
'T is many laughing hours to bed-time yet.

58

To-night pour wine, and sing a dulcet air,
And I upon thy lips will hang, O fair!
Yea, pour some wine as rosy as thy cheeks,
My mind is troubled like thy ruffled hair.

59

Life's caravan is hastening on its way,
Brood not on troubles of the coming day,
But fill the wine-cup ere sweet night be gone,
And snatch a pleasant moment while you may.

60

Yet Ah, that Spring should vanish with the
Rose!
That Youth's sweet-scented Manuscript should
close!
The Nightingale that in the branches sang,
Ah, whence, and whither flown again, who
knows!

61

Ah, Moon of my Delight who know'st no wane,
The Moon of Heav'n is rising once again;

How oft hereafter rising shall she look
Through this same Garden after me — in
vain!

62

Heart of my heart, in such an hour as this
The cup of life brims all too full of bliss,
See, it runs over in these happy tears —
How strange you seem! how solemn is your
kiss!

63

O thou who in the Universe entire
The object art of all my fond Desire,
Far dearer art thou than my Quickening Soul,
More precious thou than Life's Consuming Fire!

64

Like to the interwisted melody
Of harp and lute shall our true wedding be,
And such a marriage of fair music make
That none shall separate the THEE from ME.

Night, with a sudden splendor, opens wide
Her purple robe, and bares her silver side,
The moon, her bosom, fills the world with
light, —
Only thy breast is lovelier, my bride !





IDENTIFICATION OF THE QUATRAINS

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. Le Gallienne | 20. FitzGerald |
| 2. Le Gallienne | 21. Le Gallienne |
| 3. Le Gallienne | 22. Keene |
| 4. Whinfield | 23. Le Gallienne |
| 5. Whinfield | 24. Le Gallienne |
| 6. Keene | 25. Le Gallienne |
| 7. Le Gallienne | 26. Whinfield |
| 8. Garner | 27. Powell |
| 9. FitzGerald | 28. Whinfield |
| 10. FitzGerald | 29. FitzGerald |
| 11. FitzGerald | 30. FitzGerald |
| 12. Keene | 31. Powell |
| 13. Garner | 32. Le Gallienne |
| 14. Le Gallienne | 33. Garner |
| 15. FitzGerald | 34. FitzGerald |
| 16. Stokes | 35. Le Gallienne |
| 17. FitzGerald | 36. Cutter |
| 18. Le Gallienne | 37. Cutter |
| 19. Le Gallienne | 38. Cutter |

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| 39. FitzGerald | 52. Stokes |
| 40. FitzGerald | 53. Le Gallienne |
| 41. FitzGerald | 54. Le Gallienne |
| 42. Cadell | 55. FitzGerald |
| 43. FitzGerald | 56. Le Gallienne |
| 44. Le Gallienne | 57. Le Gallienne |
| 45. Cutter | 58. Whinfield |
| 46. Powell | 59. Whinfield |
| 47. Keene | 60. FitzGerald |
| 48. Keene | 61. FitzGerald |
| 49. FitzGerald | 62. Le Gallienne |
| 50. Johnson | 63. Garner |
| 51. Le Gallienne | 64. Le Gallienne |
| 65. Le Gallienne | |

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