



## When They Broke Down The Door: Poems

*Fatemeh Shams (author), Dick Davis (Introduction and Translation)*

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The power of poetry to map the human heart has been a hallmark of Persian culture for at least a thousand years, and Fatemeh Shams wields it unforgettably. As a member of the Iranian diaspora living in the West, her voice is often one of anguished separation, and many of her poems touch on politics, but as translator Dick Davis says in his introduction to this volume, her approach is "inward and personal rather than public and propagandistic." Frequently, her focus on the individual extends to erotic passion "It was night, your hands were full of moonlight . . ." -- or addresses its obverse, of loneliness: "I sleep in my own corpse's arms . . ." Whether she is writing in free verse or in traditional literary forms, her remarkable technical abilities and the strength of her feelings always shine through. Shams's verse makes real for us her vision of the world as only poetry can. Introduced and Translated by Dick Davis. Original Persian text faces the English translations of the poems.

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