

Dagaal sokeeye, dal shisheeya iyo dareenkeyga

Civil War, the Land of Strangers, and My Feelings

Adan Omar Mohamed

English translation by
Abdirashid Adan Mohamud¹

Hibashadii Afrikaa

Illayn dunidu waa hawl
halgan loogu jiro oo
harraad kama dhammaatee
Alla ayayna haga oo
hirka noo horseedoo
higsada inna yadhiyeey?

Hawraar horaa tidhi
hurdo habar ma korisoo
hilbo kaama saartee
halgan loo midoobaa
hankah lagu yidhaahdaa
ama lagu hodomaa e
Alla ayayna haga oo
hirka noo horseedoo
higsada inna yadhiyeey?

Hurdaayoow war iga hoo
hoheey wayda iga qabo
meel laga hayaamaad
ubad u hadhinaysaa
hoosaasinaysaa
ragna wuu hiraabtoo
haadduu la duulaa
halgan buu ku noolyahay

Longing for Africa

Surely the world is nothing but hard
work,
a continuous struggle and never-
ending thirst,
but I believe that we can be guided
and aspire to a better future.

An old saying says
that sleep cannot make
an old person young and strong
again.

It is only a unified struggle
that can yield success
and bring about a happy end.

Oh you who are sleeping,
let me tell you,
take in these words of mine,
you are leading the young ones to a
forsaken place
and deceiving them!
Other men have left
early in the morning,

hoheey inu horuu mare
Alla yaa ku haga oo
hurdo kuuma taalee
haahaabo kugu yidhi!

Hoheey hiil la'aantay!
cidi iguma heeroo
hawraansan ima tidhi
anna hiif ma daayoo
hilibahaygan kala qalan
wadhnahayga hurayee
oday heego joogiyo
inta wiil halyey jira
habar iyo hadhaagaba
anigaan hareeraha
midna hebel ku odhanayn
midna haan ku sheegeyn
Afrikaygu hibatee
hiil maw gelaysaan.
Inta hiif ku noolee
ilmo hililiqdaahay
inta loo heshiyyee
hog madow habeennimo
hilibahoodii lagu guray
Afrikaygu hibatee
hiil maw gelaysaan?!

Inta halac u dhimaney
intay haaddu hiigey
inta wiil haggaasteen
hoy iyo guri hayn
Afrikaygu hibatee
hiil maw gelaysaan?!

Inta hanad la huurshee
meel lagu hadhuudhshiyo
haadaamo loo qoday
hooyooyinkoodiyo

with the early birds!
Their whole life is a struggle
to make progress.
I believe that we can be guided.
You are not in a position to sleep
and
must have higher aspirations!

How unsupported I feel!
There is no one around here
who takes my advice,
and I keep lamenting
my tortured body
and my burning heart.
You, elders, male and female, and
strong young men,
without me having to look around
and calling anyone by name
or mentioning who is related and
who is not,
Africa is in need!
Will you come to its aid?
How many are those
whose lives are full of hardship and
tears
or whose bodies were thrown into
deep holes
by conspirators, in the dead of night.
Africa is in need!
Will you come to its aid?

How many are those on whose flesh
birds of prey have fed
or who have died of hardship,
boys who went malnourished,
without hearth or home!
Africa is in need!
Will you come to its aid?

Countless are the heroes
who were suffocated,
silenced, and trapped,
whose mothers and sisters

hablihii la sharaftiray
eheladan la hiifee
handadaada lagu diley
hiil maw geleysaan?!

Hadal haan ma buuxshoo
hankah laguma yidhi ee
heeryada ma tuurnaa
maysu habar wacanna?
hantideenan haadda cunay
hadaf maw samaynaa?
hawraarsan weeyoo
hiilkeed ninkii lihi
hareertayda joogoo
haa-dayda haayoo
loo kala hadhaynine
iyadoon huruuf jirin
innagoon is hiifayn
midna haybad siinayn
midna hoos u eegayn
midna habar u yeeleyn
midna haan ku sheegeyn
hadafkaan mideyniyo
hal maysku noqonnaa?

Dibjir

Dabci mahaan aqoon jirey
Degaan Duunyo iyo Dawyo waxaan
Derisadaydii uga imi
Duul i garanaaya oo aan
Debed la heehaabayaa
Waa dagaal niciye.

Dugsi kuwaan la tegey oo
Da'yari door is garanayney
Dabaci miduu walaalkay ka dhigay
Nin iyo Dookhiise
Waxaan Dahabo hooyo uga imi
Debecsanow aabe
oo aan debed la heehaabayaa

were dishonoured.
Will you come to the aid
of these kin who are humiliated and
intimidated.

“Words alone cannot fill a water
vessel!”
or bring satisfaction.
To throw this burden off our
shoulders,
shall we form an alliance?
To protect this property of ours,
on which birds of prey feed,
shall we define our purpose?!

Let this be our agreement
and let him who can help
and is close to me
and hears my poem
do so without rancour
or mutual antipathy.
Special privileges for no one
without contempt for anyone
without imposing clan identity on
anyone.
Can we establish common principles
and be one?!

A Pauper

A region, wells, property
I have known from birth,
Neighbors I left behind,
people who knew me—
I am wandering about abroad
because I hate war.

Why I left the people
with whom I went to school
and knew when I was little,
who were like brothers to me
from the time I was born,
each with his own idiosyncracies;
Why I left my mother *Dahabo*

Waa dagaal niciye.

Ma dugsadeen duleed duur cidla ah
laaygu dabajoogo,
Ma dugsadeen digniin lay daldalo
maydga derriskeeyga,
Ma dugsadeen degaan aan irabin
diigsi iyo liide,
Ma dugsadeen askari ii danla' oo
dawga igu baad leh
Ma dugsadeen dedaalkaygi hore
daadi layyiriye,
Ma dugsadeen dantaa igu qasbiye
wax aana dooneyne,
Diiwaanka igu qora dibnuhu way
dardhanayane
Dibjir waxaan ku ahay daar cad iyo
dabaqyo dhaadheere.

and my kind-hearted father—
The reason I wander about abroad
is because I hate war.

I would not have taken refuge
in a deserted, Godforsaken place
with people chasing me.
I would not have taken refuge in a
place where
I live under constant threat and my
neighbors are being killed.
I would not have taken refuge in a
place
that does not want me and debases
me.
I would not have taken refuge in a
place in which
policemen who do not have my
interest at heart
only want to harass me.
I would not have taken refuge in a
place
where no one will acknowledge my
previous accomplishments.
I would not have taken refuge in a
place
where necessity forces me to do
what I never wanted.
I write these verses
from lips quivering with anger.
I am a pauper,
living in a beautiful white house
with many stories!

Gacallaawe

Geyigaan ku noolahay
Gawaan laga geyoonaynba,
Gabadanadu waxay dishaa,
Geed nin kaan gelino
Gedgedoonka gacantuu fidshiyo,
Guux ku hadalkiisa,
Go'ii uu habeenkii huwadey,

Single Life

The land on which we live
in a desolate space,
it is the shelterless
who perish,
restless and turning
from side to side,
he stretches the hands,

Gees isaga tuurka
Gogoshiisa baa laga gartaa
Gacal la'aantiisa e

groaning,
he shoves aside
the night's sheet,
the condition of the bedcover
betrays
the absence of a loving companion.

Markii waagu uu galalac yidhi,
Goonyo dhugadkiisa,
Mergiyada ayuu garabka iyo,
Gacanta saaraayo
Indha godan guduutuu
Haddana giirka kiciyaaye
Gasiin subagle gogoshii dugsoon,
Gaari fidinayso,
Gacal uu la sheekaysto ma leh
Wuu gunuunciye.

At daybreak
he surveys his surroundings
with an exhausted eye
and frowning face,
a nourishing meal and warm
bedding,
an able lover to arrange,
there is no intimate other here,
he is deeply sorrowful.

Gabdho iyo rag waa wadda go'doon,
Guur midkaan heline
Gudcur dam ah gudoodiga habeen,
Gooni socodkooda,
Gujaa lagu wada qabaa,
Gacal la'aan goonyo dhugadkoodo
Gafuur gocondho yeeshiyo
Gunnimo geeri yaa u halise
Guulaan ka beegsaday
In aan doob ku gaamiro dheh.

Women and men stranded,
one who fails to marry,
complete darkness in the midst of
night,
walking alone
a common condition,
no loving and isolation,
mouth bedevilled by poison ivy,
damnation invites death,
I search the alternative
to hardened bachelorhood.

Magan Eebbe

Ca'da gabaygu leeyahay
Cisada calan walayntiisa
Taariikhda caankoo cashada
Lagu calaamayo,
Cimritegay wixii jirey
Ayaad ka citiraaftaa e.

Mid kaloo la cansaaray oo
Caawa aan dhalanin
Iyo caado dhici doonta
Iyo cusob ka sheekaynta

God's Protection

The Alpha and rhythm of poetry,
its celebration,
famous history
when displayed,
a bygone epoch
is identified by its legacy.

A history born
or tradition made
or present mulled over,
each has its marks

Waxuu caan ku yahay baa jiroo
Ciddina diidayn e.

none can deny.

Anigana caloolyowga
Iyo ciilka igu biiray
Caku calanka boodhaysteyee
Lagu cayaraayo
Ee curadadii uu lahaa
Laysku cidhibgooyey
Cod in aan ka dhiibtaan rabaa
Ciidda gubanayso.

And I in my disconsolation,
the rising anger
the byproduct of a trashed flag,
which is a joke,
while its offspring
were set to eliminate each other,
my intention is to express a view
of a land on fire.

Inta coofle caawada
Cariga ciil la hoganaysa
Ee cuud wixii uu dhaqdiyo
Ubad ka caydhoobey
Dumar tuu ka caashaqay
Cimrigi Eebbe ku cadsiiyey
Caweys lagu hor ceebaystay
Oon cidi ka ooeynin
Cadrada la calafgooyey
Ee haadku ku cashayey
Caqli nimaan lahayn baa is yidhi
Waa cidada kale, e
Ka calaaloo ceebta daya
Cidhib danbeedkeeda
Caarkeeni weeyaan
Waxaa cudud ku cartameysaane.

Tonight there are many
unkempt and wailing,
deprived of all of their assets.
The women and children they loved,
who God created as part of them,
were molested before their eyes!
While no one cried to support them!
Innocents violated,
they are reduced to victims
for the birds of prey.
The mindless says:
They belong to the other clan.
O people, in opposition to these,
Let your voices be heard,
witness its shameful consequences.
You are gambling away our dignity.

Inta habar cajuusowdey
Iyo curad agoomowdey
Cagaag lagu maqunshoo
Cawada ciirsi li'i taagan
Ama caraar ku soo dhooftay
Ee caydh u hoganaysa
Casho lagu cashuuriyo

Countless elderly and orphans
were forcefully dispossessed.
Today, there are helpless
others made to flee.
On social welfare, they survive,
blessed gift, they thought,
but the people of the new land
despise the practice.

Cis li'i ciidda ka lihiba
Carri aanay garanayn
Cidlii ceeshki mahad moodey
Caqli nimaan lahayn baa is yadhi
Waa cidada kale, e
Ka calaaloo ceebta daya

The mindless says:
They belong to the other clan.
O people, against such
raise your voices,
see its shameful consequences.
It is our dignity

Cidhib danbeedkeeda
Caarkeeni weeyaan waxaad.
Cudud ku maasheene.

which you infringed upon
or offered to an enemy's soldier.

Iyagaan caruus yeelanoo
Cidi u maadeynin
Cishriin ma gaadhaan
Kunkaa loo caloolgalaye
Gidigood "cawaalay" sidaan
Ciilaan hadhihayn e
Ceebtaa ninkii geysteyow
Sebin colaadeed dheh.

Without the bond of marriage
and proper festivities,
young girls are
impregnated by the thousands.
All carry a child,
a lasting shame!
Say to those who caused the scandal
This is a time of war.

Akhirona ciqaab Eebbahay
Car iyo hoogaaga
Cidi kuuma joogtee ogow
Ehel ku caanshaa e.

But on the Day of Judgment
there will be God's accounting
in the burning fire.
Remember,
you can expect no one
to come to your aid.

Balse malak ciqaab iyo ba'aa
Loo carbiyey huudhin
Cadho Eebahay camal xumaan
Cadow ku hiigaaya
Oo aan cadaabtuna karayn
Ciriqna kuu dhaafin
Ku calaajiyaa badanin
Oo boqol calaamoodle.

An angel programmed to punish
knows no mercy and fatigue,
never disobeys God's instructions,
implements God's anger
to destroy evil,
spares no part of the body.
An expert on crushing,
he comes in hundreds of guises.

Cabsi baan la diidee cadaab
Cawdu ka Billaahi
Camal ii dhoweyana caku e
Cawdu ka Billaahi.
Calaf eebbahay aanu qorin
Waa cad aan jirin, e
Carshi in aan ku loolamo
Intaan caamada hubayo
Oo dhiig calaacalaha daro
Caadil mamnoocay
Ciidayda dhaawoco caku e
Cawdu ka Billaahi

I seek God's protection
from a deed
leading to such Hell fire.
No fate is realized
without God's design.
I ask God to spare me
from fighting for a chair,
through arming the ignorant
or shedding innocent blood
— which is forbidden by God —
or damaging my land.

Cirka eebbayygii unkee
Ciidda gogol yeelay
Innagana cadaan iyo madow
Qoloba cayn yeelay
Calaf nooma waayin,e
Wuxuu qolo u caydheyay
Ha is caawinsadeen weeya oo
Cudud ha yeesheen e
Casrigaan ku noolahay
Cabsiis cago-juglayntiisa
Cimlaaqyadu ka ceeshaan
Cakuye cawdu ka Billaahi.

God, the Creator of the skies,
laid the whole earth
black and white,
gave each a particularity.
Omnipotent,
He made some poor,
others disabled,
in order for us to build solidarity,
the basis for a viable community.
I seek God's protection
from the time in which we live,
where the strong threatens
and eats alone.

Deyoow

Nin deyoobay doorsamay caqligu
dawgi ka habaabay
Diiftiisa garanayn halkay doogtu
kaga taalo

Duulkii nadaadihi yidhaa wey ka
darayaane

Nin dagaal darwiish lagu yidhoo
dabici shaydaan leh
Abidkii dirgiigixin denbiga derejo
moodaaya
Duulkii na daadihi yidhaa wey ka
darayaane

Nin dilaala doodduu yidhiyo
duubka kor u saaran
Oo daroogo diyo loogu daray laba
isdooxaaya
Duulkii nadaadihi yidhaa wey ka
darayaane

Treachery

A confused and mindless man
loses his way,
knows neither his misery
nor the cause.

People who say to him "Lead us"
will surely worsen their condition.

He is someone who is glorified in
war
but has evil intentions,
who confuses virtue
with the application of cruelty
and bad faith.
People who say to him "Lead us"
will surely worsen their condition.

He is someone whose opinions are
for sale
yet wears a pious turban high on his
head,
the one who benefits from social
poison
and mutual predation,
People who say to him "Lead us"
will surely worsen their condition.

Nin daliil aan jirin diinta yidhi dago
ku soo dhiiba
Oo ducufal iimaanka yidhi nebigi
bay i doortay
Duulkii na daadihi yidhaa wey ka
darayaane

He is someone who calls upon false
testimony
and demands gifts
through religion
and claims
that the prophet deputized him,
People who say to him "Lead us"
will surely worsen their condition.

Afartaa da'leyda ah haddana diiqay
nolosheena
Nin walow intaad dabada gelin digo
ku naaxaaga
Dalku in uu hagaaga ma rabee waan
damirayaa dheh

Those who undermined our
existence,
let those who protect them,
who enrich themselves
through mischief,
admit they are against development
in the land,
admit that they are destroyers.

Notes

1. Lidwien Kapteijns and Ahmed I. Samatar contributed to the translations. Part two of Aden Omar Mohamed's poetic compositions will appear in a future volume of *Bildhaan*.