

Name: Saber\*

The Charge: Egyptian

Age: The youngest of my generation inspite of the white hair which falls in plaits from my forehead to below my waist.

Profession: I have inherited from my ancestors and the centuries the making of civilization, beauty and life.

Complexion: The colour of wheat

Form: Straight as a sword

Hair: Coarser than hay

Colour of eyes: Deep black

Nose: Like a tensed horse

Mouth: Static and when I tried to move it this is what happened.

Place of birth: In any dark room under the sky and on the soil of Egypt,  
In any house between the palm trees  
Wherever the Nile flows as long as it is not a mansion.

Verdict: For seven thousand years I have remained a prisoner  
Crushing the stones between my teeth from frustration  
And I sleep sad.

Remarks: If you ask me why my imprisonment has been so long  
I'll tell you, its because I'm good-hearted but sharp and satirical  
I didn't commit any offence against the law  
Because I'm afraid and the law holds its sword in its hand.  
If you ask the secret police about me at any time  
You will hear and understand my story from A to Z.  
My name : Patient under all misfortunes, like Job, like a fool;  
Carrying heavy loads and waiting is my fate.  
I sink in rivers of sweat all day long,  
At night I collect my sadness and lie over it,  
Do you know why?

\*Saber: An Egyptian name meaning he who is patient.

الاسم : صباير  
 التهمة : مصري  
 السن : أصغر أهل عصري  
 رغم أنسراة الشيب فضفاير  
 فضفاير منه شوشى لالتت  
 مصري .  
 المهنة : وارت عمه مبرودي ولزمان صنع الحضارة  
 ولنضاره ولأفان  
 البشرة : قمحى  
 القدر : رضى  
 الشعر : أخشن من الدريس  
 لون العيون : أسود غطيس  
 لثفت : نافر كالحصان  
 الفم : ثابت فى الماء ولما حيت أحرکه  
 عمه مطرحه كانه إلى كانه  
 بهمة الميلاز : فى أى أورة مضامه  
 تحت السماء على أرض مصر  
 فى أى دار وسط النجيل  
 مطرح مايجرى النيل  
 مادام مايلوتش قصر  
 الحكم : من سبحة آلاف سنه  
 وأنا راقد سجين  
 ألجن على خبراسى الحجر  
 من الضجر وأبان حزين  
 ملحوظه : سألنى سائل جيسك طالت وليه ؟  
 لى طيب وأبن تلت وأبن آه  
 ما فيش مخالفه رابنها ضد القانون  
 لى خايف ولقانونه سيفه فى ايديه  
 تال عليه المخبرين فى أى حين  
 سمع وتفهم قصتى ألف رياه  
 الاسم صباير على البلاد أوب حماد  
 جيل الحمول من قمنى ولأنتظار  
 أعروه فى أنهار العرق طول النهار  
 وألمه لى المساء وأقبح عليه  
 عرفت ليه ؟

If the sun sank in a sea of fog,  
And a wave of darkness unfurled over the world,  
And sight died in the eyes and mind,  
And the road got lost in a labyrinth,  
You who are living and searching and can understand,  
There is no guide but the eyes of the words.

١٠٢. عيون اللام  
إذا الشمس غرقت في بحر الغمام  
ومرت على الدنيا موجة ظلام  
ومات البصر في العيون والبصائر  
وغاب الطريق في الخطوط والبراير  
يا ساير يا داير يا أبو المفهوميه  
ما فينش لك دليل غير عيون اللام

## 2. UNCOMPROMISING WORDS

Uncompromising words are like a sword  
They cut where they pass.  
Flattery is deceiving,  
Easy, comfortable but harmful.  
And the honest word is a debt that the free man must pay.

٢٠٢. صر اللام  
صر اللام ذي طسام يقطع كلام ما يبر  
أما المدبج سهل ومرح يخج للنا بيض  
ولكلمه دين من غير ابريم بس لوفى على امر

\*This poem, written by Negm in the 1960's, was put to music in 1973. It is the song with which Sheikh Imam always starts when he sings in public.

Oh Palestinians, the arms dealers have imposed Zionism  
 on you,  
 And killed your pigeons on your roofs.  
 Oh Palestinians, I want to travel to your country  
 With my fury in my hands and let my hands come down  
 with yours,  
 On the head of the snake and end the rule of

Oh Palestinians, your exile has been too long  
 And your desert groans from refugees and victims  
 And your land longs for its peasants to farm it,  
 And revolution is the aim and victory is your first step.

Oh Palestinians, revolution is certain,  
 By the gun we will impose our new life,  
 And however long the road looks  
 Lengthening our steps is the only solution.

Oh Palestinians, Vietnam is good news for you,  
 It is coming out in victory from under a hundred  
 thousand air-raids,  
 And the candle is still alight and the Americans are  
 loosing  
 And going home confused - we wish you a similar  
 victory.

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\* Mongolian war leader

يا فلسطينيا والشرقاني رحالوا  
 يا الصهيونيون قتل حمامكوا ان حمامكوا  
 يا فلسطينيا وانا بدي اسافر حردا لو  
 ناري في اديتي واديتي تنزل معالو  
 على راس الحيا وتموت شريبتك هو لاكو

يا فلسطينيا واخرابك طالت كفاريه  
 ولبصرا انت ام اللاحقين والضحايا  
 والذين كنت للفلاحين ولسقاي  
 ولبثوره غماريه ولبصير اول خطالكو

يا فلسطينيا والثورة هي اذكرك  
 بالشرقية نفض حماننا الحديده  
 والسكه متهما طالت وبنات بعديده  
 صد الظاوي هو اللي يسعد عاكوا

يا فلسطينيا قيننا عليكوا البشاره  
 بالظهور طالعاه من تحت بيت الف غارة  
 والشمعك والعد والفر كانه الحساره  
 راجع حماره عقبال ما حصل حردا لو

Build your mansions in our fields  
 From our sweat and the work of our hands,  
 And your bars beside our factories  
 And prisons in place of our gardens,  
 And release your dogs in the streets  
 And close your cells on us,  
 And disturb our sleep in our beds,  
 We have slept long enough.  
 And overload us with pain,  
 We are already full of sufferings.  
 And we know who is the cause of our pains,  
 And we know and we went and we met  
 Workers, peasants and students  
 Our time has come and we have started,  
 We are following a road that has no return,  
 And victory has come closer to our eyes  
 And victory has come closer to our hands.

\*This poem was written by Negm in prison in January 1973. It has become one of the major songs of the Egyptian student movement.

تشيير تمسوك مع المزارع  
 من كدنا وعمل إيرينا  
 والخمارات جنب المصانع  
 والسجون مطرح الجنين  
 والهلك للابك في الشوارع  
 وأقل زنازينك علينا  
 رقل نوحنا في المضاجع  
 ادرى احنا فما ما اثنتها  
 واثقل علينا بالمواجع  
 احنا ائوجعنا والتفينا  
 وعرفنا مين سبب جراحنا  
 وعرفنا روحنا والتفينا  
 عمال وفلاحين ولهبك  
 دفت ساعتنا وابتدنا  
 نسللك لهريق مالهنس راجع  
 والنصر قرب من عينينا  
 والنصر اقرب من إيرينا

4. LET DOWN THE HOD

Let down the hod beside the others,  
 Sit down Hofny\*and light a cigarette.  
 Think a little about this life,  
 What's the story, what's the problem?

Since my childhood I've been working hard,  
 And what have I eaten but Bosara\*\*  
 I've gone into alleys inside alleys,  
 And in each alley I've raised a building.  
 Among the shovels I'm a builder and labourer,  
 But the contractor has eaten my share very cleverly,  
 He didn't leave me a morsel or a bite I could eat  
 without humiliation.  
 And life is very bitter, most bitter.

\*Hofny; Common Upper Egyptian name

\*\* Bosara: a food of the poor

ب. ع. دي الشيكارة  
 دي الشيكارة جنب الشيكارة  
 وأقعد يا حفتي ودعلك حجارة  
 فكر تفويك في العيشة ده  
 ايه القضية ايه العجابه؟  
 من صغر سني شقيان لكني  
 مالط سني غير البصارة  
 ودخلت حارة من جوه حاره  
 وفي كل حاره عليت عمارة  
 وسط المعاول بناو منهاول  
 بس المقاول لكني بتشطاره  
 ولا خلى سدرة ولا لفته حره  
 والعيشة حره آخر صاره

Welcome Papa Nixon,  
You and your Watergate,  
The Sultans of Fool\* and Oil have made great celebrations  
for you  
They've carpeted you the widest road from Ras-el-Teen\*\*  
to Mecca  
And from there you pop over to Acca\*\*\*  
And they say you've been on the Moslem pilgrimage.  
Why not, its a circus,  
God Bless You, you people of the Prophet.

On the day of your arrival your agents prepared an  
amazing exorcism ceremony for you  
In which prostitutes, pimps and faggots danced,  
And the exorcist was leading the Kodia\*\*\*\*  
And the other participants were spiders, busy weaving in  
accordance with the great honour due you.

They invited you and said  
Come on, and eat Eastern sweets,  
And because you are so trivial  
You believed that we were an easy prey.  
You arrived, already disgraced, so they made you a big  
wedding party - you trivial, sudden groom  
Bring your face closer so we can spit on it -  
A gift from the Egyptian people.

Listen to my words so that they will remain with you  
Although you are not going to survive,  
I am not going to say welcome  
Or come, or don't come,  
But they say that Egyptian flesh cuts where it passes  
And this is the effect of eating Koshari\*\*\*\*\*  
And blighted fool, with oil.  
Oh, its a circus.  
God Bless You, you people of the Prophet.

\*Fool; Beans. The food of the Egyptian poor.

\*\*Ras-el-Teen; The presidential summer palace close  
to Alexandria

\*\*\*Acca; A city in occupied Palestine

\*\*\*\*Kodia: This is an allusion to the Egyptian  
countryside ceremony of "Zar" in which evil  
spirits are exorcised. The Kodia is the  
name for the people who form circles and  
shake their heads and bodies during the  
ceremony.

\*\*\*\*\*Koshari: Another food of the poor, made from  
rice and lentils.

تشرفت يا نيكسون بلدا  
يا بناع الودت رحيت  
عملوا لك قيمه وسيمما  
سلطه طين الفول والزيت  
فرسوا لك اوسع سلكه  
من راس التين على مملكه  
وهناك تنفذ على علكه  
ويقولوا عليك حجيت  
ما هو مولد ساين راي  
شنى الله يا صاحب البيت

جواسيسك يوم تشرنقك  
على كيفك نصبروا الزاد  
تتفصح فيه الموسس  
والفاج والهندار  
والشيخ شههورش رالكب  
ع الكوريا وهات يا موالكب  
ولواقى الزوجه عنالكب  
سا حبين على حسب البيت

عزموك فقالوا تحالى  
تال بلتون وهريسه  
قصت لذك نهيف  
صدقت ان احنا فريسه  
طبيت لطقوك بالزوجه  
يا عريس الخفله يا خفله  
هات وشك خذلك تفاه  
شوبش سر صاحب البيت

خذ منى كلام يقين لك  
ولو اناك مش حتجيش  
لا حقول اهلنا ولد جهلك  
ولا تبجي ولد ما تجيش  
يقولوا اللحم المصرى  
مطبخ ما بيسرى بيهورى  
وده من تاثير الكورى  
والفول والسوس ابوزيت  
والا مولد ساين راي  
شنى صاحب البيت

A, B, C,  
Open the book and hold the pencil  
Write as it is pronounced  
Saigon has fallen and they have raised the flag.

The sun of this day has risen full of songs,  
The more we hear them the more we love them.  
The sun of this day has risen like a fire  
To cleanse the wound and sharpen the pencil.

Saigon has returned to the revolutionaries,  
Above the blood and under the fire.  
They worked hard, so they deserved victory.  
They planted, so they harvested,  
But we, in Egypt, have held out our hand to the  
estate-agent,  
And all that the estate-agent said and the big boss has  
repeated  
Has been read from back to front and front to back by  
the exploiting class  
And they were shouting nonsense  
About America and the frightening power of America  
They claimed that the phantoms were carrying death  
But death has been brought down with the American flag.  
God damn you, you stupid backward class,  
You act like smart alics but you bring disgrace,  
You bought talkers and writers and estate-agents and  
the big boss.

Saigon is a jewel to the revolutionaries  
It has returned free to the free people.  
Tomorrow we will hear many songs,  
Pay attention and document you writer and record in  
your paper that Egypt is full of longings;  
Egypt is the bride and tomorrow is the groom,  
And the lovers, we are the lovers.  
In us and by us and for us is the revolution.  
We are the revolution and Egypt is the people.  
The past is in us and the present is by us,  
And the future is the people,  
All the people.

أجد هوز حطبي للمن  
أفتح صفيحة وأمسك قلم  
أكتب زي الناس ما يتلوق  
سقطت سايجون رفحوا العلم  
طلعت شمس اليوم ده أغاف  
كل ما نسمع نعيش ثاق  
طلعت شمس اليوم ده حريقه  
تكون المرح وتبري القلم  
سايجون عادت للثوار  
فوق الدم وحت النار  
جروا فوجدوا... زرعوا فصدوا  
وأحنا إيدنا للسمسار  
واللي قالوه السمسار جيب  
واللي حاكاه السمسار دار  
طافروه القرا ونجيب  
بالمسعد والمنار  
هتس ونس بخرم الصوت  
عن أمريكا وهول أمريكا  
زعموا الفانتوم شابل صوت  
سقط المون بول أمريكا  
جتلوا فضيحة ياطيفه سطيده  
وعاملك فضيحة وجايبه الحار  
كنتجيه وفصيحجه  
وسمسار جيب وسمسار دار  
سايجون دزه ياتوار  
رجعت حرة للأحرار  
دا أحنا حنصيح بكره أغاف  
أسمع وأحفظ بالتباف  
وأثبت عندك في الأوراق  
مهز بتنفضع بالشواق  
مهز عروسك وبكره عريس  
والعشاق أحنا العشاق  
فينا وبيننا ولينا الثورة  
أحنا الثورة وهن الناس  
فينا الماضى وبيننا الحاضر  
والمتقبل لهما الناس  
كل الناس

The lovers are gathered in the Citidal prison\*  
 The lovers are gathered in Bab El Khalk\*\*  
 And the sun is a song rising from the cells  
 And Egypt is a song rising from the throat,  
 The lovers are gathered in the cells,  
 However long the imprisonment and oppression last,  
 However the vulgar brutality of the prison guards increase,  
 Who can imprison Egypt for one hour?

They are gathered and passion is a fire in the blood.  
 A fire that burns hunger and tears and sadness,  
 A fire that burns when we step forward,  
 When the hands reach forward to collect the flesh.  
 And the flesh is scattered on the sands of Sinai,  
 And lies are holding back our hands.  
 The boots of the enemy are imbedded in the flesh of my earth,  
 And lies have formed nests of secret police at my door  
 And the secret police are coming out like rabid dogs  
 Gathering the lovers in the cells.  
 However long the imprisonment and oppression last  
 However the vulgar brutality of the prison guards increase  
 Who can imprison Egypt for one hour?

Egypt, the daylight that sends us out into the squares,  
 Egypt, the weeping, Egypt the singing and the mud.  
 Egypt, the suns rising from the cells,  
 Rising and blossoming gardens in our blood.  
 Egypt is the blossoming gardens, who will harvest them?  
 Egypt, the gardens, is for he who will raise her sword.  
 However long the imprisonment and oppression last  
 However the vulgar brutablity of the prison guards increase  
 Who can imprison Egypt for one hour?

\* and \*\* State prisons for political prisoners

يتجمعوا العشاق في سجون الظلم  
 يتجمعوا العشاق في باب الخلق  
 والشمس غنوه من الزنزين طالع  
 ومصر غنوه مفرقة في الخلق  
 يتجمعوا العشاق في الزنزين  
 مهما يطول السجن مهما القهر  
 مهما يزيد الفجر بالسجانة  
 من الى يقدر ساعة يجسد مصر

يتجمعوا والعشق نار في الدماء  
 نار تحرق الجوع والروع والهجم  
 نار تجعل لما القتم ينضم  
 لما اليداري تفور تلم اللحم  
 واللحم منظور في رمله صينا  
 والكذب يحجز على ايدنا  
 قدم لعدو فخار سلك في كرم ترابي  
 والكذب عشق حزين على بابي  
 المحزين خا حبيبه كلون وعرائه  
 يتجمعوا العابرين في الزنزين  
 مهما يطول السجن مهما القهر  
 مهما يزيد الفجر بالسجانة  
 من الى يقدر ساعة يجسد مصر

مصر النهار ليلقنا في الميادين  
 مصر البكا مصر الخنى ولطين  
 مصر الشموس الهلك من الزنزين  
 هالك وطرحا في دفا باسيه  
 مصر الجنان طارحه عين نطقه؟  
 مصر الجنان للي يرنح سيفها

مهما يطول السجن مهما القهر  
 مهما يزيد الفجر بالسجانة  
 من الى يقدر ساعة يجسد مصر

مهما يطول السجن مهما القهر  
 مهما يزيد الفجر بالسجانة  
 من الى يقدر ساعة يجسد مصر