

# Samad Vurgun

Azerbaijan

I've walked these mountains again and again,  
Passed by the springs bright-eyed as cranes,  
And caught the distant plashing strain  
Where quiet Araks' waters moved:  
Here love and friends I've truly proved.

Men know that you are mine by birth: '  
My nest, my refuge, and my hearth,  
My mother, native land, dear earth!  
Sever soul and body?? Death but can.  
O Azerbaijan, my Azerbaijan!

As mother to me, as child to you?  
Such is the bond we ever knew:  
I'd come back wherever I flew,  
For you are my people, you? **my nest,**  
My native birthplace ever blest.

When I'm away, your face unseen,  
When times and forces intervene,  
My hair is touched with silver sheen?  
For months and years press age on me:  
My land, don't blame your absentee.

Your mountain crests are topped with snow,  
And cloud? **a shawl of fleecy flow,**  
Your past is greater than we know.  
Your age from everyone obscured,  
And none may guess what you've endured.

Evil tongues spread defamation?  
You lived through years of dark privation.  
Still, generation to generation  
Your fame lives on: a benison  
To happy daughter, happy son.

Khazar the sea you border on  
"Where floats the legendary swan...  
My day-dreams sweep me swiftly on  
To Mugan Lowland, on to Miell:  
A long- life road? **half**-done, I feel.

The mountain ranges, valley sweep,  
Gladden the heart till it could weep...

Glimpse of startled fawn and chamois leap?  
How much beauty on which to gaze?  
Pastures cool and steppes ablaze.

Cross the mountains, over steppe-land,  
Or through Astar, Lenkoran?  
From African and Indian strand  
Birds fly to visit, with us pause,  
Freed from oppressive grasping claws.

It's here the yellow lemons grow,  
The heavy branches weighting low.  
Up in the mountains, white the snow  
And deep from winter's opulence:  
Since Creation? **a true defense.**

Lenkoran is a dazzle of flowers,  
Refreshed by the springtime showers,  
Clustering on beds and bowers,  
My motherland's delightful daughter,  
Bordered on by Khazar's water.

The golden wheat we grow? **our bread,**  
Our cotton? **wealth of snowy heads;**  
Squeeze the juice from grapes wine-red?  
Before you breakfast, drain a cup  
And feel your spirit surging up,

In Khazakh mount, and give free rein,  
Lean well over the horse's mane,  
A sweating gallop then maintain:  
On reaching mountain pastures high,  
Look down on Goy-Gyol? **mirrored sky.**

Across your valleys long I stare,  
On clear days full of lucent air;  
My spirit broods on faces fair,  
Thirsting for poetic tongue?  
Creating verses makes me young.

A day that's free, a man that's free,  
A spring" like this invites a spree'  
Seek out the shade of a plane tree  
To spread a rug that's rainbow-spun?  
And hail the country of the Sun!

Through Karabakh my spirit fares,  
Wings over mountain here, now there;  
From far away down the twilit all-  
Drifts the song- of Khan of Shusha?

Famed through all Caucasus and Russia-

Beautiful birthland! Your meaning deep,  
Cradle of Beauty that never sleeps,  
Where songs of bard, inspired, sweep.  
The sun's embrace? **your counterpart,**  
O land of poetry and art.

Spirit immortal, works immortal;  
Nizami, Fisuli? **are immortal!**  
On pen and paper, open the portals  
Of your soul, record the flow:  
The word once writ? **through time will go.**

Look at the sea near our Baku:  
Its shore a bright-lit avenue,  
The derricks roaring right in view;  
They thunder where the steppe-land swales?  
To light the mountains and the vales.

The cool wind is a merry tease,  
We bare our chests to the off-shore breeze.  
Our heart, Baku on Caspian seas-  
Its light? **our very strength adorning:**  
Our Morning Star? **clear eye of morning.**

Beautiful birthland! I was born  
Together with freedom's dawn  
Which crimson banners did adorn?  
Life seemed one endless, joyous feast;  
Gay songs and laughter never ceased.  
Dear country? **gate of the Ancient East,**

### A Mother's Send-off

The hero donned his uniform, his rifle he slung with zeal,  
His heart swelled so there was no room in his chest of muscled steel.  
"Oh wait!" they told him, and all came up and kissed him one by one?  
That morning clear with a mountain breeze that eased the summer sun.  
"I'm going, mother, take care of yourself," he said, and kissed farewell.  
His mother hugged her son so brave and her tears began to well.  
She kissed his cheeks and his eyes, and then she tightly held his hand?  
Her valiant and manly boy, true son of his native land.  
Her words rang- clear: "My son, my dearest, apple of my eye!  
Just see how grey my hair is, from the ordeals of times gone by.  
I know you'll be a hero, and I have raised you not in vain.  
Remember my words! We'll get by without you, come shine or rain.  
I wish you all the best of luck. May your arm have the strength of three,  
Whenever you raise your sabre high against the enemy.  
But in his sight be proud and brave though his fire seems from hell.  
Keep your rifle clean, and love your horse? **be sure to groom him well.**  
A jigit keeps his weapon ready, and never puts it by:

News of his latest victory each day to us must fly.  
My brave good son! Though. I'm the mother that bore you, understand...  
You grew up here and ate our bread? **and your mother is this land.**  
Our home lies in a Land of Heroes,? **Chapayev and Koroglu;**  
Strong as hundreds each? **no weapons made could break their spirit true.**  
Well, so you're off; a lucky trip... if your way through Moscow lies,  
Salute our leaders? **a mother's heart would bless their enterprise.**  
With autumn, when the quince in the garden ripens till it's browned,  
When peaches, g-old and juicy, weigh the branches down to the ground,  
I'll send a parcel packed with fruit that eye and palate please.  
And your strong arm and daring deeds will increase our victories.  
Now go! Be proud and brave before the foe, though his fire seems from hell,  
Keep your rifle clean, and love your horse? **be sure to groom him well!"**  
The soldier started on his way? **the mountains watched him, old and wise?**  
The sun withdrew its radiant light from the hero's native skies.  
The mother watched her vanishing son, threw water for luck on his trail.-  
And from the scene, one poet's heart was moved to great travail?  
"Hail to the hero!" said his heart- "Hail to you, Motherland!"  
And the poet's lips bent down to kiss his mother-earth's brown hand.