



What Do White Birds Say

The earth has disappeared beneath my feet,
It fled from all my ecstasy,

Now like a singing air creature
I feel the rose
Keep opening.

My heart turned to effulgent wings
When has love not given freedom?
When has adoration not made one free?

A woman broken in tears and sweat
Stands in a field
Watching the sun and me
Trade jokes.
But never would Hafiz laugh
At your blessed labor
Of finding peace.

What do the dancing white birds say
Looking down upon burnt meadows?

All that you think is rain is not.
Behind the veil Hafiz and angels
sometimes weep.

Because most eyes are rarely glad
And your divine beauty is still too frightened
to unfurl its thousand swaying arms.

The earth as disappeared beneath my feet,
Illusion fled from all my ecstasy.

Now like a radiant sky creature
God keeps opening,
God keeps opening
Inside of Me. (97-98)

Look I am a Whale

We live on the Sun's playground.
Here,
Everyone gets what they want.

Sometimes the body of a beautiful woman,
Sometimes the body of a beautiful man,
Sometimes the body of both in one.

We used to play that kind of tag
In the animal world too.

Now a mouse. Now a Tiger.
Look! I am a whale—I got tired of the land,
Went back to the ocean for a while.

What power is it in our sinew and mind
That will not die,

That keeps us shopping for the perfect dress?

We have all heard the Flute Player
And keep dancing Toward Him.

Hafiz,
You have seen the Flute Player
And cannot help but Whirl. (122)



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Master, trans. Daniel Ladinksy*