

CAUGHT IN A NET

The subject of this *kafi* deals with those difficulties, in which the disciple has been caught. The main ideas in this poem are as follows:

The burden of the hardships of love is heavier than the weight of mountains, but the lover does not hesitate to bear it, because he desires to have a glimpse of the Beloved. But the poor lover does not know whether his desire would be fulfilled. Moses had expressed his desire to see God face to face, but God had warned him that he would not have the strength to bear His effulgence. However, on the insistence of Moses to have His vision, God asked him to look first at the mountain (Mount Sinai) on which He put His light. And when God cast His glance on Sinai, it was immediately burnt, and Moses fainted out of fear.

Again, the lover insists that he would have direct relation with Him, although he knows that people with such a relationship never enjoy peace and sound sleep. The lover is not content with the revelation of God by others. He must experience for himself the vision.

In one of the stanzas Bullah refers to a difficulty which he has mentioned in some other *kafis* also. He says that God does not meet him despite the fact that He is near the royal vein¹ (*Shah Rag*) and abides in the 'very folds of his veil.'

He also says that in the state of intoxication with His love, a wave comes from his heart up to his mouth which impels him to disclose those secrets, which he is not permitted to disclose.

1. This is a mystic term for the subtle path from the eye center upward through which the soul passes on its ascent to higher regions.

The last stanza describes the stage in which the lover has lost his identity in the Beloved. He then sees the Beloved pervade everywhere and in everyone. He is perceived inside as well as outside.

Jind kurikki de munh ai

My life has been caught in a net!

You yourself are "flesh of my flesh",

You yourself are remote and aloof.

On hearing Your utterances

I have been robbed of my senses.

Leading me out of rituals to the non-conformist path,

You have thrown me into a strange mire.

My life has been caught in a net!

An atom of Your love weighs heavier than
a mountain.

Just for a moment of Your glimpse,

I carry the whole mountain on head.

When no return is received for labor,

What indeed can people do?

My life has been caught in a net!

Why raise a tumult? Let Him burn me as He would.

I go without a sheaf of comfort.

Surrounded by endless heaps of sorrow.

Whatever had to happen, happened that day;¹

What can be done now, O brother?

My life has been caught in a net!

He listens not to my advice,

He speaks not a word to me;

Shall I ask and find what He intends?

It's but a day before that,

1. The day of Creation.

I was mad for Him,
He was mad for me.
Why does He fear me now?
From behind the screen He has thrown a hint,
He has thus pierced, my heart.
My life has been caught in a net!

With the arrow in my heart,
With the noose round my neck,
I endure my life in this manner.
Repeatedly I bang my head on the ground,
With tearful eyes, I remember my Love.
Have others too fallen in love with You,
Or I alone am guilty of this blunder?
My life has been caught in a net!

The world is resplendent with Your Name,
Why do You run away from Your lover?
In the folds of the veil You live cheerfully,
But Your secret, You do not reveal to me.
You have caught hold of me from the middle,
You have hung me upside down.
My life has been caught in a net!

O Dweller of my heart, come Thee out,
That I may hold Your arm to stand.
Outwardly You hide yourself from me;
Inwardly I am never far from You.
Zulaikha too was pierced from within,
I too cry from within with pain,
My life has been caught in a net?

All I had to say, I said to Him;
The Pretender feigned not to hear.
I wring my hands, I smite my palms,
I cry my eyes out.
I was to get, had instead to give,
Such indeed is Your 'benevolence'
My life has been caught in a net!

Wave after wave rises thus,
That I blurt out what is a secret.
If I speak the truth, I get the noose;
If I tell a lie, I may be spared.
Why should I give out a delicate secret,
Which uttered later becomes public first.
My life has been caught in a net!

Revelation comes only to the pure;
Pray, do become mine, of Your own.
Wake with me when I wake;
Sleep with me when I sleep.
Whosoever fell in love with You,
Did You ever give her peaceful sleep?
My life has been caught in a net!

How people have persecuted me
because of your love!
How many homes have been ruined like this!
You steal a peep on me from outside,
Inwardly You revolve round me.
You play the game of hide and seek,
You play on me such clever tricks.
Is this what You call Your game?
My life has been caught in a net!

To settle dispute between You and me,
The Qazi¹ has come from Rum.
He satisfied himself from scriptures,
That You and I are one.
The Qazi has taken a fancy to me,
I have set my heart on him.
My life has been caught in a net!

1. Qazi from Rum means Maulana Jalal-ud-Din Rumi. Here Bullah seems to refer to his Master, Inayat Shah.

“Like whom are You, O Beloved?”

Bullah used to ask:

Now the question of You and I has been resolved.

When in my search I looked for You,

I myself was lost, and ceased to exist.

I found You within, I found You without,

Your light I saw in and out.

My life has been caught in a net!

Faqir Mohd., Kulliyat, pp. 99-102 poem 52