NOTEWORTHY

HOW I BECAME A MADMAN

25.01.2023

You ask me how I became a madman. It happened thus: One day, long before many gods were born, I woke from a deep sleep and found all my masks were stolen,

the seven masks I have fashioned and worn in seven lives,

I ran maskless through the crowded streets shouting, “Thieves, thieves, the cursed thieves.”

Men and women laughed at me and some ran to their houses in fear of me.

And when I reached the market place, a youth standing on a house-top cried, “He is a mad-man.” I looked up to behold him; the sun kissed my own naked face for the first time. For the first time the sun kissed my own naked face and my soul was inflamed with love for the sun, and I wanted my masks no more. And as if in a trance I cried, “Blessed, blessed are the thieves who stole my masks.”

Thus I became a madman.

And I have found both freedom and safety in my madness; the freedom of loneliness and the safety from being understood, for those who understand us enslave something in us.

But let me not be too proud of my safety. Even a Thief in a jail is safe from another thief.

Khalil Gibran (*1883 Bischarri, + 1931 New York)

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