

MARCH 16

THAT SHIELD YOU HOLD

There is a shield you may still hold because of
so many battles.

I guess another conflict could begin any moment,
so maybe lugging it about could be of some use;
or is it just an undermining habit?

Does not it get heavy, so much so that you
sometimes carry it on your head at noon?

And then do wonder, with your insecurities so
intact . . . about casting darkness as fears can
shadows

even if the sun is out, if the *Sun* is out—if God
is really all around in the middle of a beautiful
day or night.

Yes, how amazing that a small umbrella or an
illusion, held over your head . . . or clung to, can
hide the stupendous fact of omniscient Light.

MARCH 2

LIKE A WINTER COAT

Names have started to admit their inabilities.
I am glad they are being honest.

Honesty always helps; there are fewer chores
then to attend.

Labels shield one from the truth; they are
like a winter coat in a way—

who wants to wear one in this summer we
can spend with you, playing?

JANUARY 22

I BET WE CAN FIGURE SOMETHING OUT

How many times do you need to hear *who you are* before you begin to cash *some* of that in and stop acting like a beggar . . . for any kind of attention from people who do not really love you?

Sweeping the streets the way that some do, with eyes that might covet, is no longer fitting to us. For we are everything's lord.

There is no pride on my face, just the opposite. For I got to this great position in making myself ready every moment to serve another.

All the alertness any creature might know, all primal strength and agility, I would use if we were near . . . to care for you in a way a divine lion would its cub.

I don't want you to leave me and go back into any world that can frighten. What can I do? I bet we can figure something out.

FIDDLING WITH THE IDIOT & HOPEFUL

Once when I was fussing with my hair in front
of a looking glass, my master walked by and
said,

*Hafiz, why are you always fiddling with the idiot?
You should starve him a day or two now and then.
Simply don't look in a mirror.*

Once a week I started abstaining from vanity.
No mirror.

Then I went to twice a week, then four times.
Then a little bird started to build a nest in
my beard and let out melodious chants in the
morning.

It was then I realized I was probably onto
something **big** . . . and began walking around
looking very hopeful.

APRIL 15

FREEDOM FROM THE SHACKLE

Once in mid-reach I inquired of my hand,

“Friend, what moves you in that direction?
What hope do you expect to fulfill?”

And an answer came to mind for my hand
has never really talked.

A voice I heard within said, “It is freedom
from the shackle that is the root of all
desire.”

It is freedom from the shackle that is the
root of all desire.

JUNE 18

ONE OF THE DUMBEST THINGS YOU CAN DO

One of the dumbest things you can do is
backbite an animal, or a human being.

Reason is: Besides the fact that an animal
who is feeling grouchy that day might bite
you back . . .

whenever you speak ill of any living creature
something of their shadow might fall on you.

Some unwanted impressions of theirs could
spill on your floor,

and I imagine you are busy enough trying
to keep things tidy.

OCTOBER 14

I THINK THEY HAD A POINT

I overheard some days talking—yes, *days*.
I was at first alarmed, as you might have been,
by what they said.

But then I came to believe they had a point,
which was:

That if they shortened the year by a few
months people would have less time to worry.

Well, as I already wrote . . . *I think they had a
point?* What is your opinion?