

Says Rahim

1

*Says Rahim do not snap ever
the thread of love
once broken, it does not unite
if it does, knots appear.*

2

*Says Rahim do not spurn the trivial
seeing the weighty
when you need a sewing needle
of what use a sword.*

3

*Says Rahim keep your sorrow
to your own heart
others will taunt you
none willing to share.*

4

*Says Rahim a man with no education
wisdom, religion and generosity
an animal without a tail or horns
futile is his birth in this world.*

5

*Says Rahim pleased I am not
being offered ambrosia without respect
better to die with dignity
drinking poison.*

6

*Says Rahim a dilemma indeed
when you speak out the truth
worldly ties break
with lies you don't ever reach God.*

7

*Says Rahim the sun rises with glowing rays
it sets with equal grace
so does a good man
living through ups and downs.*

8

*Body, a paper toy
turns into pulp in a trice
strange, so says Rahim
yet filled with much pride.*

9

*How will the weak ever live
fighting the strong?
Says Rahim like being at war
with the crocodile while in water.*

10

*A tree does not eat its own fruits
no pond drinks up its own water
a good man saves for others' needs
so says Rahim.*

11

*Blessed is the love the fish has for water
lifeless without it
says Rahim a bumble bee is different
hopping flower to flower.*

12

*Blessed is the swamp
insects thrive on
says Rahim so vast the sea
yet everyone comes away thirsty.*

13

*Says Rahim my Lord's image is embedded in my eyes
there is place for none else
like a traveller turning away
from a full caravanserai.*

**Rahim — Abdur Rahim Khankhana,
a scholar and poet (1556-1627)**

(Translated from Hindi by Vijay Munshi)