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## Three Poems by Manouchehr Atashi and Mohammad Biabani

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## Three Poems by Manouchehr Atashi and Mohammad Biabani Translated from the Persian

Marjan Modarres Sabzevari October 17, 2020

Translation by Marjan Modarres Sabzevari

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### Daggers, kisses and treaties

(The White Wild Horse)

Manouchehr Atashi

The white wild horse  
 Conceitedly stood at the stall  
 Contemplating the wretched chest of plains  
 Perturbed about the castle of scorched sun  
 Vainglorious in mind, but lame in the heart  
 No fragrance of fresh pasture attracts it

The white wild horse, deluge of valleys  
 Very often has rolled from crest to trough  
 Frightening away the vain deer  
 Very often in trough, detached from crest  
 To herd the panthers full of immodesty

The white wild horse, with silver horseshoes  
 Has scribed copious stories to the scroll of approaches  
 Kidnapped copious girls from the doorway of lodges,

The sun, often in its own warm pathway  
 Set from neck to its femur,  
 The moonlight, often in the declivity of plains  
 Wrapped a yellow scarf around its thick neck  
 The highland, often at dawn in the stiff breeze  
 Awoken by cheers of its hoofs from sleep

The white wild horse's shedding mane yet  
stands wrathfully at the stall  
Its hoofs beat the bits of earth  
Hungry sparrows fly  
From its feet  
Remembrance of its loosened bridles  
Is driving through the scorched castles

The white rebellious horse  
Has opened the mane of rage to its rider  
– Seeking for its lost will –  
Asks about the flurry of hot scenes  
Burns with sarcasm of shame's suns

Nothing is left however for the rider with a broken heart  
No quiver and no fatigues, the sword has died...  
The dagger is broken in the body of a wall  
The mighty will of the desert man has turned dull

The white wild horse! Don't let me down so!  
Draw on me no bloody dagger of your eyes  
Set no fire on the root of my dark rage  
Let the wolf of my hungry conceit  
Sleep in its red dream

The white wild horse  
The enemy has drawn his poisonous dagger of sneer  
's hidden animosity to a peace treaty  
's infected poison with sweet kisses of affection  
Drawn a bow to the arrows of coins

The white wild horse!  
I shall turn aggressive with which will  
I shall fight with which man in the battleground  
I shall hang shield toward which sword as a canopy  
I should parade you in which ground

The white wild horse!  
The sword has died...  
The trench of iron saddles has been emptied.  
A friend he who squeezes my hand with affection  
He who has a snake of deception hidden in sleeves

The white wild horse!  
Flower of scarlet cups has blossomed in castles  
Flower of silver coins has blossomed on paws  
Steel of hearts has begun to rust  
's wrapped the amulet of terror around man's arm



Let not bouncing fish like rainbow  
Entrap your eyes!

A word of warning!  
Because, like us, you too will see  
– Through a crack –  
You ought to be gladdened by one look  
And by a half-empty carafe of sea.

\*

**To Dear Departed Mohammad Mokhtari**  
Mohammad Biabani

Yearning for the pulverized dead  
Laid upon this cadaver  
Shrouded night uncovers by day  
If the wind is pelting overmuch  
The typhoon might have lost its balance  
By day when even night  
Does not sojourn with old graves  
Dawn sounds a bit far-fetched  
When the wind is not the flogging  
By now overmuch is my back aching  
I'd rather go past the earth pleasingly  
A hand separates me from your coming –  
Affirming its swordsmanship  
An eye  
is drawing my heaven on earth  
with the people's bone on riverbanks resided  
This shroud  
is scorching hot and in the mirage is marked  
The smoke blowing over virtue and morals  
Parched light is overmuch dark  
It must have turned barren  
The ear torn by the sound of dawn

A coffin  
Has made you disparate overmuch,  
Who exclaimed the essence of dawn is light?  
Has it always been that the graveyard  
Debarred drinking the thirsty eyes up?  
This acquainted scent  
Even strains the membrane of wolf of desert  
Someone must have gone past hither  
My hands cannot reach into dim words of street  
My eyes cannot ... over-the-wall tears  
There where he is passing through  
I too must have passed

I behold  
 The homeland does not rejoin!  
 Some eyes are peeping through the window  
 With a verse melting you in dribs and drabs  
 Day has remained untold so that  
 A leaf too will ruin in the catacombs  
 You see the sun  
 Is gently caressing half of your bones  
 One day I was a falcon on your shoulder  
 But now be the wing of my helplessness  
 The rat of the millennium  
 must now have chewed up  
 Human feeling  
 It too may have sprouted  
 The snow melting within your throat

The world never thinks of a bloom  
 To be in the shape of you  
 This dark spider e'er weaving its own tangle  
 Even passing through snow  
 Shrieks the darkness of your world  
 The woman who has leant on here  
 Is freezing cold and machine guns are busy  
 With cutting out love's patience furthermore  
 That day overmuch is my back aching  
 This hand is vaporizing and the sea  
 Is yet flowing into gutter of twilight  
 Not having you the world seems overmuch weird  
 This mat each time eaten by termites  
 Slit opened to a body and anew  
 A Human being decays within a skull  
 Just as a lie is the only mouthpiece  
 It is freezing cold and this cloud is dispersing  
 The pulverized dead.

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### About the Authors

*Manouchehr Atashi* was born on September 25, 1933 in a village called Dehroud in Dashtestan, a county on the coast of Persian Gulf in the southern region in Iran. He graduated from Tehran University of Higher Education (1964) with a bachelor's degree in English. He worked as a teacher in Bushehr and its suburb for many years before moving to Tehran. After closing his career in teaching, he worked as an editor in broadcast media. Inspired by Nima Yushij, he used many native elements of Southern Iran in his poetry. He drew characteristics from nature, such as the sea and the warm land of palm trees and imbued them in his poetry that combines tribal life with sincere experience. He debuted as a poet in Iran in 1960 with his poetry collection *?hang-e digar (Another Melody)*. Atashi's other books include *?v?z-e ??k (The Song of the Earth) (????)*, *Did?r dar Falaq (Meeting at Dawn) (????)* amongst others. Atashi died in Sina Hospital in

Tehran due to a sudden cardiac arrest after kidney surgery. He was entombed in Bushehr in 2005.

*Mohammad Biabani* was a Persian poet born in a town near Bushehr on May 28, 1945. His poems focused mostly on social and political issues. He was known for his love of folk literature and integrating popular beliefs and ideals into his interpretations of them in his work. He also was known for his non-fiction works such as *The Pathology of Art*, *Novel from Emergence to Creation*, and literary criticism of contemporary poetry. Biabani, however, was reluctant to publish his own poems for some time. In 1990, he finally released his first collection of verse entitled *The Epic Tale of Golbanoo Tree*. He died in Bushehr from lung cancer on March 13, 2003.

### About the Translator

*Marjan Modarres Sabzevari*, born in Yazd, is a literary translator, and her poetry translations can be found online and in print. Previously, she worked as a director at an English theater in Bushehr, Iran and conducted performances of Hamlet's Dream and Jane Eyre. She has a master's degree in English language and literature and a bachelor's degree in English translation.

Photo Courtesy of *Marjan Modarres Sabzevari*.

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