

Week 2. Ibn al-Fāriḍ

From *al-Jāmiyya* (29-36)

Though he is absent from me,
 every grasping sense sees him
 in every subtle sense
 lovely and pure,

In the melody of the lyre
 and gentle flute
 when they embrace
 in trilling notes of song,

In the meadows
 of the forest
 in twilight's cool
 and daybreak's glow,

Where the mist
 falls from clouds
 on a blossoming carpet
 woven from flowers,

Where the zephyr
 sweeps its skirts,
 guiding to me at dawn
 the sweetest scent,

And in my kissing
 the cup's lip
 sipping wine drops
 in secluded pleasure,

I never knew exile from homelands
 while he was with me,
 and wherever we were,
 my mind was at rest.

So my tent is the one
 where my love has settled;
 whenever he appears, I turn aside
 at the shifting dunes.¹

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¹ Homerin *Passion Before Me, My Fate Behind Me* (SUNY 2011), pp. 95-6

From the *lāmiyya*.

A token of what I encountered and suffered for her –
and I have kept my words short, not long – is this:
Wasting away, I disappeared; my visitor could not find me.
How can those visiting the sick see one without a shadow?
No eye ever stumbled across my track,
for those wide eyes left no trace of me in love.
Yet when I remember her, a resolve rises within me,
and when she is mentioned (*dhikrahā*), my cheap spirit grows rich.²

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A taste of Nicholson's translation, poem not specified.

If separation be my guerdon from you, and if there be no (real)
distance between us, I regard that separation as union.
Repulse is nothing but love, so long as it is not hate; and the
hardest thing, excepting only your aversion, is easy to bear.
Delicious to me is the torment that you inflict; and the injustice
which love ordains that you do me justice.
And my patience, a patience both without you and with you –
its bitterness seems to me everlastingly sweet.³

² Ibid. p. 72

³ Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism* Curzon, London, 1921, p. 178.