

Three Ghazals

by [Jeffrey Burghauer](#) (April 2020)



Hylas and the Nymphs, John William Waterhouse, 1896

[1]

There's no fever Mercy can't
Build a Bethlehem around.

Show me marble comeliness
Faith can fix a stem around.

Basic life's a burlap square

Mercy is the hem around.

Poet, here's a breeze you may

Wrap a requiem around.

[2]

Join me, shepherdess, within this glade of rage,

Where I sprawl beneath the thickened shade of rage.

Will the sylvan nymph unbind her fragrant hair?

It's congested deftly in a braid, like rage.

She declines. I sniff like an aristocrat,

And caress the soft, Venetian suede of rage.

"Equal work," they say, "deserves its equal pay";

It appears that I've been overpaid by rage.

Boredom is a Danzig thaler; fear, a void.

Anger is a wooden nickel. Trade with rage.

All these moms & maids & maiden aunts were led

Very well when led to be afraid of rage.

[3]

Heaven's fulcrum is a rowlock made of brass.

Hum a hymn, and dip your oar into the night.

I catch most of my experience by day,

Conjure, and release my lore into the night.

"Swear," she importuned. I turned toward her face,

Looked into her eyes, and swore into the night.

Poet, armed but with a flask of Persian ink,

You can stalk a carnivore into the night.

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Jeffrey Burghauser is a teacher in Columbus, OH. He was educated at SUNY-Buffalo and the University of Leeds. He currently studies the five-string banjo with a focus on pre-WWII picking styles. A former artist-in-residence at the Arad Arts Project (Israel), his poems have appeared (or are forthcoming) in *Appalachian Journal*, *Fearsome Critters*, *Iceview*, *Lehrhaus*, and *New English Review*. Jeffrey's book-length collections are available on [Amazon](#), and his website is