

12th English New Course NBF: EnglishKeys Academy

Chapter 04: Rubaiyat e Umar Khayam

Stanza 1

Word	Urdu Meaning	English Synonym	English Antonym
Awake	جاگنا	rise, awaken	sleep, doze
Bowl	پیالہ	cup, hollow	—
Flung	پھینکا	hurled, tossed	held, caught
Puts to flight	بھگا دینا	disperses, drives away	gathers, collects
Hunter	شکاری	pursuer, stalker	prey, captive
Turret	مینار	tower, spire	foundation, base
Noose	پھندا	loop, trap	release, freedom

**Awake! for Morning in the Bowl of Night
Has flung the Stone that puts the Stars to Flight:
And Lo! the Hunter of the East has caught
The Sultan's Turret in a Noose of Light.**

جاگ جاؤ! کیونکہ رات کے پیالے میں صبح نے
:وہ پتھر پھینک دیا ہے جو ستاروں کو بھگا دیتا ہے
اور دیکھو! مشرق کا شکاری
سلطان کے مینار کو روشنی کے پھندے میں جکڑ چکا ہے۔

Explanation: In this stanza, dawn is dramatically personified. The dark sky is described as a "Bowl of Night", and morning "flings a stone"—a metaphor for the sunlight—that drives the stars away. The "Hunter of the East" is a powerful symbol that can be seen as the rising sun or the constellation Orion, both of which appear in the east before dawn. This hunter captures the "Sultan's Turret" (symbolic of power and grandeur) in a "Noose of Light", representing the first golden rays of morning encircling towers or minarets. The imagery evokes both the transience of night and the unstoppable march of time, marked by the daily cycle of daybreak.

Comprehension Questions

1. **What is meant by "Hunter of the East" in this stanza?**

It symbolizes the rising sun or the constellation Orion. The hunter metaphor reflects how dawn captures the darkness and the visible world in its noose of light. It emphasizes the cyclical nature of time and the transient beauty of the world.

2. **Which poetic devices are used in this stanza?**

Metaphor and personification dominate the stanza. The sky is a bowl, the sun is a hunter, and light becomes a noose. These devices create vivid visual imagery to convey the majesty of dawn.

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3. **How is the theme of transience suggested here?**

The stars being driven away and the turret being briefly captured in light show how night quickly yields to day—reminding us of the fleeting nature of time and beauty.

Stanza 2

Word	Urdu Meaning	English Synonym	English Antonym
Worldly	دنیاوی	material, temporal	spiritual, eternal
Hope	امید	aspiration, desire	despair, hopelessness
Turns to ashes	راکھ بن جاتی ہے	perishes, vanishes	succeeds, thrives
Prosper	کامیاب ہوتی ہے	flourishes, thrives	fails, declines
Anon	جلد ہی / تھوڑی دیر میں	soon, shortly	later, never
Dusty	گرد آلود	dirty, parched	clean, fresh
Lighting	روشن کرتی ہے	illuminating, shining	dimming, darkening

**The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns Ashes – or it prospers; and anon,
Like snow upon the Desert's dusty Face
Lighting a little Hour or two – is gone.**

وہ دنیاوی امیدیں جن پر لوگ اپنے دل لگاتے ہیں
یا تو راکھ بن جاتی ہیں—یا وقتی طور پر کامیاب ہوتی ہیں؛ اور پھر،
صحرا کے گرد آلود چہرے پر جی برف کی مانند
کچھ گھڑیوں کو روشنی دیتی ہیں—اور پھر غائب ہو جاتی ہیں۔

Explanation: This stanza contemplates the fleeting nature of human hopes. People devote themselves to material desires, but such hopes either fail ("turns ashes") or briefly succeed, only to vanish soon after ("anon"). The poet uses the image of snow on the dusty face of a desert to describe the impermanence of worldly success—it may shine for a short time, but it inevitably melts away. The stanza captures the ephemeral quality of life and achievement, highlighting that nothing material truly lasts.

Comprehension Questions

1. **What is the central idea of this stanza?**

The stanza focuses on the short-lived nature of worldly ambitions. Whether they fail or succeed, their effects are temporary, like snow in a desert that melts quickly.

2. **What is symbolized by “snow upon the desert’s dusty face”?**

It symbolizes temporary beauty or success that does not endure. The desert represents harsh reality, and the snow is a fleeting moment of grace or hope.

3. **Which theme is explored in this stanza?**

The theme of transience and disillusionment with materialism. It suggests that placing hope in worldly things leads only to short-lived satisfaction.

Stanza 3

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Word	Urdu Meaning	English Synonym	English Antonym
Door	دروازہ	entrance, gateway	wall, barrier
Key	چابی	solution, answer	obstacle, mystery
Veil	پردہ	curtain, cover	exposure, uncovering
Past	اُس پار	beyond, over	this side, near
Little talk	تھوڑی سی گفتگو	brief conversation	silence, quietude
Awhile	کچھ دیر کے لیے	for a moment	continuously, forever
No more	اب کچھ نہیں	nothing remains	still there, persists

There was a Door to which I found no Key;
 There was a Veil past which I could not see:
 Some little Talk awhile of Me and Thee
 There seem'd—and then no more of Thee and Me.

ایک دروازہ تھا، جس کی مجھے چابی نہ ملی؛
 ایک پردہ تھا، جس کے پار میں دیکھ نہ سکا
 — کچھ دیر کے لیے میری اور تیری کچھ باتیں ہوئیں
 پھر یوں لگا جیسے نہ رہا، نہ میں۔

Explanation: This stanza reflects on the mysteries of existence and the afterlife. The "Door" without a key and the "Veil" that cannot be seen through both symbolize the barriers to understanding life's ultimate truths, such as death and what lies beyond. The brief conversation between "Me and Thee" (likely referring to the poet and the Divine or the poet and a beloved) suggests a fleeting moment of connection or understanding, which soon disappears—leaving only silence. This expresses a deep existential sorrow and spiritual uncertainty.

Comprehension Questions

1. What is symbolized by the 'Door' and the 'Veil'?

The 'Door' represents the barrier to understanding the mysteries of life or the afterlife, and the 'Veil' symbolizes the limits of human perception—what lies beyond is unknowable.

2. What does the phrase "no more of Thee and Me" suggest?

It implies the fading or ending of a relationship or spiritual connection. It may refer to the disappearance of divine presence, the loss of self, or simply the end of life.

3. What theme does this stanza explore?

This stanza explores the theme of **existential mystery**—the human struggle to comprehend the purpose of life, death, and divine truth. It conveys a feeling of being lost in a universe without clear answers.

Stanza 4

Word	Urdu Meaning	English Synonym	English Antonym
Moving	حرکت کرنے والا	flowing, shifting	still, static

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Writes	لکھتی ہے	inscribes, records	erases, deletes
Having writ	لکھ چکی	once written	—
Piety	پرہیز گاری	devotion, righteousness	sinfulness, impiety
Wit	عقل	intellect, cleverness	dullness, foolishness
Lure	لبھانا	tempt, attract	repel, push away
Cancel	منسوخ کرنا	erase, nullify	confirm, validate
Tears	آنسو	weeping, sorrow	laughter, joy

The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ,
 Moves on: nor all thy Piety nor Wit
 Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line,
 Nor all thy Tears wash out a Word of it.

حرکت کرتی ہوئی انگلی لکھتی ہے؛ اور جب لکھ چکی،
 تو آگے بڑھ جاتی ہے: نہ تیری ساری پرہیز گاری، نہ عقل
 اسے واپس لا سکتی ہے کہ آدھی سطر بھی مٹا دے،
 اور نہ تیرے سارے آنسو ایک لفظ بھی دھو سکتے ہیں۔

Explanation: This stanza is one of the most well-known from *The Rubáiyát* and presents a powerful meditation on fate and the irreversibility of time. The "Moving Finger" is a metaphor for time or destiny—once something is written (i.e., once an event happens), it cannot be undone. No matter how pious or intelligent a person is, or how much they regret (tears), they cannot change what has already occurred. The poet underscores the finality of actions and the inescapability of fate.

Comprehension Questions

1. What does the "Moving Finger" symbolize?

It symbolizes the passage of time and the inevitability of fate. Once events are set into motion, they cannot be reversed or edited.

2. How does the stanza convey the concept of regret?

The stanza emphasizes that neither piety, intelligence, nor sorrow (tears) can undo what has already been done. It suggests that regrets are powerless in altering destiny.

3. Which poetic devices are used in this stanza?

Metaphor is the dominant device—the "Moving Finger" stands for time or fate. There's also personification, as the finger is given human attributes like writing and moving.

Stanza 5

Word	Urdu Meaning	English Synonym	English Antonym
Spring	بہار	blossom, season of bloom	winter, autumn
Vanish	غائب ہو جانا	disappear, fade	appear, remain

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Rose	گلاب	flower, bloom	—
Youth	جوانی	adolescence, prime	old age, senility
Manuscript	تحریر	text, scroll	blank, silence
Close	بند ہونا	end, shut	begin, open
Nightingale	بلبل	songbird, warbler	—
Whence	کہاں سے	from where	—
Whither	کہاں کو	to where	—

**Yet Ah, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!
That Youth's sweet-scented Manuscript should close
The Nightingale that in the branches sang,
Ah whence, and whither flown again, who knows!**

اہائے! کہ بہار گلاب کے ساتھ ہی کیوں غائب ہو جاتی ہے
کہ جوانی کی خوشبودار تحریر کیوں بند ہو جاتی ہے؛
— وہ بلبل جو شاخوں میں گاتی تھی
ہائے، وہ کہاں سے آئی تھی، اور کہاں چلی گئی — کون جانتا ہے؟

Explanation: This stanza mourns the passing of beauty, youth, and joy. The poet laments that spring disappears along with the rose, symbolizing how beautiful moments are always fleeting. The "manuscript of youth" refers to the story of one's early life—sweet and fragrant—that inevitably comes to a close. The nightingale, a traditional symbol of love and poetry, vanishes mysteriously—no one knows where it came from or where it has gone. This expresses the transient nature of life and mystery of existence. The tone is deeply nostalgic and wistful.

Comprehension Questions

1. What does the "Spring vanishing with the Rose" symbolize?

It symbolizes the fleeting nature of beauty and joy. Just as the rose is short-lived, so too is the season of spring—and by extension, the pleasures of life.

2. How does the poet portray the passage of youth?

Youth is described as a "sweet-scented manuscript" that eventually closes. This metaphor suggests that youth is like a beautiful story, but one that inevitably comes to an end.

3. What is the symbolic role of the nightingale in this stanza?

The nightingale symbolizes joy, love, and poetic inspiration. Its mysterious arrival and departure reflect the unexplained, fleeting aspects of happiness and beauty in life.

Summary : The selected stanzas from *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám* explore the transience of life, the inevitability of time, and the mystery of existence. The poet uses rich metaphors like the rising sun as a "Hunter of the East," snow on a desert, and the "Moving Finger" to illustrate how beauty, youth, and worldly hopes are fleeting. He mourns the limits of human understanding, the irreversibility of fate, and the passing of joyful moments, urging readers to recognize the temporary nature of all things.

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