

I Often Wonder



A Poetic Experience
By Wael Al-Sayegh

Wael Al-Sayegh is an Edinburgh born UAE national. He was raised in Dubai, and educated in the prestigious Rashid School for Boys. He holds a Masters of Arts from the University of Glasgow UK and a Project Management Master's Certificate from Regis University, USA. Mr Al-Sayegh's work experience includes years of employment with some of the region's leading financial institutions and he has worked for both the private and public sectors. His family has a long history in the Arabian Gulf region and has played a key role in its development, both politically and socially. In his capacity as a Cultural Ambassador Wael has been interviewed by many radio programmes including the award-winning *Business Breakfast Show* on Dubai Eye 103.8FM and the world renowned BBC *Culture Shock* programme. Wael has also been interviewed on several local and international TV channels. Wael's self-discovered vocation in life is writing.

By the same author

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Experience

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WAEL AL-SAYEGH

وانسل الصايغ

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www.waelalsayeQh.com

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Dedication

***This book is dedicated to my much loved
parents: Dr. Mirza AU Hassan Al-Sayegh
& Khadija Salem Al-Arrayed.***

Acknowledgments

***Thanks goes to all those who supported
A Poets Oud. You honoured me beyond
words.***

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Dignity

A one-armed beggar stood at the back
of a Mosque
He placed his crumpled cloth on the
floor and exposed his stump to the
passers-by.

As the faithful left, many of them
pitied the man and gave him money
When the beggar thought all had gone
he sat down and counted his notes and
coins.

As he sat there he suddenly noticed a
man looking at him
A wealthy-looking man of his age now
stood tall before him.

Without a word, the rich man just
stood there, looking down at the
beggar who by now was very
confused.

The rich man then took off his
prosthetic leg and then his prosthetic
arm

He then hopped a few steps towards
the beggar and smacked the beggar
hard across his face using his artificial
limb.

The beggar fell on his back in
complete shock as the rich man spoke:

“I have been given far less than you
but I have accomplished far more.
Your existence in this place is an insult
to its sacredness. This is a place where
people ask mercy of God, where as
you come here and ask it of man.”

With that he put back his leg, back into
its place.

“You must stop with your begging and
start helping your self, Your dignity
must take a stand. Here,

giving him his artificial arm,
let me lend you a hand.”

If Nature Could Sue

All of mankind's modern day
technological advancements come
from nature and the universe. The
planes we fly in, the medicine we take,
the machines we use and the metals we
fuse.

The humans of old lived and worked a
life that was in unison with the flow of
the universe. They knew it to be far
more powerful, experienced and
knowledgeable than they. They
acknowledged the fact that they were a
mere part of it, their worth no more
than clay.

With each knowing its worth, nature
began to educate man. It shared with
them its genius and ancient wisdom.

Many Artists and Scholars of these
ancient times did not sign their names

on their work, for their humbleness and indebtedness to nature would not permit them. They were thankful for just being able to have such important work be able to flow through them. That to them was glory worth far more than gold.

But then mankind developed an ego and started to say "this is mine". The birth of global free enterprise turned nature into a slave.

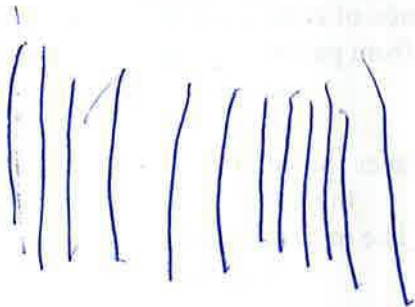
Instead of attributing their development to nature and recognising her as the ancient wise teacher she is they took what she had given them and named it after themselves.

As a consequence of their denial nature ceased to teach. The advancements they made, although colossal to their petty minds, were

minuscule compared to what they
could have achieved.

Without the blessings of nature
humanity is surely doomed.
For man does not create anything by
himself, he merely emulates and
manipulates what nature gives.

If nature could get her seif a good
lawyer she'd surely sue
Not only would she file for damages,
but for misusing her Intellectual
Property too.



Sights & Sounds

Giant Pineapple looking palm trees
Mini Bus Taxies with bright shiny
alloy rims
Crayon coloured houses on steep hills
Shanty Towns.

Where Rugby is a lot more than just a
game

Where the Atlantic meets the Indian
Ocean and the roar of the waves is
heard from far

Where mountains have tablecloths
made of clouds and the sound of music
from passing-by cars that make the
windows shake.

Faces that are black, white and every
thing that falls in between
The most culturally diverse place I
have ever seen

Where Mandela the lion was caged,
for trying to give its people a fresh
new page
These to me are just some of the Sights
and Sounds
Of the wonderful city of Cape Town.

Man's Best Friend

A little girl asked her father if she
could have a little puppy for her
birthday

Infuriated by her request the father
point blankly refused.

“Dogs are Nijis and no angels enter a
house that has a dog residing on its
premises,” he shouted at her.

That night in his sleep, a giant Saluki
dog came to the father in his dreams.

The Saluki was the size of a Great
Dane, and its belly was as slender as
the most pure bred Arabian Stallion
Its light brown eyes and elongated,
narrow, well-proportioned face gave it
a majestic and dignified look of
authority

With no hope of out-running the
hound, the father stood perfectly still.

The mystical creature gracefully
approached the father and came to a
halt a few steps away from him
Sitting on its hind legs it looked deep
into the father's soul, and in the purist
of Arabic tongues spoke:

“Oh retched human, know, that if it
was not for my faith in the Almighty I
would have crushed you for the words
you spoke about my kind earlier on.

You say that no angels come to where
we reside but did the Almighty not
honour us in the Holy Koran as being
part of the Miracle of the Cave? Did
we not prostrate to the glory of God
alongside your kind? Did angels not
protect the Cave from harm with us
residing in it alongside man?

And if God's honour is not enough for you, then at least recognise us for the friendship we offer your kind.

Do we not protect your women and children whilst you are away from your camps?

Do we not warn you of approaching enemy tribes that lurch at night?

Do we not lead your blind to safety and help you hunt for much needed food?

You must know, oh ungrateful and ignorant human that we are made Nijis to you not because of any wrong-doing on our part, but to protect us from your harmful hands."

I'd Rather Be

I'd rather own a small rubber boat that
goes places
Than a luxury yacht that permanently
stays at bay.

I'd rather be a wise man forced to stay
quiet
Than a fool who always has his say.

I'd rather be bored with innocence
Than be preoccupied with evil.

I'd rather die with honour
Than live with none.

I'd rather ride a donkey to work
Than a fancy car that makes me a mule
to the bank.

I'd rather stand by the good with
nothing but a sword

Than be on the evil side, armed with a
tank.

Yes, I'd much rather.

Embrace

The preservation of our beautiful culture is not the sole responsibility of Museums, Cultural Centers, Sociology or even Archeology, it's equally shared with the positive personal usage of modern day Technology.

It is my humble opinion that Culture should not be preserved, but rather, Culture should be lived, breathed and ultimately shared with the rest of humanity.

Through the usage of modern day Technology the pearls of OUR Desert and Sea wisdom can now take flight. They can now elegantly glide, with their wings spread proud, through the currents of global information and finally take its proper place in world history.

Through the window of modern
Technology we can now be seen as
what we truly are, a peaceful, tolerant,
open-minded, generous, nature loving
and poetic nation.

I call out, from the humble beginnings
of the Dubai Creek, the very pumping
heart of my beloved Emirate to all of
the indigenous nations of the world,
and say you must not shy away from
Technology but Embrace it. Embrace
it so that your beautiful culture is not
only preserved, but truly lived.

Emotions

There was once a famous Oudist who
was second to none
He could do anything with his Oud, he
and his Oud were one.

He could make his Oud laugh, he
could make his Oud cry, some even
said he could make his Oud loving
sigh.

One day he was invited to play at the
Royal Albert Hall
He put on such a magnificent
performance that the crowd would not
let him leave as they shouted their
“Encore” call.

To give them a special treat the
Oudists invited the audience to call out
some emotions, and he would play a
musical expression of each.

“Love,” called out the first, and he
played Love.

“Peace,” called another, and he played
Peace.

“Passion,” called the third, and he
played them Passion.

“Hate,” came a call from the back of
the Hall.

The Oudist stopped playing, as an
awkward silence fell upon them all.

With the spot light surrounding The
Oudist, he stood up, and with a face
full of fury and rage, smashed his Oud
into the floor, and walked off stage.

What Do You See?

What do you see when you look at an
air cabin crew attendant on a plane?
A servant? An employee? Or a pretty
face perhaps?

If so, then imagine what would happen
to you if you had a stroke or an asthma
attack. Who do you think would rush
to your aid? Your best mate sat next to
you perhaps? An off-duty Doctor or
nurse on holiday?

Did you know that Cabin Crew are
even trained to deliver babies? That
some of them are fluent in up to nine
languages?

They come from all walks of life,
Doctors, Lawyers, Writers, Poets, and
Entrepreneurs.

Look at them for what they are,
human. Someone's daughter, son,
husband or even someone's wife.

Or at the very least, someone who
could save your life.

I Often Wonder

It fed us, sheltered us, and even gave
us the means to seek our fortunes at
sea

All of this and more was given to us
by the noble palm tree.

Its branches shaded the birth place of
the Prophet Isa, who was bestowed by
the Almighty, with the power to bring
to life what was once dead.

The mere thought of seeing one from a
distance, would give hope to the
desperate traveller. Hope is what keeps
us going after all. Where would we be
without Hope?

The Palm Tree is a symbol of peace,
safety and a tribute to life.

Arab Legends state that the Palm tree
was formed from the residue of clay

God moulded mankind from. But
seeing how mankind behaves today, I
often wonder, if it is perhaps we, who
are the residue.

What Lies Within

Creativity is not thinking out of the
box

It's not knowing what a box is.

Mankind does not truly create
anything

For how can a creation create?

Instead mankind is inspired, inspired
by the magnificence of what
surrounds, and what lies from within.
For man to say the words "I created,"
to me, is such a sin.

Courtesy

An old man one day decided to repaint
his entire house

He summoned the workmen in and
asked them to paint the inside of the
house in his favourite colour, but when
it came to the outside he instructed
them to ask the neighbours what
colour they would prefer.

Why would we ask your neighbours?
Inquired the surprised workmen.
It is your house?

The inside of the house is what I see
most and therefore I get to choose.
The outside of the house, however, is
what they see most and therefore they
should choose. It's called courtesy,
son.

There is an Arab proverb that says: Eat
what takes your fancy, but dress in
what others find appropriate to see.

Desert Rose

In the harshest of environments lives
my favourite flower, the desert rose.

Its playful pink and deep red petals
contrast magnificently with the ancient
brown of the ever changing desert
sands.

Its beauty, like all true beauty, is the
end result of much struggle and pain.
Its thick, intertwining branches are not
the prettiest of sights, but journeys to
greatness are seldom pretty.

Always remember that like the desert
rose, our lives are remembered not by
the struggles we have to endure, but by
the flowers we produce.

Drunken Encounter

I hate the smell of your fermented
breath

I hate the sight of your glazy eyes
I hate hearing your slurry words.

A human is a human by the use of his
brain

Yet here you are killing the cells that
make you sane.

Why do you insist on carrying on with
this mass brain slaughter?

You can't even recognise me, and I'm
your only daughter.

Here & Now

With no tomorrow to plan for, and no
yesterday to change, what remains is
the here and now.

Your breathing, your heart beat.
Time is plentiful in this realm and can
be used to make you what you wish to
be.

Live in the here and now and you will
see, just how beautiful your heart beat
can be.

Resting Place

You must love the earth, be at peace
with the earth.

You must hug the earth, embrace the
earth, feel the earth and kiss her from
time to time too.

You must do all these things, if not
because you were made from her, then
for the fact that she is your final
resting place.

Might as well insure
that you rest in peace.

Human Touch

Business people will tell you never to use a human when a machine can get the job done better, plus machines don't complain as much.

But none can deny, that no machine in the world, can ever manufacture that level of excellence we call the human touch.

Desert Sands

I submerge my bare feet into the night
desert sand,
Its coldness sends a shiver down my
spine,
I look up at the stars and the moon,
and all my city worries disappear into
the darkness of the night.

Poverty

Poverty is a man-made disease
That is a result of nothing but
mankind's ill-natured greed.

Mother Nature can provide for all on
this earth and still have some to spare
But the rich get richer by wanting
more than their fair share.

One human's excess is another
human's shortage.

A man-made disease needs a man-
made cure.
And what is so shameful about poverty
is that its solution is so simple and
pure.

Want to end poverty? Easy
Only use what you truly need and let
go of everything in your life that can
be called greed.

Ignite Your Flame

Know, that I compared to you, am
nothing.

For your accomplishments will be far
greater than mine.

You have so much talent, that far far
exceeds my own.

If I could somehow claim any merit in
helping you along the way.

I would be honoured to be a humble
solitary spark that helped ignite your
flame.

Undenied

Her Abay's blackness is the night
Her face the radiant moon
Her Hennad hands tell a story of a
wedding soon.

Her mascara intensifies her already
capturing eyes
She does not walk across the Italian
marbled floor, but glides
Her desert femininity is unique
Her strength is undenied.

What Am I?

A religion, a sect, a race, a creed?
Or am I something that grew out of a
baby that needed constant feed.

Am I an occupation, a hobby or a
passion?
Or am I simple the product of today's
latest fashion?

Am I a role in someone's life, a dad, a
husband, a brother?
Or am I just another picture on a
magazine cover?

So what am I?

The best answer I can come up with is
that I am whatever I need to be,
in order to be a good example of
humanity.

The Kitchen Table

Be wary and respect the power of the
kitchen table

Much more than food and drink is
served on its surface.

It's where scandalous secrets are told,
it's where desperate lovers meet, to
nourish their souls. It's the birth place
of revolutions, wars and treaties of
peace. It's where many novels, break
ups and marriages are bom. It's where
tears are shed, hearts are mended, and
breaths are taken away.

Watch out for what occurs on it, by it
or under it. I have met almost every
human emotion there.

It's a place that is anything but stable.
So be wary and respect, the power of
the kitchen table.

You Chose

You came to give, you came to share,
and you ventured to our lands when
the rest of your home-bound friends
would not dare.

You came here to better your self
somehow, gain a new perspective to
life, feel the sun kiss your skin, it is
here you discovered that being a
minority in a foreign land is not a sin.

Your purity is what makes these
Arabian sands welcome you. It will
show you parts of herself that even the
locals don't get to see, why, because
you wish to understand her and study
her, by simply letting her be.

Should you choose to stay for long
then know our love for you with each
day will grow strong, for vegetation in
the desert is always welcome.

And should you choose to depart, then
know you will always exist where it
matters most, in our prayers and in our
heart.

No Escape

Stuck in the nauseating Dubai traffic.

A never-ending trail of brake lights
lies ahead of me
As the red snake grows longer with the
passing of time, our small movements
forward grow smaller still, until we're
at a complete stop.

A life time goes by, and we have not
moved.

I can't turn left, I can't turn right
There is no escape, from this awful
plight.

Claustrophobia now hits
The air seems thin and I cannot
breathe
The lack of oxygen now goes to my
brain
Will I ever see my loved ones again?

In this state of hallucination the Toyota emblem on the back of the car in front of me starts to appear as a human face trapped in a circle. A human face I tell you, with two eyes, a nose and an open mouth.

I snap myself out of this disturbing trance and look away, only to see the same face again on my own steering wheel.

The face now speaks to me.

“You look absolutely dreadful mate, roll down your window and catch some breeze.”

Of course I would understand none of what he said, for he would be speaking in Japanese.

Dragon Keeper

You'd never guess by seeing me smile
that I have really bad teeth
Like a well-directed movie whose plot
thickens as the story opens up, you
discover why the movie is rated 18
My teeth are truly a honor scene.

I have more fillings than teeth, more
root canals than Venice
And extractions to me, are a walk in
the park, I have got the art of ignoring
pain down to a T. I'd never see a
dentist if it were up to me.

When I do have to go I brush my teeth
like mad that day
I honestly don't know why I try,
Like an abused second hand car with
its fresh paint job dripping on the
floor,
I know the embarrassing truth will be
discovered, down to the very core.

Now my dentist is a good chap,
friendly, gentle and always smiles, but
I have demonised him. I have named
him the Dragon Keeper.

As I settle into his grey electronically
reclining seat, I feel as if I am on a
sacrificial platform. I look up and
there it is, the dragon. The long necked
floodlight dragon, with its mouth wide
open, it threatens to sink its fangs into
me if I cause its keeper any trouble.

As the dragon keeper works on my
teeth, his masked apprentice holds
down my tongue, as if it were some
wild roaring beast struggling to break
free.

Why oh why does this scenario always
seem to be happening to me?

Zachort

No one is allowed to remember their
suffering, but you

No one is allowed to forget your
suffering, at all.

Your words are that of a widow that
has clung to life by her sorrow.

You simply refuse to let go of your
pain

It's now part of your identity, and is
even a prerequisite for cinematic fame.

Your actions on the other hand, paint a
different picture, one of lies and deceit.

For how could one who has been
wronged so much, impose the same on
another?

Your sense of right and wrong is now
permanently skewed

Your story at best, is that of the
abuser; who was once the abused.

Yoda's Poem

Nine hundred years old I am
Strong has been the Force with me
Trained many Jedi I have
Consumed by the Dark Side many of
them I did sadly see.

But of all life forms in the universe I
did train,
unique the most humans are by far
Flows in them the breath of the Great
Creator of the Force, generous with
them the Force is.

But despite being given so much,
doubtful of themselves these humans
are.

Always with them things cannot be
done
Little belief in their abilities they have
Much fear in them I have always
sensed.

Anakins fall to the Dark Side was
caused by his fear of losing his loved
ones

Even wanted to cheat death did he
Anger clouded his vision it did
For death is a necessary part of life
One without the other; simply cannot
be.

Reminded I am of a Verse of Poetry
Written by a human it was
*"For what is it to die, but to stand in
the sun and melt into the wind."*
Great knowledge of the Force, this
human did have.

Humans, must train themselves to let
go of everything they fear to lose
Contemplate on this they must
Or eternally consumed by the Dark
side they will be.

Original State

The Falcon is the symbol of my
beloved country
Its bravery is renowned and it marvels
all with its aerial skill
and none can forget the sight of its
stooping in for the kill.

But I admire the Falcon not for these
things but for its inspiring sense of
freedom.

The autumn winds carry the Falcon to
our Arabian sands.
Captured by the Bedu, hooded and
then trained for the winter hunting
season to come.

But no matter how strong a bond it
develops with man it never forgets its
original state of freedom to which it
was born in.

The Bedu, of all people, appreciate
what freedom is
And so after the hunting season ends
they unhood their friends and
release them back into the winds.

But should the very same Falcon be
captured again in the following season
It would have to be retrained again, as
if captured anew.

For life in captivity is an unnatural
affair that requires training
Freedom on the other hand is
permanently engraved in the heart,
even when hooded and kept in the
dark.

Patterns

I lay in bed, musing about the sight of
the sunlight against my cupboard
I am stuck by how the wooden grain
pattern resemble human finger prints

The hypnotic maze of patterns tells the
story of uniqueness
For no two, despite the million of our
species, are the same.

The lines are the path that we are set
forth on
The loops are the diversions we choose
to take
The whorls are the lessons we just
couldn't get
and the arches is the glory of what
could have been.

What story do your patterns tell?
What potential uniqueness do you
hold?

Us humans are all made so unique, yet
choose to be so common?

We are designed to be Shepards, but
insist on living as sheep?

Our duty in this world is to discover
our unique path, so that we may claim
our unique glory

Time for me to get up now,
And work on discovering my own
unique story.

The Red & Blue

On November 29th of each year, my people, the native American tribe of the Cheyenne, commemorate the Sand Creek Massacre.

On this day in the year 1864 our women, children and men were slaughtered like animals under the very flag, the red and blue, that was promised to protect us.

They took away our land and our way of life and even carved their faces on our black hill.

Even after all these years our wounds have not fully healed still.

But my heart is consoled by knowing we are not the only ones that suffered under this flag.

The Africans who were bought and
sold as slaves
The Asians and the atomic
emancipation of their braves
The Middle East and the destruction of
the cradle of human civilization
One wonders what will become of this
nation.

If you ask me what I see when I look
upon the Red and Blue
I shall tell you.

That the red is the innocent blood they
shed,
The blue the superior blood they
believe they have.
The stars are the nations that they
killed
And the strips
The bars of ignorance they keep their
own people behind.

For all those who deem me unpatriotic,
I must apologise.

Forgive me for not having anything
pleasant to say, you did after all, leave
my people that way.

Innocent Blood

Al Nakba Al Nakba Al Nakba
When it comes to Palestine that is
what I will always teach my children
to say
Others call it, Israel's Independence
Day.

The displacement of 750,000
Palestinians from their land
Their rights attacked, their history
denied,
The world watched as a nation
disappeared
Every nation that backed it up, is
morally smeared.

They build a nation on the foundations
of innocent blood
No matter how desensitised they make
themselves
this fact will always sting
It is not wise to build a state

On such a slippery thing.

Wretched Lot

Us Arabs have lost the plot
Without the Prophet Mohammed
(PBUH) we truly are a wretched lot.

If you ever doubted the authenticity of
the Prophet Mohammed, as the sealer
of the Prophethood spanning from
Adam (PBUH) to Jesus (PBUH), then
you should look no further than the
Arabs today.

How else, apart from with the full
support of the Divine, could he turn a
group of mindless desert squabblers
into pioneering Philosophers, Medics
and Astronomers, that laid the
foundations for the world's scientific
and artistic advancement?

How could a desolate barbaric land be
turned into an oasis of intelligent
abundance?

The torch was passed from Jesus (PBUH) to Mohammed (PBUH), as Jesus will one day tell you when he returns. To carry on the enlightenment, the journey from darkness to light, to its final frontier. To all tribes of the world both human and Jin, through the darkness of the Arabian peninsulae.

Islam was brought down to the world through the Arabs, not because of the blackness of their eyes but to show you the extent that beings can be elevated to. So imagine what other civilizations would have to gain?

But after the Prophet passed away,
back to their squabbling ways the
Arabs went
Although the truth does remain in the
hearts of a few, the majority went
astray, which is nothing new.

We Arabs have all the money the
world needs, yet we control not a thing
We would rather see our people go
hungry then spend less on buying
some hutchie mama some Bling.
We can't even agree on the time of
day.

We Arabs have well and truly lost the
plot
Without the Prophet Mohammed
(PBUH) in our hearts, we truly are, a
wrenched lot.

A Night in

No busy clubs or shopping malls for
me

A night in is all I wish for.

A pleasant cup of tea mixed with
honey

Music that blends with my mood and
does not intrude

The aroma of a home cooked meal
prepared by the hands of love

A good book or an intriguing DVD
and the love of my life sat next to me.

Orientalist

You came to our lands not to
understand us
But to see how best to lie about us.

You wrote your reviews before you
even boarded the plane
The concept of us having anything to
contribute is not even entertained
For according to you, civilization
belongs to only a chosen few.

Your hearts are either too blind to see
us, for much of our culture can only be
felt, or you were paid enough not to
see at all.

You are like a person who ventures
into the desert to seek wisdom and
complains that it's simply too sunny
Or a man who goes to Scotland and
complains about the rain.

But you are nothing new; we have
been dealing with your kind for quite a
while

You can build your stake of lies
however high, but the simplest draft of
truth will cause it to be no more.

You efforts to me are only a testimony
to our true worth

For if we truly are only worth as little
as you say we are, why then have you
given us so much of your time?

Your materialistic livelihood depends
on the extent of your engineered
distortions

But no matter how much they spend
on you, the truth clarifies for free, even
if it does so in little portions.

Flow of Love

When was it precisely that you fell in
love with me?

Asks my beloved wife.

My honest answer is that I don't know,
I somehow found myself where I am.

I did not fall in love with you,
as much as I flowed in love with you.

That is why our love is strong, for
nature formed it to be
Our love is a Diamond you see.

My love for you is as natural as when
the plants grow
My love for you is as natural as the
rivers flow.

At what point, I do not know
For my love just came from the
universe's flow.

Social Pleasantries

The VIP guests all assembled at the
Ambassador's house
As the dignitaries mingled the
collected sound of pleasantries
hummed in the air.

The social symphony of the room was
altered when a stunning looking young
lady walked in wearing the most
elegant black dress. All heads, male
and female, followed her through the
room as she greeted the dignitaries.

Who is she? Asked someone
"The daughter of the Brazilian
ambassador," came a soft spoken reply
Visiting her family on her University
Spring Break.

As she floated like a butterfly from
one social flower to another

she came across the French Ambassador, who took her hand and kissed it, and with his seductive French accent said "*Mademoiselle*, you look absolutely stunning in that black dress." To which she smiled in reply and said "*Merci monsieur*, you are too kind."

She then greeted the UAE ambassador, who did not extend his hand to her but placed it on his heart, politely bowed and in a deep Arabic tone he said "Young lady, you make that dress look so magnificent on you." To which she blushed.

Every Second Counts

In the hustle and bustle of the concrete
jungle

It is easy to get disconnected with the
pace of nature.

By the command of the Divine, we
were sculptured by nature

It flows through our every vein,
Yet we have strayed so far from our
natural deposition.

With all the time-saving tools we have
designed we seem to be so short of the
very entity it claims to provide. It's as
if we are eternally stuck in the rush
before winter, where every second
desperately counts.

Whatever happened to the other
seasons in our lives?

Where is our summer, our winter, our
spring?

Where are the joys that autumn brings?

Our powers as human beings are
dwarfed by this natural imbalance.
We must always try and flow with
nature's pace.

That way, we can harness the power of
nature herself, and help to better
elevate the human race.

Literature

The word 'Literature' in Arabic is
translated to Adab

Which is derived from the word
meaning Manners and Politeness.

This definition points to the fact that
the true outcome of literature must be
courtesy, decency, refinement and
propriety

Else the efforts are not sincere or just
for show.

I find this fact most amusing,
For I often meet those who have read
mountains of books, and yet not even a
trace of decorum can be found in them.

Indeed most so called literates now-a-
days grow more pompous and arrogant
with the completion of each book, the
purpose of their literacy quest, they
have very much misunderstood.

Colour Blind

I stand in front of a Fire hydrant and
ponder.

It's colourful and bright, and yet not
noticed

Its passed by every day and yet not
remembered

But when things go wrong, it's the first
port of call.

When called to action

The fire hydrant

Forgives your past negligence.

And does its duty with pride

Only to be forgotten again with the
passing of dangers tide.

It reminds me of God,

For despite Gods brightly coloured
signs we only

Sincerely turn to God when things get
out of control

Then we pray like mad, get what we
want, and continue on with our lives as
if nothing happened. Colour blind.

Maktoub

A Bedouin man who is in desperate need of adventure wakes up one day and tells his wife he needs to travel the world.

“If I don’t do it now I will never know peace, there is more to life than just our desert ways.”

A Bedouin woman knows that a man’s heart is never truly her own unless it seeks out its Maktoub calling. So she agreed and wished him farewell.

For years the man traveled, he crossed mountains, valleys, rivers, seas and conversed with a multitude of different faces, races and tongues.

He became a clever merchant, taking products from one land and selling them in another. He soon became rich

enough to go back home and live with
his family like a king.

On his way back home he encountered
a passing traveller who he invited to
camp with him. To show kindness to a
travelling stranger is the essence of
Bedouin hospitality after all. In their
discussions he discovers that the man
was also a merchant.

“What merchandise do you deal in?”
Asked the host to his guest.

“Advice and wisdom,” came the reply.

The Bedouin Merchant laughed out
loud and said,
“Advice and wisdom indeed, a
commodity that is neither seen nor felt.
Why you might as well sell air!”

My advice will save your life, dear generous host, how much do you value that commodity then?

Impressed by the man's answer he agreed to buy one piece of advice at an agreed price.

"Go to bed with regret in your heart but never with vengeance," came the advice.

"Is that it? I give you enough money to buy a whole herd of cattle and you give me regret and vengeance! You are a swindler, I would have preferred you sell me air, for at least it would help me breathe."

In the morning the two merchants headed their separate ways. The Bedouin man reached his home at nightfall, only to find his wife in bed

asleep embarrassing a long-haired
male.

In his rage he reached for his Khanjar and was about to murder both lovers in their sleep, when the words of the purchased advice came suddenly back to his mind. "Go to be with regret in your heart but never with vengeance."

On that he retreated and went to bed near a tree a few meters away from his tent. That night his heart filled with self-mutilating regret. Regret that he had ever dreamed of leaving his family, regret that he did not kill them both, regret that his eyes were strong enough to see what he had seen.

When daylight broke he was awoken by his wife, she embraced him with tearful eyes and said,
"How I have missed you my love, not a day went by did I not cry for your

return. You must see how your son has
grown, why he is even vowed never to
cut his hair until you came back
home.”

Conformity

I have given up conformity
I no longer care to fit in
Not from spite. Hatred or anger
But because conformity for me is a sin.

A disappoint to my family I may be
They after all only want what's best
for me
But despite my respect and love for
them, I cannot help but break free.

Break free from the chains of social
acceptance
Break free from this Emarati palace
cage I am in.

Why should I be content with simply
being an Emarati?
Why am I labeled only as such?

I often feel like a Bonsai Tree, clipped
and dwarf for the sake of someone
else's convenience
But I was not bom to be a bonsai, for I
am a Nobel palm tree.

I want to grow, I want to reach for the
sky, I want to shade and feed those
who nurtured me from nursery. I want
to break free from my palace cage and
take my place on a world stage.

I do not conform to rebel, but rather, in
order to excel.

Cattle Class

Where the roar of the engine is part of
the Decor

Where no matter how big you are, the
seats are one size fits all.

On an overnight flight, somewhere
over the Black Sea

I stand up to go to the loo, the blood
rushing back to my legs reminds them
of their true purpose.

I look down the aisle and see a
gauntlet of sleeping zombies and
vampires many of them asleep with
mouths wide open.

I venture down the gauntlet as if I am a
tight wire artist, avoiding their
stretched legs, titled heads and
protruding elbows. The smell of stale
fart hovers in the air.

Some say it doesn't matter if you
travel economy or business; you all get
to your destination just as fast. I say
screw that, if I had the dosh, I'd
always travel first class.

Human Concerto

Humanity at its best, is often seen on
the sports field

Put two different ideologies on the
same side and watch them fully
support each other for the benefit of
their team.

In their celebration dance watch a
European hug an African, watch a
Muslim embrace a Christian.

This concerto of team spirit is
contagious. It spills into the spectators.

Watch them closely when an
immigrant scores for their team. They
say “we scored”, “our team won”, “our
player scored”.

But when the referee blows the final
whistle, back to our tribal ways we go.
Humanity descends to basic animal

instinct. A devolution that saddens my
heart.

But for those moments of suspended
human glory, I am forever grateful.
They quench my thirst for hope of a
better tomorrow.

If we all lived thinking of the benefit
of our human team, this world would
be nothing short of a wonderful dream.

Scrap Yard

I see it all around me
Expired American TV sold to us a
prime
Designer clothes that are last year's
fashion
Management that wouldn't even be
trusted to make a cup of tea in their
own country
Art performances that would make
professional critics chum.

Is this our lot in the global economy?
Is this a taste of what is to come?

I asked an international renowned
trend setter why this was the case?
why are we the dumping ground of the
world's scraps?

He smiled in reply and this is what he
had to say:

“Son, copper will always shine
amongst hay.”

Magnificent Beauties

African skin blended with Arabian
eyes
Colourful Dishdashs and Geometric
Kimas
Majestic Turbans and simplistically
elegant sandals.

Roads chiseled through ancient dark
brown mountains
Homes built on steep hills
Smiles as sweet as their infamous
Halwas.

Polished Khanjars that shine so bright
Although I am a proud Emarati,
one simply cannot ignore
The magnificent beauties that surround
a fellow Omani.

What Once Was

What was once called the mother of a
million palm trees is now but
A collection of a few with severed
heads.

Its sweet water has run dry, leaving
behind bitterness
Its people are thirsty
and the land mourns itself.

For 34 days we all shamefully did
nothing but watch
As they unjustly bombarded the South
of Lebanon into oblivion
Leaving behind illegal cluster bombs
for their little children.

For 34 days our nakedness was
exposed for all to see.

The military might we celebrate every
year in pompous fashion
didn't even dare stretch a finger.

Some of us couldn't even support them
with silence, but cheered the so called
opposition with pom poms and told
them to finish off the job.

Oh the shame is just too much for me
to bear . . . how low can we sink, even
barrels have ends!

But God does not for sack those that
fight for their honour, for the
champions of the south beat them
again, brought down the so called
strongest army in the lands, the one
which we are all brain washed to
believe was not even worth fighting,
and for a second time.

A Western journalist described the
whole episode as being like a boxing
match between a light weight and a
heavy weight, if after 12 rounds the
light weight still stands then no matter
what the score cards say the light
weight had won.

I mentioned this to a Christian
Lebanese brother of mine and he said,
it is exactly that and more, this victory
we must always savor, for the score
cards were also in our favour.

Maestro

Have you ever seen a real belly
dancer?
Not a tourist gimmick but the real
thing.

A young athletic woman submerged in
her physical prime.

Her costume defies gravity
It is hard for you to see where it begins
but you will be glad to see where it
ends.

The beads around her peach like
behind embrace her with ecstasy
As they break out in song with every
step she takes.

As she walks on stage her outfit will
tease you with flashes of skin
A rhythmic glimpse at the forbidden.

When she begins her dance the beads
submit to her complete demands as she
orchestrates a symphony that is
composed to take you away.

To transport you to a private royal
suite where there exists only two, you
the king, and she the enthusiastic
subject.

This is how the Arabs fell, this is the
Achilles heel they insist on being hung
by.

Homes have crumbled, marriages have
plummeted, politicians have been
made to resign and governments have
fallen with each side thrust of her hip.

Granting Wish

There was once a good man who stood up for high moral principles even when it was not popular to do so.

The corrupt king at the time soon discovered about this man's audacity and sent a tyrant army captain to sort him out.

The Captain stole the good man's belongings and burnt his house down to the ground leaving his children crying in horror.

The days past and the corrupt king was toppled.

The new king had heard of the good man's plight and made him an honoured Wazeer that always stood by his side.

As the army generals came in to swear
allegiance to the new king, in walked
the tyrant captain.

The new king had heard of this
captain's ill deeds and was angry at his
presence, the good man noticed this
and whispered in his ear "Your
majesty, don't let your anger cloud
your judgment, this man was only
following his orders at the time. I beg
you for my sake, forgive him for what
he did, for my heart holds nothing
against him."

The captain saw this whisper with
clarity and as his turn came to give his
oath
he said onto the king.

"Your majesty, I make you swear by
the Almighty not believe a word this
man tells you about me, nor must you
act on anything he says."

The king's eyes widened with anger
and rage.

“Very well Captain, I will grant you
your wish. Guards, take this man to the
Gallows.”

Visiting Alien

Sitting in a Cafe in Dubai
I am surrounded by foreigners
Foreign kids, foreign women, foreign
men, foreign youth, foreign cuisine
and foreign decor.

Sitting here in my Khandoor with my
Hijabed wife I feel like a visiting alien
The crowd look at us as if to ask: What
are you doing here?

I feel like that Arabian wolf they found
in that real estate development
they built out in the desert.

The press made such a fuss over the
captured wolf. How did it get there,
where did it come from, and why was
it living so near?

If the Wolf could speak I am sure it
would have replied:

“This is my home, I have been here
for over a thousand years.
You ask me why I am so near! Well I
ask you in reply
‘What the hell are YOU doing here?’

Indecent Exposure

A shirtless man walks home from the
community swimming pool.

A lady does her grocery shopping in
her gym outfit.

A half naked tourist with a visible G
sting makes her way through the old
part of town.

A typical Dubai day I hear many of
you say.

Indecent exposure is relative,
Relative to the culture you preside in
Relative to the laws you live under.

I am not here to tell you what you
should or should not wear.
But don't blame anyone if people stop,
point and stare.

If you were to ask me for guidance on what to wear this is what I would say:

“Think business conservative when in public.”

Don't wear anything too tight or too transparent; make sure at all times you cover your shoulders and knees.

And ladies, no matter how good looking you think they are,
Don't display your tits or ass please.

Reawaken

When I was a student in the UK
I used to marvel at those who read for
pleasure
Sat at the bus stops, railways stations
or on the beach with a fat book in their
hands.

Reading to me was a forced activity
A requirement to pass an exam.

I tried to join in this reading trend
I got myself a big fat book and started
to read
But no matter how many times tried, I
could never finish it
It was just too long and the writing far
too small.

A friend suggested that I
choose a topic I liked and read about
it. Reading he said was a vehicle that
got you somewhere, not a destination

you arrive at. He recommended that I should start with something short and sweet and then allow my love for the subject matter take me deep.

So I took my friend's advice and chose a topic I fancied. I read booklets first and then moved on to short stories. I even made my way through a whole 450 page novel.

Now I read all the time, I always have a book by my side and can't image how others don't like to read.

Reading is so important; it feeds our soul, and expands our mind.

We Arabs must reawaken our passion
for reading
for

A nation that does not read is one that
will never succeed.

After all
The very first word to be brought
down to the Prophet Mohamed was
“Read”.

Hospitality

When you come to our land
You can buy your visa at the airport
like a coupon
You can drink you alcohol and eat
your swine - ■
You can dress in whatever way you
see as fine
You can even gain access to places
where I cannot.
You can buy into our businesses with
great ease, but when we wish to buy
into yours it's a security threat, despite
our history of moving mountains for
you.

But when I go to your country, things
are not quite the same
I have to stand in long queues and
jump circles just to apply for a visa
If I gain entry I struggle to find a Halal
mouth full to eat. On top of all that my

chosen attire is viewed with much
negative heat.

It is clear to me now that your
definition of Freedom and Hospitality
is different to our own. We see them as
being basic rights, where as you view
them as special privileges.

Africa, My Love

African acappella always moves me
My mind does not understand the
words they say
But my heart is touched and my eyes
tear anyway.

Africa has been so wronged
and yet it still manages to smile, laugh
and dance.

Africa is so poor and yet it has more
love than we do Oil.

Africa brings out emotions in me that
are as intense as
its ancient blood red soil.

Animal Lover

We humans can show so much love to
animals

Yet when it comes to our fellow
humans we are so cruel

A human who mis-places their
humanity is such a fool.

Maximum Potential

The art of growing has nothing to with
size

Developing to your own maximum
potential is the grandest prize.

Remember

Remember, in this canvas called life,
the paint brush is always in your hand.

Dare to See

I feel, hear and see poetry all around
me

For I am a poet in all that I do
And if you dare to see, I'll even show
you the poetry in you.

Dying Breed

Poetry is simply a message from your
heart. Is it any wonder then that poets
are a dying breed?

Eternal Debt

Two women I will never be able to
repay my debt to no matter how much
I obtain in life.

My beloved mother, and my cherished
wife.

To Fight

To fight and win is fortunate
To fight and lose is honour
To not fight and win, fame
To not fight and lose is great shame.

To The Bone

Europe is my birth
Asia is my home
Africa is my love
I am an afeuroasian to the bone.

Distinct Greatness

Your fears are the protruding Icebergs
of your distinct greatness as a human
being

Say all the self-improvement books I
have read

If that bothers you, I'd read fantasy
books instead.

Fujairah

The Arabian brown mountains
Together with the Kaki coloured
umbrella tree
Contrast magnificently with the Indian
blue Sea.

Down To Earth

Seven points of contact to the ground
Placing your forehead down to earth
Not forgetting that without the Glory
of God
that is all you'd be worth.

Thrown Of Love

Sat on the thrown of love
Face to face, at the perfect angle
Back is arched like an extended bow
Releasing a bulls eye hit.

Shaka, you might have reinvented war
And caused much blood to shed
But you also gave the world
A brilliant substitute for making love
in bed.

Sticks & Stones

I know some of you call us rag heads
Others from your pedigree also refer to
us as penguins
I even hear you call our women
garbage bags!

You travel away from you rainy lands
and carry with you the weather in your
souls
The dark clouds impair your vision
and the cold winds blow your minds
away.

We, however, see you under the clear
sky and sunny conditions
And we have no name for what we
see.

We simply feel sorry for thee.

Where Love Resides

“I do love you, you know, I may not
say it often but I do,”
said a wife to her husband.

The husband replied:

“Your love need not be said in words

For I see it in your walk, your smiles
and in your eyes

That is where love should always
reside.”

Be Wary

Bruce Banner turns into the Incredible
Green Hulk when he gets angry
Good men do the same, but only when
they are hungry.

The Arab Proverb says:
Be wary of a bad man when his
stomach is full
And be wary of a good man when his
stomach is empty.

A bad man will dish out his badness
only when his stomach is full,
Full of money, full of power or fame
Until then he will pass himself off as
being tame.

A good man however is forever
consuming his energy in being good
For it is hard work being good
So when his stomach is empty he lacks
the energy to be as he should.

Light of Hope

In the middle of a dark stormy sea
A rotating beam of light from a
lighthouse is hope to the hopeless.

Hope that the nightmare will soon end
Hope that normality will be restored.

The Storms in life are many
In this modern Dark Age we all need
the light of hope.

Humans that can enlighten have a
moral duty to
If not with a lighthouse, then
Even a flickering candle will do.

Ghaf Tree

Ever green in desolate lands
Its branches cascade down in stillness
and its umbrella shade protects
indiscriminately.

Its near extinction is an embracement
to ourselves, our culture and traditions
Forsaking a loyal friend was never our
way.

Yet despite our trespasses, the Ghaf
tree remains pure to its origin
It still shares its centurial wisdom with
all who care to listen.

Its fate is tied with our Emarati
destiny.

We must therefore advance as a
nation, in this modern age, with our
cultural roots buried firmly deep down
into the soils of our souls

We must reach for the sky only after
our foundations are strong.

This message to our development is
key

That is why, we must save the Ghaf
tree.

Timeless

At what point does something turn into
a classic.

A timeless item that never goes out of
fashion.

Is it to do with its ingenious design?
Or is it to do with man's reluctance to
change?

No matter how digital or wireless we
become many of us still adore
fountain pens, well polished leather
shoes, a hand tailored suite, an analog
watch, and a well bound book.

At what point did all these get ceiled
from the vacuum of time?

Abya Flirt

Her abya is wide open as she struts
through the aisle

Like a super hero's cape it flaps
behind her through the air

Her tight blue jeans and her glittering
belt buckle are on show.

Her hair flirts with her loose hijab
Her heavy make up competes with the
nature's gifts.

Traditionalist all look at her and stare
Thinking, she might as well be bare.

Worship

The pursuit of soul cleaning
knowledge is to me the holiest worship
You can read the Quran all day, pray
until your knees bleed, but if you do
all that without knowledge, what's it
truly worth?

You must know what you worship and
why. Otherwise you're just playing a
guessing game.

Imam Ali once said, one hour of
thinking is worth more than a thousand
years of worship without.

The End

Glossary of Arabic Terminology

Nijis: Unclean

Saluki: Arabic Hound Dog

Oud: Arabic guitar aka Lute

Oudist: A player of the Oud

Abay: Black overcoat worn by women

Henna: Temporary body Art

Zachrot: Hebrew for Remembering

Al Nakba: The catastrophe

PBUH: Peace Be Upon Him

Maktoub: Written Destiny

Khanjar: Arabic Cured Knife

Emarati: A national of the UAE

Dishdasha: Traditional Omani national dress for men

Kima: Traditional Omani Head Wear

Halwa: Traditional Arabic Sweet

Wazeer: Minister

Khandoorah: Traditional UAE national dress for men.

Hijab: Head Vale

Halal: Meat that has been slaughtered to Islamic specifications

Ghaf: Indigenous tree to the UAE

AKA Prosopi Cineraria

*“For what is it to die, but to stand in
the sun and melt into the wind.”*

Kahlil Gibran

I Often Wonder is the second poetry collection from Edinburgh born UAE national Wael Al-Sayegh. Find within its pages the unique fusion and jarring of modern-day Eastern and Western culture that the poet is now renowned for after the success of his debut release, 'A Poet's Oud'. Prepare for an even more poignant, resonant and reflective ride as you journey through political and social life with this challenging minds' eye.

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