

NAZIMHIKMET **Three Poems**

AUTUMN

The days are shortening
 The rains are going to start.
 My doors, wide open, waited for you.
 Why are you so late?

Upon my table, green peppers, salt and bread.
 Half the wine that I kept for you in a jar, I drank alone,
 Waiting for you.

Why are you so late?

Here, swelling fruits, under branches ripe and deep.
 They will fall to earth if left a little longer
 Before being picked,
 If you are late.

(Written in a Turkish prison, awaiting a visit from his wife, who was late).

THAT IS THE QUESTION

All the wealth, of the earth cannot quench their thirst
 They want to make a lot of money
 You have to; kill, you have to die
 For them to make a lot of money.

No doubt they don't admit it openly
 They hang up colourful lanterns on the dry branches
 They send running on the roads glittering lies
 Their tails all covered, with tinsel and spangels.

In the market-place they are beating the drums;
 Under the tents, the tiger-man, the mermaid, the headless-man,
 The acrobats in, pink shorts on the straight wire,
 All have heavily made-up faces.

To be duped or not to be duped
 That is the question.
 If you are not duped you will live
 If you are duped you will not.

1951

MORNING

I woke up.
Where are you?
In your own home.
You still can't get used
To being in your own home when you wake up?
It is one of the odd consequences
Of staying in jail for 13 years.

Who is the one sleeping next to you?
It is not loneliness, but your wife
She is sleeping soundly like the angels.
Pregnancy becomes the woman.
What time is it?
Eight o'clock
You are safe until evening
Because it is not customary for the police to raid a house
during the day.

1951