Yunus Emre: poems

1.
Dervishood tells me, you cannot become a dervish
   So what can I tell you? You cannot become a dervish.
A dervish needs a wounded heart and eyes full of tears.
   He needs to be as easygoing as a sheep - you can't be a dervish.
He must be without hands when someone hits him, without tongue when cursed;
   the dervish should be without self – you cannot be a dervish.
You make a lot of sounds with your tongue, meaningful things
you get angry about this and that - you can't be a dervish.
If it were all right to be angry on this path,
Muhammad himself would have got angry
   As long as you take offence, you cannot be a dervish.
Unless you find a real path, unless you find a guide,
   unless Truth grants you your portion, you can't be a dervish.
Dervish Yunus, come, dive into the ocean now and then,
   unless you dive into the ocean, you cannot be a dervish.1

2.
Those who learned to be truly human
   found everything in being humble
while those who looked proudly from above
   were pushed down the stairs.
A heart that must always feel superior
   will one day lose its way.
   What should be within leaks out.

1 The Drop that became the Sea, trans. Helmsinki and Algan (1989), p. 29; Golpinarlı, p. 334
The old man with the white beard
    never sees the state he's in.
He needn't waste money on making the Hajj
    if he's broken someone's heart.
The heart is the seat of God, where God is aware.
    You won't find happiness in either world if you break a heart...
Whatever you think of yourself, think the same of others.
    If the Four Books have any meaning, this is it.
May Yunus not stray from the path
    or get on his high horse
may the grave and the Judgment be no concern
    if what he loves is the face of God. 2

3.
We drank wine at the hands of a cup-bearer whose tavern is higher than the heavenly throne
    we are drunkards of the cup-bearer, our souls are His winecup.
Here those who constantly burn are wholly transformed into light
    that fire is unlike any fire: there are no flames to be seen.
Those drunk in this assembly only sing: I am Truth;
    like a hundred Hallajs, the lowliest of them is mad.
In that assembly of ours the heart is the kebab;
    of that candle which burns in us, the sun and moon are moths.
The drunkards of that assembly are like Ibrahim b. Adham;
    in a single corner are as many as a hundred thousand in the city of Balkh.
Come, take a look at those who have drunk the wine of Love;
    in so many years, how often the wine-cup has made its rounds.

2 Drop, p. 60.
Yunus: do not utter these words of rapture to the ignorant;  
don't you know the time of the ignorant will pass? 

4.
Our laws are different from other laws  
our religion is like no other.  
It is different from the seventy-two sects  
we are guided by different signs,  
in this world and hereafter.  
Without the cleansing of visible waters,  
without any movement of hands, feet or head –  
we worship  
Whether at the Ka'ba, in the mosque or in ritual prayer  
everyone carries their own disease.  
Which labels refer to whom, no-one really knows  
tomorrow it will be clear who abandoned the religion.  
Yunus, renew your soul, be remembered as a friend  
know this power, listen with the ears of love. 

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4 Drop, p. 25, Golpinarlı CXLV
5.

My love for You goes deeper than my own soul

   my way amounts to this: I don't say I'm inside myself.

   I'm not. The I within me is deeper than myself.

Anywhere I look it's filled with You.

   Where can I put You if You're already inside?

You are Beauty, without features; something deeper than any signs.

   Don't ask me about myself. I'm not inside.

   My body walks, I'm clothed, yet empty.

I can't lay a hand on the One who took me from myself.

   You can't go over the head of the Boss.

Some people get their share of revelations,

   and some people go deeper than this.

In the beautiful light of His face

   is a fire brighter than the light of day.

What a suffering it is, that's deeper than any remedy.

   The Law and the Brotherhood are paths,

   Truth and Wisdom are still deeper.

They say Solomon knew the language of birds,

   within Solomon is a deeper Solomon.

I've forgotten religion and piety;

   what if there's a doctrine deeper than religion?

The works of those who leave the faith are blasphemy.

   What about a blasphemy that goes deeper than faith?

Yunus chanced to meet a Friend

   who showed him a door inside.\(^5\)

\(^5\) *Drop*, p. 37; Golpinarlı, CXXV, severim ben candan içeri
6.
The Truth fills the world
     but to whom is Truth known?
You ask so much of It,
     but It isn't separate from yourself.
You believe in the world
     you claim your daily bread as your own
how long will you keep up the lie?
     you know it's not like that.
It's a long way to the other world
     be honest with yourself
through all the separation and painful yearning
     those who attain do not return.
Those who come to the world will
     one by one drink the juice of death
this world is just a bridge
     although the young wouldn't guess it.
Come, let us get to know each other,
     let us make our work easier
Let us love and be loved
     no-one inherits this world.
Yunus, if you can understand
     if you can hear the meaning
find a little happiness
     no-one's here forever.  

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6 Drop, p. 79; Golpinarlı, CCLXI, hak cihâna doludur kimsene Hakk’i bilmez
To be a slave to a king who can never be dethroned,
    to lean on a threshold whence none can be wrested,

To be a bird and fly to a far-off place
    to drink of a wine from which there is no sobering

To be a strong swimmer and plunge into the sea
    to bring out a jewel that no jeweller knows

To enter a garden and take pleasure
    to sniff a rose that never fades,

Man must be a lover, find his beloved
    burn in the fire of love and in no other.

Yunus, desist from thought of existence,
    turn your face in worship

Bring a man like your true self,
    whose like the world can never know.