
Volume 14

Issue 2 *Spring-Summer: Writing From the World:
Selections from the International Writing Program
1977-1983*

Article 38

1984

Ghazal

Jonaid.

Mary Jane White

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Recommended Citation

„Jonaid and Mary Jane White. "Ghazal." *The Iowa Review* 14.2 (1984): 119-119. Web.
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.3031>

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Jonaid · *Afghanistan*

GHAZAL

I am, O pious priest, one ungodly one. I am, O cupbearer,
one drunk one.
I am one from the singers' and sinners' quarter. I am from the
bazaar of sin.

Save a full glass for me at the party of the ungodly,
For I am a pious guest in the house of God one day only.

I'm fasting, on just my piety; it has made me sick.
Tired of my prayer-rug, bowing I think to escape the mosque.

Don't leave me dry, with no wine, planted between showy,
flowering trees,
Where, O free associates, I am resting at last with my
associates.

Like a high-minded eagle I am, like a mountain, like a species
of dignity
I am, like a river; in me there is no calm, like the Sahara,
there is no end to me.

Too long shaded by flowers, too long reined in, too long
wandered about,
Now I am headed for the Sahara, reckless, on horseback.

Sleepy from and craving more wisdom I am not. Moderately
drunk
with troublemaking I am.
The pride of rebellion, of difficult horses, worries my
concentration.

I am the decline of slavery, a messenger out of the sinners'
quarter.
Praise be, if the wind takes me. Praise be, if I am trammeled
over.

translated by the author with Mary Jane White