

## Marrying Kinds

by Arjuna

INDIA'S traditional customs regarding marriage mean that the bride-to-be pays a dowry to her would-be husband. That is the accepted practice.

Although there are a few places where the prospective groom presents money, jewellery and other goods before he can claim his bride, the more common arrangement is still for the man to demand a dowry. And sometimes their hunger for dowry is never sat-

isfied. Even after two or three years of marriage, they continue to harass their wives to get more money from their parents. If the bride's parents are not able to meet their son-in-law's demands, the poor girl is burnt alive, strangled to

death or disposed of in other heinous ways. The man then tries to find another wife who can offer him a larger dowry. Thus, the case of Mukesh Kumar, 26, is rather unusual. He claims he is being harassed by the parents of his wife who are demanding 25,000 rupees

more. He had already paid them 50,000 rupees in cash and given other household goods and jewellery at the time of his wedding.

He says his in-laws have illegally detained his wife, Sarita Devi, 20. They have refused to send her back to Mr. Kumar unless he gives them the money. Sarita belongs to a Rajasthani family who, by custom, receives dowry from her men who marry their women.

It is a custom in Rajasthan state that men must give dowries to their in-laws at the time of marriage. Bride price is also demanded in the Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh province in the northeastern part of India. There the Singphos community adheres strictly to the custom of would-be husbands giving the parents of their chosen brides money, jewellery and other earthly goods before the wedding could take place.

This group migrated to Arunachal Pradesh in the late 14th century from the Humang Valley of Burma. The Singphos are buddhists of the Hinayana sect. It seems that to the Singphos, it is a status symbol of sorts if a daughter is married off with a big dowry. This system of paying a heavy price for a bride sometimes discourages Singpho youths from marrying, especially if they are poor.

According to Parul Dutta, former director of research in a government ministry, the bride price generally consists of 280 rupees, four buffaloes, two guns or another 280 rupees in lieu of the guns, two Burmese dresses two gongs and two strings of beads. In fact, the possibility of marriage is virtually dictated by the amount of bride price a man is capable of paying.

Other unique customs of the Singphos include the right of a man to marry a step-

S HORT of cash with which to rebuild this war-torn nation, Cambodia's new government has been eyeing tourism at the famed Angkor monuments as one vital source of funds.

But an interim report prepared by United Nations educational, scientific and cultural organisation (UNESCO) has ruled out mass tourism for the world's largest temple complex, saying security safeguards are not in place to prevent the temple from being plundered by hordes of visitors.

UNESCO submitted the report in mid-February to King Norodom Sihanouk.

Based on 25 previous studies by local and foreign experts, UNESCO says the series of seven spectacular cities built by the Hindu emperors of the Khmer empire from the ninth century are too fragile.

"As one of the world's great cultural achievements, the monuments of Angkor hold great attraction for tourists," the reports says. "Explosive tourist development, however, has both positive and negative aspects."

"On the one hand, it can provide new socio-economic opportunities," it adds. "On the other, if not properly planned for, a massive influx of tourists could quickly degrade the fragile archaeological monuments, deplete the natural resources and rent the cultural fabric of the community."

Conservationists are cheering the study's recommendations. But some Phnom Penh insiders say the cash-strapped Cambodian government may find it hard to heed such warning.

Phnom Penh is bent on getting Cambodia back on its feet after more than two decades of strife. Bereft of lo-

## Saving Angkor from Tourism

**Cambodia's cash-starved government is torn between boosting tourism at the famed Angkor complex and the need to preserve its unique heritage. Bala Chandran of Inter Press Service reports from Phnom Penh.**

cal funds, it has been relying on foreign aid since it was elected last year.

Officials had hoped Angkor would attract enough tourists to help ease the country's financial problems and erase Cambodia's image abroad as the 'killing fields', a reference to the reign of the murderous Khmer Rouge in the late 1970s during which more than one million people are believed to have been killed.

Says a source in the Cambodian Council of

Ministers: "There is no question that the report will be rejected. (Angkor tourism) is His Majesty's pet project."

Angkor, which means capital, stretches from the Kulen mountains in the north to Tonle Sap Lake to the south. The complex covers 5,000 sq kms of splendid religious monuments, impressive fortifications, hydro-systems and other utilities built by the pre-Buddhist Khmer rulers of ancient times.

Most famous among the

Hindu temples is the Angkor Wat, which was built by King Suryavarman II at the height of the Khmer empire in the 12th century.

Angkor was abandoned in the 15th century as Cambodia turned to Buddhism, with the nation's capital located near what is now known as Phnom Penh.

Studies conducted indicate that hundreds of possible archaeological sites across the Angkor plain which, if excavated and researched professionally, would reveal important new information about the kind of economy that supported the ancient Khmer empire.

Cabinet minister Van Molyvan, who is in charge of Angkor development, says the

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## The British Council Language Matters

### The Intro

Today we have some more puzzles for you. There is the usual Wobbly Words puzzle but also this time a Wobbly Sentences!

This is a good exercise for practising word order. Many people are not so confident with the word order in questions and by doing exercises like this you can make it fun. To add a little spice you also have to get the punctuation correct. The question marks are easy, but where are you going to put the comma?

Finally, there is also another practice worksheet on phrasal verbs. Have you got those dictionaries yet? We have again chosen to use meanings of the verbs which are not always very well known.

### Grammar Game

Phrasal Verbs continued....

Remember our advice of last week and take care when doing this exercise. It is not as easy as it may seem at first because we have chosen meanings of the various verbs that are less often taught. Use your dictionary!

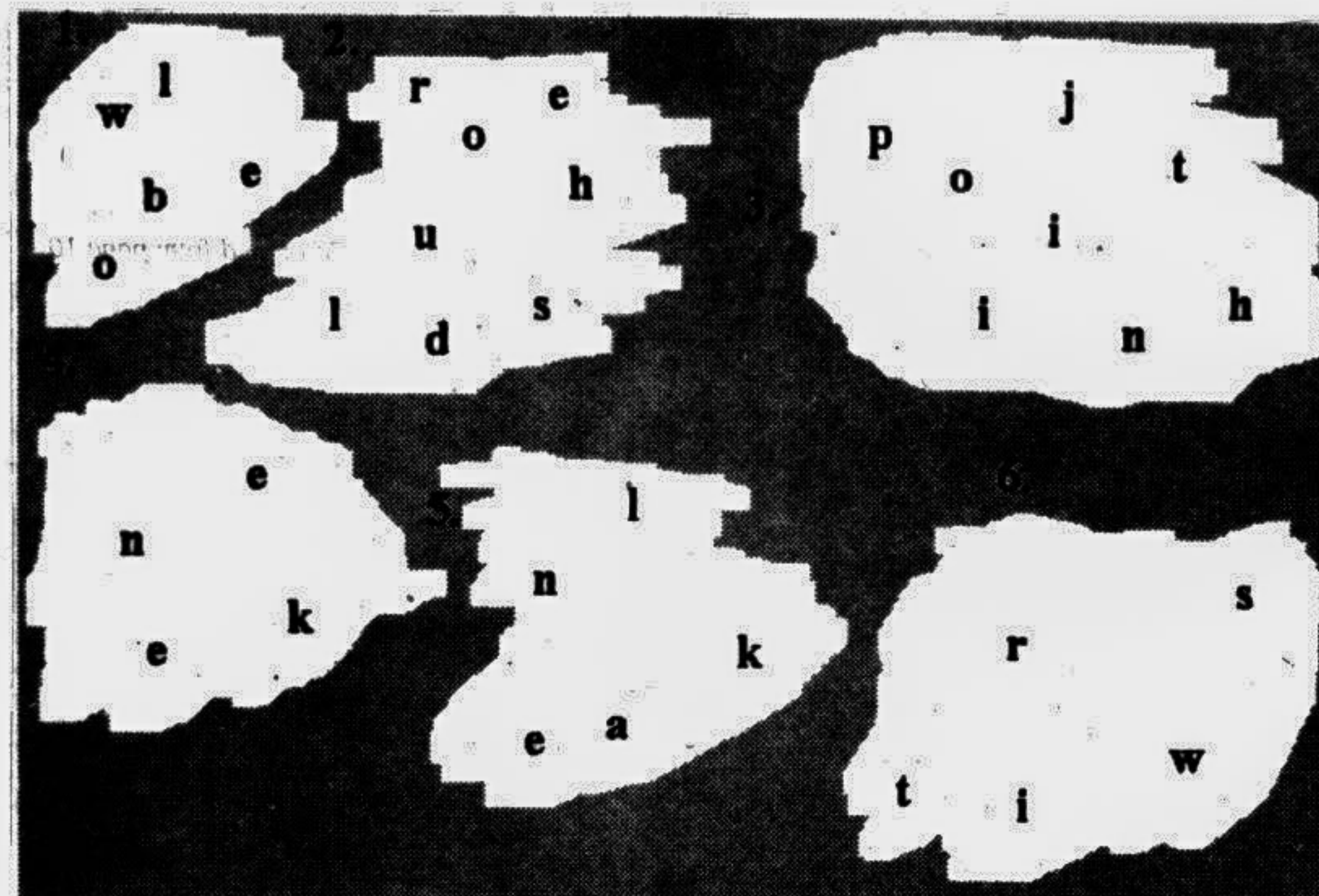
Fill in the blanks in the following sentences with the correct form of one of these phrasal verbs:

take on, get on with, put on, turn on, go on

1. Why are you standing around chatting? Haven't you got any work to .....
2. The detectives were baffled. They had no clues to .....
3. I don't trust her. I think she's just ..... an act.
4. Business is booming. We've just ..... a number of new staff.
5. She was so angry she ..... them and insulted them.

### Wobbly Words

Try this word puzzle. In each shape the letters are jumbled up. Put them in the correct order, but be careful - some have more than one word. What do all of them have in common?



1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....
6. ....

### Wobbly Sentences

Try this exercise to help you practise the word order in questions. There are two different questions mixed up. You must sort them out, put the words in the correct order and make sure you use the punctuation marks.

the often wash next  
how station  
please you to  
is do ? railway  
what your  
the ? bus  
hair

Question 1 .....

Question 2 .....

Answers:  
Wobbly Words  
1. throw 2. shout 3. hip joint 4. know 5. make 6. joint  
Wobbly Sentences  
The two sentences are:  
How often do you wash your hair?  
What time is the bus to the railway station, please?

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## Crucifixion — the Way to Salvation and Resurrection

**FAITH:** The holy gospels are the compilation of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ which translates Christian faith. Frequently through parables Christ taught the people. He salvaged the people from the rock-bottom of dark pits of sins and viles.

Paramount of all commandments of Christ is "Love thy neighbour as thyself". This very teaching has formed the foundation of Christianity. Love which is many a time considered as fragile and a losing ideology is formidable enough to overcome all barriers and believably, is the greatest blessing of God. Christ has also said to the people "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13). And, He Himself in love sacrificed supremely for the liberation of the mankind from the tangles of hellish and pretentious living, by embracing martyrdom on the cross.

**FASTING, ABSTINENCE AND Penance:** For Christian community the fasting and abstinence begins from the ASH WEDNESDAY — on that day, in congregations in the church, the celebrant priests make the sign of cross on the forehead of the devotees, enchanting "Man, you have come from dust and you will go back into dust", and this period of restraint and sacrifice continues for 40 days. This is reliving of Jesus' going to the desert and spending forty days in fasting, abstinence and prayers. "For forty days and forty nights He ate nothing and became very hungry." (Matthew 4:2). Christ's great fortitude in overcoming the temptations offered by Satan has a great teaching for the believers to uphold the significance of penance and abstinence.

Penance is the supreme virtue of tolerance/endurance of suffering or penitence by which one renounces the worldly pleasures and embraces austerity. Whenever trials and tribulations, pains

and sorrows come, one may take the adversities for penance.

Our stay on Earth is accompanied by sufferings, pains and inconveniences, some of which affect us minorly and some of which leave in our lives large and deep scars. As we are not in complete control of our activities of lives, the recurring failure on our part naturally remind us that we are not self-sufficient and we need help to overcome the problems. Thus the Almighty remains the last resort and resource of necessary strength and inspiration that we need. The Christians are taught to accept in good grace all the difficulties and inconveniences as penance in honour of Christ who suffered so much for the sake of all sins. By doing all sorts of small sacrifices the spiritual life is enriched and difficulties transformed into love for Christ. In recollecting Christ's suffering the Christians practise life of

by Jerome Sarkar

Jews and they became apprehensive of losing sway over the people; and, moreover, Christ was openly and boldly revealing and denouncing the hidden ideas and real character of the then religious leaders. Hence, they were plotting against Christ and inducing the Roman Government to arrest Christ and put him to death. The Pharisees brought false accusation of blasphemy and subversive activities to the Roman Empire against Him and instigated the Jews to take Christ to Pilate, the ruler, accusing Him of offences committed against the nation and country. But the Pilate found no guilt with Christ. However, the Jews demanded His death. On the staunch demand of a section of Jews, the Pilate ordered for His death and handed Him over to the Jews who after inhuman torture crucified Him. "Way Of Cross",

which is the promise of life after death. Today the Christians make a sign of cross in a sick bed or in the playing field in hope of better performance/results/blessings/courage etc.

The suffering and pains of the people around the world should not frustrate us and also death across the globe should not over-shroud the death-defying faith of the salvation-seeking people of the world. Even after two millennia of the coming of the Redeemer, we are confronted with the brutal realities of the world — ethnic cleansing, famine, hunger, exploitation, family disintegration. Excruciating pain experienced on a personal level (cancers, leprosy, gotre, congenital disorders, retardation etc) is almost inescapable.

The missionaries and revolutionaries/reformers have embarked on their work and embraced pain to soothe pains

sage of salvation of the mankind. By the pricking death Jesus has proven his profound love for humanity; He has thus slowed to the people that death does not hold the ultimate power on the destiny of a man. Man has nothing to fear for death and will come back to life after death. The Easter commemorates the rise of Jesus Christ from death.

**PRESENT DAY PERSPECTIVES:** In today's world, too, the innocent become the victims of the situation by the vagaries and evil designs of the powerful. Influence, money, power are dominating over all human qualities like faith, sacrifices, justice and so on. Whether by the religious leaders, community heads, national and international patriarches, the same game is being played only in different forms and guises.

Christ's teachings should inspire us. We should not pathetically lose sight of the noble who are devoted to Christ's teachings and are inspired by His great sufferings in love for the sake of love for humanity, braving all faces of mistrusts and misdeeds. What is right is always right and that can't be twisted by evil hands. As a result, the world is blessed with thousands of sung and unsung Mother Teresas, Nelson Mandelas, Suu Kyis. Thousands (claiming and unclaiming the Christ's teachings) prefer to work for the neglected, the down-trodden, the destitute and the sufferers and strive for human development without any material returns. These people in awareness, consciously stand against injustice and oppression. They cannot be segregated by race and religious affiliations etc.

It is not frustration but hope that should command us, by the acts of the people irrespective of creed and colour who have been bravely waging war against unjust, laying their lives for the down-trodden and strengthening the faith in humanity and inspiring others to join them to carry forth the flag of Jesus Christ. Let the people of the world today derive courage and confidence from Zlata Filipovich of Bosnia and more of her kind be born.

### The Easter Passed on Sunday Last

sanctity, fasting foregoing pleasures, performing good work for the people, consuming simple food, spending more time in praying and through self-denials. One of Christ's teachings is that what good the right hand does, let not the left hand know. Christ has always advised His followers to sacrifice not like the Pharisees who did everything in public to show how much sacrifice they made and offered alms openly. Christ hated the hypocrisy of the leaders of the time. They talked very piously but inside were living vipers. The Pharisees always used to soliloquize. They were betrayers to the religion and persecutors of the people. Christ preached openly in gatherings and taught the people with parables which were going against these hypocrites.

**CHRIST:** Christ's popularity and the deep faith of the multitude of His followers frightened the Chief Priests of the

the re-enactment of the torment of Christ on each Friday during the Lent, a season for all these penance and abstinence, remind Christians of the great pain Christ took in his cross-laden trek to Calvary where he was crucified.

**THE CROSS:** On the cross, Jesus Christ, amidst anguish, torment and unbearable pains, offered his life to purge and emancipate the mankind. As the Holy Bible says and Christians believe, He resurrected on the third day and thus established the triumph of the soul over death. By this very act, He has commanded us to love and accept pains for our neighbours/fellow beings and has promised life after death.

The Cross and the resurrection are the symbols of Christian identity and hope. The Cross, the Holy Cross upon which Jesus Christ laid down His life for the freedom of the mankind from the clutches of devilish superstructure stands as an inspiration for Christian way of living. The third day He arose from death. It is known as the Easter Sunday. Death on the cross is rewarded by resurrection on Easter Sunday

of others. Even though we often are left in amazement at their discretion to experience pain for abatement of the pain of others, there is no stop in them following the trail. Jesus' exercise of mysterious powers to cure lepers, cripples, blinds, evil spirits-driven ones, must have inspired them to emulate Him through services. The disintegration of families is the thorniest of the things in the world besides the brutal killings. Justifiably, one asks the relevance of the sufferings of Christ on the cross. In fact, Jesus' suffering on the cross invariably has been encouraging us to keep faith on the redeeming power of God, the resurrection of the human being as demonstrated by the suffering of God who willingly chose humanhood and took the thorniest path of persecution that a human can imagine. Thus He has left behind us the trail of cross and salvation.

**EASTER SUNDAY:** Easter is the greatest of all Christian festivals. To the Christian Community, the Easter — Resurrection of Christ — has been the doorway to Heaven. Easter reminds the triumphant mes-

## A Cheap Article

by Taslima Nasreen

Nothing cheaper than women can you have in the market.

If they get a bottle of nail polish they happily pass three days without any sleep. When they get two cakes of soap and a bottle of fragrant hair oil they turn such pets that you can tear out chunks of meat from their body and sell them in the bazaar twice a week. If they get a nose-ring they lick your feet for seventy days; if it is a striped sari they do so for full three and a half months.

Even an emaciated hairless house-dog barks, but a woman has always a lock on her lips, a lock of gold.

Women are indeed articles to use as you please. If you want you can put chains around their feet, their hands, and their minds. If you like you can divorce them at will.

Translated by Prof Kabir Choudhury

## Moonlit Summer Dream

by G Maehi

Thine upon the moon shines,  
Falling silence of shivering heat,  
For thee I made a bed of roses,  
For mine, I prefer a mat of soil where —  
I am supposed to lie.

Love thou cry —  
In my heart I try  
to find thee; in my tears  
to hide thee, in the fears  
of losing where thou liest.

Thy soul is the heart of mine,  
Thou art, heaven of my love —  
Losing thee cuts my heart  
as does a sharpened blade.  
Thus out I cry —  
Please come and pare not my heart,  
As thee go on prying, I cry  
As thine heart I scorch  
Who's gonna botch  
my smouldered heart.

Thine upon the heaven lies  
Thus I meek thee with my eternal love  
Festoon thou with whatever needs  
I prethee where she smiles  
Thee, not a moon  
Smiles with brightened teeth

Upon my grave thee stand  
wearing thoust fragrant robe  
I cry with joy as high as I could  
sleeping in my bed of roses  
I made for thee

Thus I beckon —  
Screaming, come hither and stay a moment,  
Crying, come and love me not,  
Groaning, come and forget me not,  
Howling, come and loath me not,  
Sobbing, come and hold me not,  
But let me love thee  
Thus I pride, my heart  
Thus I get my heart in thoust  
bed of roses.