

ROKN-E SAYEN

If worldly wealth means that you sleep in luxury
Or if your pillow is the earth and poverty,
Don't gripe about the one for it will soon be past -
And don't congratulate yourself on what won't last;
Since pilgrim-souls have no abiding city here
What's there to boast of for two days? What's there to fear?

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SADR-E ZANGANI

To talk to you about my heart's distress,
O God, can this be me?
And then to kiss your ruby lips, no less,
O God, can this be me?
For me to glimpse you, even from afar,
Was once impossible -
To sleep with you, to know such happiness,
O God, can this be me?

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VAHSHI

If secretly I've glanced at you
Don't be annoyed with me: it's true
That kind of glance is not allowed -
But all the others do it too!

Epigrams translated from Medieval Persian.
Translator, Dick Davis.