

THE TEBAHPLA

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For Chris Edgar, after "The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam"

Awake! As actors afterward amass,
 An artful agent almost acts an ass
 And asks aloud, "Are acting arts about
 An artist's act? An actor's art?" Alas!

Believing books, beseeching brooks, belay
 Beyond brown bookstores by breakwater's bay!
 Bold bones, bent by broad bindings, bear bright books;
 But books bound badly, baldly break, betray.

Can comics caper, cheer, arouse, consort,
 Call centaurs "cows," chase captives, challenge court?
 Can cartoons care, can colors cry, can cries
 Courageously claim cats cannot cavort?

Defying dreams, debasing dawn's dark drum,
 Disintegrating, dropping downward, dumb,
 Dull doltish devils dance, defy death's doors,
 Daft dogs defending dream's delirium.

Each empire's elevated engineers
 Envisioned eyes, evaluated ears.
 Each enterprise eventually ends:
 Engage! Elope! Eternity endears!

For friends, find foes! For foes, find friends! Fates flee!
 For fools, find fools! Fear fickle fortune's fee.
 From fabricating famine for foul flesh,
 Fresh fishes, friends, find fancy feast for free.

Good gentle gurus greet. Good guests gyrate,
 Give guidance, glowing gilt, grand golden gate.
 Gods generously grant gold gifts galore.
 Great greedy giants go gesticulate.

His hat has hidden hair, his hair hides hay.
 He hopes he'll have his heavenly hooray.
 Her home has her, he holds her hopeful heart:
 He hopes he hails her happiest heyday.

I ink ideas inspired in infancy.
 Its impact is ingrown in irony.
 I illustrate it if it isolates
 Iconoclastic iambs instantly.

June's joyful jaws jolt joyous jamboree,
 Jot jiffy jumbled jigsaws, jittery.
 Judicious jests just jar jejune July,
 Joy's jellybeans judge joking jollity.

Kings knowingly knock knaves, kick knavish knee.
 Knaves know knights kindly kill kinetically.
 King's keepsakes—kisses, kindling, kinnikinnik—
 Keep knickknacks knitting kindred kickshaws' key.

Love's limitations level lovers' list.
 Lest lust lost last, let's loot life's legalist.
 Let's linger, lacking liquor, lying low:
 Luck's love lacks lover's luckless lyricist.

My muse's madcap music may maroon
 My Mistress Moonlight. Midnight's mad monsoon
 May mimic mental mirrors' magic maze.
 Make merry, Mab! My mortal mask's my moon.

Nonentities nix nothing, notify
 New novelists: "Now nightfall's nearly nigh!"
 No numerology's next number's none.
 Nonillion nothings never nullify.

Our orders often openly oppose
 Originality. One overthrows
 Oneself on orphic oracles of old
 Or orbits over oddities one owes.

Pure poet! Pen pure perfect poetry!
 Put purple prose past poor philosophy.
 Pitch paragraphs, patch pages, ponder puns,
 Paint panoramic poems pensively.

Quaint quarrels quell quotations' quarantines:
 Quit quipping, quantifying quinidines.
 Quizzed quarterbacks quote quiet questionnaires;
 Quests quickly quash quadratic quasi-queens

Remember rhyme, remember rhythm's rate?
 Romantic reveries reverse, restate
 Raw roses reaching reason's rosy red.
 Rash rows read roses: Rhythms, rhymes relate.

Some sonnets sing! See Shakespeare's sonnets say,
 "Shall softer sounds save springtime's short sweet stay?"

Soon spring's songs sow seeds, suckle summer's soul.
 Still, seasons' sonnets suffer, shiver, sway.

Ten thousand toasts to those that taste the tide,
 That take the tongue, that tell the tales that tried

The tears, the troubling tragedies, the time—
 The time that touched the truths that terrified.

Use universal unity, united,
 Unless uncivil underdogs unwrite.

Uncompromising ugly uselessness
 Uncovers underlings to underwrite!

Vile verses vex vain virgin's vanity.

Vim's vigor veils voracious votary.

Vast voluntary Venus voids vain vows.

Vexed verses, veering, vanish visibly.

What weather were we wanting? Where were we

When winds washed words with water willingly?

Who writes, why write, when weather's whirling wild?

We wake with wishes wading wistfully.

Xanthippe, Xerox Xanadu's xanthine,

X-ray X-rated x-section's xyline.

Xylography's X-axis? Xylophones

X-ray Xanthippe's xeric xylidine.

Your yacking youthfulness yells your "Yahoo!"

Yet years yaw, yearning, yawning, yapping. You

Yelled yesterday! You yield! Your yesteryear

Yawps yonder: Yes, you yodel your "yoo-hoo."

Zen's zebras zero zephyrs zestily,

Zap zipping, zooming zebus zaniily.

Zing! Zealous zithers zig, zookeepers zag.

Zoo zombies zigzag zoologically.