

# Khalil gibran poem a lovers call

[Literature](#), [Poem](#)



Khalil Gibran a major pioneer of modern Arabic literature, as the best selling American poet of the twentieth century, and as a Middle Eastern modernist whose intellectual life is documented in meticulous detail. He was an Arab who wrote for the most part in Arabic. It was not until his thirties that he ventured to write for publication in English, and even then he seems often to have written first in Arabic and then translated his story or poem into English.

Gibran poem ' A Lover's Call', narrates the plight of a lover separated from his beloved. According to him, his lady love possesses' ethereal qualities of an angel. The poet mentions that they have been separated from each other on this earth for earthly reasons. They have parted a long time ago but the lover remembers her as if it was yesterday. He is worn out with his unrequited love for his dear lady. He remembers their time together and craves for her love, affection and companionship.

The tone of the poem is sad and serious and above all passionate. The words of the lover in the poem are the cry from his very soul. His words also show the depth of his love for his dear lady. The language is simple, colloquial language and avoided the complex language and metres of traditional Arabic poetry. Gibran is primarily a painter and writes like he is painting. His images have visual qualities and touch the heart at a pre-rational level. He used the flamboyant rhetoric acceptable to Arabic canons of taste, not the cool, detached style of modern American poetry.

Many critics think that Gibran's poetic genius predominantly lies in the use of metaphor. Gibran indeed creates beautiful images that are charged with emotions and that expand the reader's vision and imagination. There are <https://assignbuster.com/khalil-gibran-poem-a-lovers-call/>

many vivid images in the poem. The poet uses the image of ' a mother', god's spirit, ' companion of his soul', ' other self' to compare his beloved

He is also a poet prophet. An emotional strobe designed by him, light momentarily illuminates an aspect of our experience, leaving us with a picture burned onto our emotional retinas. Thereafter, we see that aspect of our experience with different eyes. What we do get from his writings is the extraordinary force of Gibran's moral seriousness turned on various aspects of life.

The poem ' A Lover's Call', gives us a glimpse of the love which is above the social bonding. Gibran is an advocate of romantic love against the oppression of society. The lady love of the lover in the poem is separated from him due to earthly barriers and he knows that they may not unite on this earth. But there love is greater than any earthly bonding. Their love is the joining of two souls and after death, together they will reach God.

In the poem, ' A Lover's Call', a lover calls his beloved and conveys his love and sorrow through the breeze in the air, through the spirits in the air and through the angels. The poem starts with the question: ' Where are you, my beloved?' This line suggests that the lover is separated from his lover. As the poem proceeds we realize that they have been parted from each other for an indefinite period of time.

Next the man wonders where she can be at that hour. In the first eight lines he says, she can be in the garden watering the plants, which look upon her as a mother because by watering the plant and taking care of it she is performing the role of a mother. She can also be in her chamber, her private

room. She is the embodiment of virtue but in attaining this position she has sacrificed the lover's heart and soul. Or she is reading books to gain human knowledge when she is replete with divine wisdom.

In the next eight lines he compares her to the companion of his soul. Their love is spiritual love, which is characterized by the union of two souls. He wonders if she is in the temple praying to the gods or she is in the field calling nature which is a refuge of her dreams. May be she is with the poor people in their hut consoling with encouraging words. She has a good heart so she may also give them money so that they can meet their needs. He compares his lady love to God's spirit. She has the essence of God and so she is everywhere. She is stronger than the ages as she is God's spirit. She will remain for ever.

In the proceeding lines, the lover retrospects the memorable moments in his past. He remembers the day he met his dear lady and the time which he has spend with her. He addresses her and asks if she remembers the day they met for the first time. It is noteworthy that his lady is not physically present in front of him. It can be inferred that the conversation is taking place between their spirits. He remembers that the radiance of her spirit surrounded them. He farther says that the angels of love moved around them and praised the activities of their souls. As if the God wanted them to fall in love.

He recollects their sitting in the shade of the branches which hid them from the glances of passer-by. The branches sheltered them from humanity ' as the ribs in the body protect the secret of the heart from injury'. He also remembers the long stretch of time they have spend together walking along

side each other in the forest. They walked hand in hand on the trails of the forest and their heads leaning towards each other. Probably their heads were leaning against each other as they were engrossed in conversation or they were totally involved in looking at each other. They were totally lost in each other and were unaware of the world around them.

The lover in the consecutive lines of the poem tells not only of spiritual love but also of physical love. He wants his beloved to remember the hour he said goodbye to her and the maritime kiss she placed on his lips. By 'maritime kiss', he may mean that probably he was taking a voyage to sea for a certain period of time and his beloved kissed him goodbye. Her kiss taught him that union of the lips is also a manifestation of love. Her kiss showed him a glimpse of heaven and all the wonders in it.

The act of kissing revealed to him the heavenly secrets which tongue cannot express. He further says that the kiss perpetuated a great sigh of relief and fulfillment. He journeyed to the spiritual world because his soul was glorified with her love which she has showered on him. He felt heavenly bliss. Their love was not only physical union but also union of the soul. He adds that her kiss made him continue feeling this heavenly love until they meet again. In other words he remained in the state of heavenly joy till the time he sees his dear love again.

In the proceeding lines, he recollects their parting and also accepts the same. He remembers the day when she kissed him again and again while tears rolled down her cheeks. He could see that she was very sad as she was parting from him for ever. They had to separate for earthly reasons. She explained to him that many human beings have to part for earthly reasons,

they part because the world wants it. The lover consoles him that though they are physically separated from each other, they are spiritually together.

No worldly force could separate their souls. And after death, the joined soul will reach God. The lover accepts his love's departure. He says that love has chooses his beloved as her delegate. She will spread the message of universal love and they will remain united in love even in separation. He says to his dear love that her love shall always remain with as his comforting groom, in his memory and also as an eternal wedding. It is noteworthy that the lovers are married for ever even if their love has not been accepted by this world.

In the following lines, he again laments the loss of his love. He asks: " Where are you, my beloved?" He wonders if she is awake at this hour of night when all around everything is silent. He wants the clean breeze to convey his every heart beat and his affection to his beloved. He wants the breeze to be his messenger of love for his dear lady. Next he expresses his miserable condition due to his disconnection from his love. He asks his love whether she is fondling his face in her memory.

He says to his dear love that he is not the same person he was before they parted. Sorrow has dropped its veil on his happy face of the past. He is not a happy man anymore because he has lost his love. He farther says that his eyes which reflected her beauty, now has shrunken with crying and his lips has been dried which his beloved used to sweeten with kisses. Again the lover calls for his beloved. He asks her whether she can hear his weeping from beyond the ocean. The lover means to say that his dear love is far

away, there is a distance of a ocean between them but still he has not forgotten her.

His love for her has not decreased with passage of time and space. He still needs her love and affection and wants to convey this longing to her. He also wants to ask her whether she can understand the greatness of his patience. Through this . line, he means to say that he has endured lot of pain and suffering because of the loss of his love. In the next few lines it will be clear to the readers that he is complaining to his beloved about his pitiable condition. He becomes desperate as he thinks that some spirit of the air may be able to communicate to his love that his spirit is dying and that also in his youth. He speculates that there must be secretcommunicationangels which will communicate to his love his grievance.

In the last seven lines of the poem, the lover tells us what can cure his terrible plight. He calls his love again and again. He calls his beloved as beautiful star and says that obscurity of life has cast him upon its bosom. Life has become unintelligible to him; it has no meaning for him. He says that grief has dominated him i. e., he is totally grieve- stricken. He continues that if his love's smile sails through the air to him, it will imbibe him with life. If he can breathe her fragrance in the air, it will nourish him. Lastly he addresses his dear love says how great is love and how small is he. He understands that he is much smaller in status that ' love' which is universal, eternal and all encompassing. He is a human being so he will die sometime but love will remain for ever.

The poem is the contrast between the happy state of being of the lover when he and his lady love was together and the painful condition of the lover after

he was detached from her because of some earthly reason. The tone is of fulfillment and happiness when the lover praises her as God's spirit. When he remembers the time they have spent together and the contentment they have felt in their company. The contentment was both physical and spiritual: " Recall you the hour I bade you farewell, /And the Maritime kiss you placed on my lips? /That kiss taught me that joining of lips in Love/Reveals heavenly secrets which the tongue cannot utter!" (Lines 26-29).

The tone is sad when he recollects the day his love departed from his life forever with tears in her eyes. Near the end of the poem, the lover reveals his pathetic condition and here the tone is poignant: " Are you fondling my face in your memory? That image/Is no longer my own, for Sorrow has dropped his/Shadow on my happy countenance of the past./Sobs have withered my eyes which reflected your beauty/And dried my lips which you sweetened with kisses", (Lines 49-51).

The tone is desperate when he wants his beloved's smile and fragrance to sail through air to revive him: " Where are you, my beautiful star? The obscurity of life/Has cast me upon its bosom; sorrow has conquered me. /Sail your smile into the air; it will reach and enliven me!/Breathe your fragrance into the air; it will sustain me!", (Lines 59-62). In the last three lines, the tone is of realization: " Where are you, me beloved? /Oh, how great is Love! /And how little am I!" (Lines 63-65).

As with Gibran's writings, the language is simple and colloquial. The poet uses day-to-day words to give a picture of the sadness of a lover in his separation from his dear love. He uses simple words like ' hut', ' Temple', ' poor', ' broken-hearted', ' field', ' night', ' forest', ' breeze' and so on. He <https://assignbuster.com/khalil-gibran-poem-a-lovers-call/>



uses vivid images to give us a picture of the inner turmoil of the lover. We can visualize the lovers sitting in the shade of the tree, hidden from humanity. We get a glimpse of the forest and find the lovers walking hand in hand and totally engrossed in each other. We find the lover bidding goodbye to his beloved and the maritime kiss she places on his lips.

We see her bidding goodbye to her soul mate with tears rolling from her eyes. The lover disintegrates physically and mentally because of the loss of his love. We see his eyes shrunken with pain and suffering and his lips dry without the love of his beloved. It is a very emotional poem. We can actually feel the desperation of the lover in the following lines: " Is there any spirit in the air capable of conveying/To you the breath of this dying youth? Is there any/Secret communication between angels that will carry to/You my complaint?" (Lines 55-58).

The poet has used figures of speech like similes and metaphors to heighten the state of being. In the beginning of the poem, the poet uses the metaphor of ' little paradise' to mean garden. The lover imagines that his beloved is in the garden watering the flowers that is looking upon her as their mother. The sentence: ".....the flowers who look upon you/As infants look upon the breast of their mothers?", (Lines 2-3), is a simile. Here the flowers are compared to infants and the lover's beloved to a mother. In the lines: " Or amongst the books, seeking human knowledge, /While you are replete with heavenly wisdom?" (Lines 7-8), ' among the books' means library.

The lover thinks that his lady love is abounding with heavenly wisdom; here there is an image of heaven because he compares her to a heavenly spirit. He also compares his beloved as a woman with goodness of soul who

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consoles the poor people with kind words and also with money. The poet uses the metaphor 'bounty', to mean money. The lover calls his lady love as 'God's spirit'; it is an image of God. The poet give love the shape of a heavenly being when he: "Do you have memory of the day we met, when the halo of/You spirit surrounded us, and the Angels of Love/Floated about, singing the praise of the soul's deed?", (lines 17-19).

He compares the branches of the tree with ribs of our body. There is a simile in the following lines: "Do you recollect our sitting in the shade of the/Branches, sheltering ourselves from Humanity, as the ribs/Protect the divine secret of the heart from injury?" (Lines 20-22), where the lover says the branches protected them from humanity as the ribs protect the heart. The lover compares his beloved's kiss to 'maritime kiss', which is an image of farewell kiss.

There is a simile in the following lines: "That kiss was introduction to a great sigh,

Like the Almighty's breath that turned earth into man", (Lines 30-31), the lover's sign is compared to Almighty's breath. His lady love is love's delegate. The love of his lady is his 'comforting groom' and his 'Eternal wedding'. 'Sorrow' has been personified in the poem: "Sorrow has dropped his/Shadow on my happy countenance of the past", (Lines 50-51).

There is the image of 'dying youth', which express the horrible condition of the lover. Life is also personified in the following sentence: "The obscurity of life/Has cast me upon its bosom; sorrow has conquered me", (Lines 59-60), lover says that life has lost its meaning for him without his lady love. There are many interrogative sentences in the poem which shows the inner conflict

of the lover. The lover in the poem compares his dear lady ' my beautiful star', ' my beloved', ' my other self', ' God's Spirit' and ' companion of my soul'.

Gibran often wrote about the oppressive of society in respect of the love of men and women. He was a romantic and so always favored country against city. In the poem, ' A Lover's Call', the two lovers had to part from each other because of some ' earthly purpose'. Their love for each other was true and they were soul partners but his lady love walked away from him because human society wanted it. In the poem, we find that nature has sustained their love. They have sat under the tree away from humanity and walked in the forest hand in hand. Again, the love wants to complain to his beloved through the breeze and wants the smile and the fragrance of her lady to sail through the air to enliven him.

Gibran is first a painter and he uses language to explicate his images. So his images have a visual quality. English speaking critiques do not think Gibran as particularly good or important. This critical condescension is not shared by the Arabic speaking world, where he is universally recognized as one of the key figures of modern Arabic literature. He was criticized because he was very serious in everything he wrote without any sense of humor. There is also limitation on the Arabic side of his work. He was unable to master the complex techniques of classical Arabic Literatures.

He wrote almost nothing in the traditional poetic form. ' A Lover's Call', is a romantic love poem. It is a call from a lover from his soul to the soul of another lover. The simple language and the beautiful images used by the poet charm our senses. It has a universal appeal because lovers of any age

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will feel the same passion for their beloved. We journey with the poet and the plight of the lover touches our heart. This poem is one of the many poems written by Gibran and remains a treasure of this talented writer.

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John Walbridge on: Gibran, his Aesthetic and his Moral Universe.