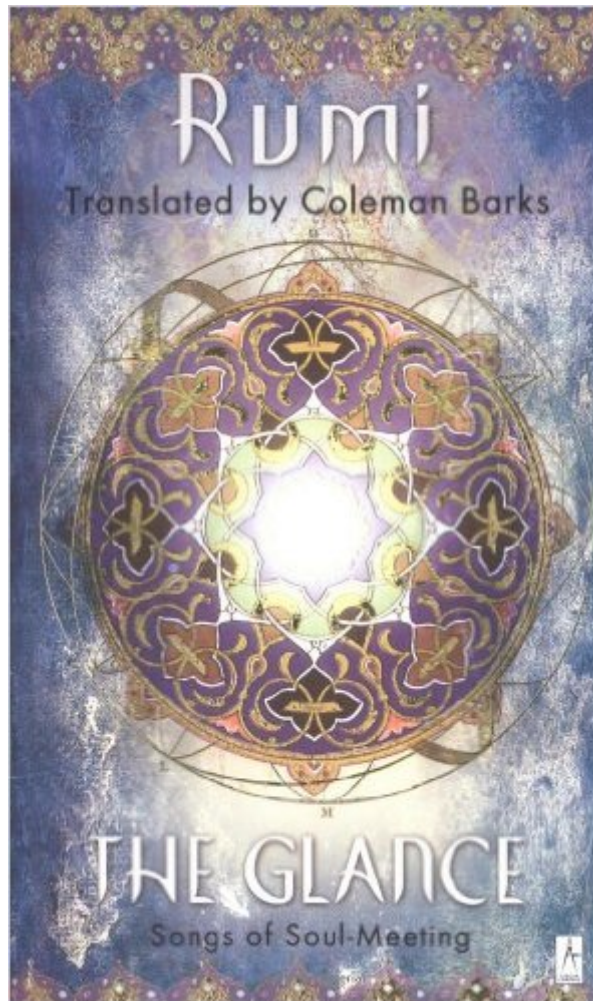


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The Glance: Songs Of Soul-Meeting (Compass)



Synopsis

In 1244, the brilliant poet Rumi and the wandering dervish Shams of Tabriz met and immediately fell into a deep spiritual connection. *The Glance* taps a major, yet little explored theme in Rumi's poetry—the mystical experience that occurs in the meeting of the eyes of the lover and the beloved, parent and child, friend and soul mate. Coleman Barks's new translations of these powerful and complex poems capture Rumi's range from the ethereal to the everyday. They reveal the unique place of human desire, love, and ecstasy, where there exists not just the union of two souls, but the crux of the universe. Here is a new kind of love lyric for our time—one of longing, connection, and wholeness.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Coleman Barks has done a superb job of selecting and translating Rumi's poetry. The words will move you to tears, the imagery inspire you, the lyric sound of the prose bring joy to your heart. It is a simply magnificent collection and translation. The volume is slender, containing only a handful of poems, but the impact of them is weighty. If you own only one book of poetry - or even only one book by Rumi, this is the collection I recommend.

A glance ... a gaze ... full recognition ... connection ... that is how I felt reading some of these poems. Anyone who has experienced strong emotions which transpose events into a new way of

"seeing" ... turning an ordinary experience into a spiritual, other-worldly, almost "divine" encounter will understand the impact of Rumi's poems. The trigger could be a heart-felt conversation, an over-powering view of nature, or a deeply buried emotion which surfaces, or meeting someone special. Rumi describes many life experiences. Each poem is like a crystal which reveals a flash of infinity that is captured in words. The world would be a better place if more people could relate to the brilliance revealed by Rumi's poems. Coleman Barks provides unparalleled free verse translations which breathe new life into these ancient verses. His highly appealing style makes the poems palatable to modern readers. Maybe, just maybe, Rumi loved life more and dared to live it more fully ... than many people living today. Perhaps, more "love for life" can be awakened in the readers of these poems. We can only hope ... Erika Borsos (erikab93)

I may not know a cake from a cow-pie, but if Coleman is cooking I'll take two helpings please! And serve it up on audio...straight from the lover's lips is best...images clear as mountain air, accent thick as pine tar, and voice sweet as peach nectar. YUM...YUM That's the way I like it. During my first listen, I felt the music on this audio to be a little too over-powering for some of the readings, but it has grown on me. Now I love even the quirkiest of the pieces. He may not be the chef for you, but he is the word gourmet for me.

In our culture descriptions of things are often confused with the things themselves, emotion or any deep feeling is thought of as spiritual and very isolated examples of larger processes are trotted out and obsessively promoted as the whole process. This book, which has some wonderful poems, suffers from all the above faults. If this were simply a book of poems by Barks detailing his personal experiences, I'd like it a lot more. But it purports to be something different: a Sufi perspective by Rumi. Well, to quote the contemporary Sufi Teacher Idries Shah: "Not every round thing is a cake!" To pull out the more intense, excitable elements in Rumi and arrange them to fit a cultural predisposition for the bizarre and supernatural, brings to mind Rumi's own admonition. "Don't look at my outward form, but take what is in my hand." Here we have the descriptions and the exotic (the outward form) but none of the intent (the specific tools designed to free the human being from the prison of appearances). A much more balanced perspective on Rumi and his work is contained in the Octagon Press book by Afzal Iqbal--The Life & Work of Jalaluddin Rumi.

And who does better translations than Coleman Barks ? That's really the secret. I write about love everyday, in poetical form too. When I read Rumi, I find a kindred soul. And that's comforting in this

modern world. Many thanks to Coleman Barks for his exceptional work !

I am spellbound by this delicious and intense taste of love. So, glancing down or up, I am for lover's sake mirrored and revealed with such words, with such indelible mysteries as to be placed in this heavenly embrace and in the depths of a lover's cavern all at once.

The very title of this Coleman Barks translation of some of Rumi's most soulful love poems is what initially drew me in - because I felt as if I knew this "Glance" he spoke of with a deep soul-friend of mine. May everyone know just a taste of what Rumi felt with his beloved, Shams. Perhaps this book may spark exactly that intent for many readers. I have been a long-time fan of Rumi's poetry, this title helped me become a bonafide Coleman Barks fan as well. In the introduction, Barks does a tremendous job in his summation of Soul-Friendship, both universally and what was known between Rumi and his soul-friend Shams. Hear what he says about the concept of Rumi's "love lyric" from page xv: "expands the concept of love lyric into a region where many languages blend: the jewel imagery of mysticism, clouds of bewilderment, the charge of erotic language, and the feel of drunkenness. It's a new and old mixture of human desirings, longings and other intensities. These poems come from a place where those experiences are both felt and transformed. The realm of the glance is beyond touch and somehow within touch, too. The friendship of Rumi and Shams goes beyond wantings, past ideas of gender, beyond old love categories, beyond the synapse of the garden balcony scene and beyond mind." These poems - and Coleman Barks introduction and closing notes - would be excellent reading for anyone who has a heart for the sensual (not only the sexual aspects of sensual, but the deep experience of all of the senses through soul-breathed and connective descriptions that gather your being up into a taste of the ecstatic spin that is Rumi - that seedling of spiritual alchemy that comes from not only reading Rumi's words, but allowing those words to become a part of your blood, allowing those words to be an invitation into experience. I also admire Barks' closing notes, where he pays homage to other Rumi translators, honoring the specific work of Nevit Ergin.

I found this little jewel quite by surprise and have since shared it both as readings and as gifts. I really appreciate Coleman Barks' translations of Rumi. Enjoy and share!

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