



ABU HUDHAIFA MUHAMMED KAROLIA
DAR-UL-'ULOOM ROBERTSHAM

This is a collection and brief explanation of approximately one hundred and forty lines from the poetry of the famous Arab poet Al-Mutanabbi. Initially collated from Al-Amthaal As-Saa'irah Min Shi'r Al-Mutanabbi of Ibn 'Abbaad, the quotations were subsequently verified from Mutanabbi's Diwan. Wherever there was a variation between the text of Ibn 'Abbaad and the Diwan, I relied on the latter. The last line, however, is an exception. Almost all the explanation was drawn from the commentary of Barqooqi. Occasionally, the commentary of Akhbari was also utilised. However, all balaaghah-related explanation was based on my own understanding. The actual quotations were collated about one year ago. However, the translation and explanation was done between the 19th and the 27th of March, 2020. Finally, this is not an exhaustive collation of the amthaal and hikam (parables and examples) in the poetry of Mutanabbi. Likewise, I have not presented an exhaustive explanation of the balaaghah-related aspects in these quotations. Allah-willing, we may add more quotations and explanation in the future.

Finally, I request the reader's du'aas for acceptance in the court of Allah Ta'aala. I also request their suggestions and constructive criticisms.

Abu Hudhaifa

Lenasia

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باسمه تعالى

إِنَّ الْعَظِيمَ عَلَى الْعَظِيمِ صَبُورٌ

صَبَرَا بَنِي إِسْحَاقَ عَنْهُ تَكْرَمًا

*Children of Ishaq, be noble and exercise patience
Great people exercise patience in achieving great goals*

- إِنَّ الْعَظِيمَ عَلَى الْأَمْرِ الْعَظِيمِ . . . الْأَمْرُ i.e. محذوف of a موصوف is the صفة of the العظيم صبورٌ
- In a another version the word عن is used instead of على In this instance we will regard المفقود as the موصوف محذوف Accordingly, the translation of the second half would be:
Great people exercise patience upon the death of great people

و حلم الفتي في غير موضعه جهل

إذا قيل رفقا قال للحلم موضع

*When it is said 'take it easy', he says, 'there is a time for tolerance
Being tolerant at the wrong time is ignorance'*

بمنتصفٍ من الكرم التلاد

و ما الغضب الطريف و إن تقوّي

*Recent anger no matter how strong
Does not take revenge due to previous kindness*

People hesitate in taking revenge from their benefactors. If a person who previously helped you makes you angry, you hesitate in taking revenge.

إذا كان البناء على فسادٍ

و إنّ الجرح ينفر بعد حينٍ

The wound recurs after a while
When the treatment was incomplete

At times, when a wound that seemed to have healed recurs, we realise that the inside is still raw. Similarly, people squabble with each other and then 'patch up' only to have a worse quarrel some time later. The second quarrel tells us that the ill-feelings after the first quarrel were not completely resolved. This is what Mutanabbi is actually referring to.

ما ليس يجني عليهم العدمُ
و العار يبغي و الجرح يلثمُ

يجني الغني للثام لو عقلوا
هم لأموالهم و لسن لهم

*Wealth harms the wealthy if they only knew
In a manner that poverty will never do
They belong to their wealth, their wealth does not belong to them
Disgrace remains even though the wound may heal*

- Wealth results in arrogance which leads to disgraceful behaviour.
- Such behaviour is like a wound, but unlike the wound of a sword, it never heals.

وإن كانت لهم جثث ضخام
و لكن معدن الذهب الرخام

و دهر ناسه ناسٌ صغارٌ
ما أنا منهم بالعيش فيهم

*A time whose people are 'small'
Even if they have huge bodies
I'm not one of them by living with them
But gold is mined from stone*

Do not judge me by the people among whom I live. Before being mined, gold is surrounded by stone. I am the same. I am a good man but unfortunately, the people around me are not the same as me.

و ما كلِّ بمعذورٍ ببخلٍ

و ما كلِّ ببخلٍ يلام

*Not everybody is blameworthy for being stingy
(Yet) not everybody is excused for behaving miserly*

و من يعشق يلدِّ له الغرام

تلدِّ المروءة و هي تؤذي

*Chivalrous behaviour is pleasurable although it may be
inconveniencing
Love is pleasurable for those who are in love*

Some people insist on behaving in a chivalrous manner despite the inconvenience it may cause them. In fact, they enjoy the inconvenience experienced in such behaviour. Mutanabbi compares such joy to the joy of the lover even though love may be tiring and a form of 'punishment'.

و قبض نوال بعض القوم ذامً
هي الأطواق و الناس الحمام

و قبض نواله شرفً و عزً
أقامت له في الرقاب أيادٍ

*Accepting his gift is an honour
But accepting the gift of some others is a disgrace
His favours surround the (people's) necks
They (his favours) are (like) the collar-rings and the people are (like)
the doves*

The second line is an example of what the experts of Arabic rhetoric call تشبيه التمثيل (comparison of a صورة comprising more than one item to another صورة that also comprises more than one item). In this example, Mutanabbi is comparing the صورة of the king endearing people by means of his favours to the صورة of man placing collar-rings around his pigeons' necks to ensure that they will not be stolen by somebody else.

إذا عن بحرٍ لم يجر لي التيمم

و زارك بي دون الملوك تحرج

*Uneasiness drove me to visit you instead of the other kings
When the sea appears, tayammum is not permissible for me*

He felt uneasy visiting other kings instead of the king he was addressing. Going to any other king would be like making tayammum in the presence of water. This line is another example of التشبيه الضمني and تشبيه التمثيل

و بضدها تتبين الأشياء

ونديمهم وبهم عرفنا فضله

*We criticise them yet through them we know his merits
Things become apparent through their opposites*

و فى عنق الحسناء يستحسن العقد

و أصبح شعري منهما فى مكانه

*My poem regarding them was befitting
Necklaces are regarded as beautiful on the necks of beautiful woman*

The beauty of a necklace is enhanced when worn by a beautiful woman. Likewise, the beauty of my poetry was enhanced when I used it to praise them. Had I used my poetry to praise somebody else, the beauty of my poetry would not be appreciated fully. This is also an example of تشبيه التمثيل and التشبيه الضمني

يجد به مرا الماء الزلالا

و من يكن ذا فمٍ مرّ مريض

*The person whose mouth is bitter due to illness
Finds sweet water to be bitter*

The reason why some people criticise my poetry is that they lack sound 'taste'. Do you blame the water if a sick man with a bitter mouth describes it as bitter? Similarly, there is nothing improper in my poetry if it is criticised by people who lack sound taste. This is an example of الاستعارة التمثيلية (usage of a sentence beyond its original meaning). It has now become a مثل (adage) and is used for a variety of similar situations.

فيها و لا كلّ الرجال فحولاً

ما كلّ من طلب المعالي نافذاً

*Not everybody who seeks lofty ambition achieves it
Not all men are brave*

People have dreams and ambitions but not all of them have the determination to pursue them until the end.

و ألدّ شكوي عاشق ما أعلنّا

الحب ما منع الكلام الألسنا

*Love does not prevent the tongues from speaking
The lover's most pleasurable complaint is what he divulges*

- The translation of the first half is based on the understanding that نافية in the first half is
- The meaning of this line is that love does not prevent the lover from complaining of the person he loves. In fact, he finds pleasure in expressing such complaints.

و ذو اللبّ يكره إنفاقه

و أنفس ما للمرء لبّه

*The most valuable belonging of a man is his intelligence
A man of intelligence will dislike losing it*

حجةً لاجئٍ إليها اللثامُ

كل حلم أتى بغير اقتدارٍ

*Every act of tolerance that results from inability (to execute revenge)
Is an argument in which shameful people seek refuge*

Only shameful, useless people describe their inability to take revenge as tolerance.

ما الجرح بميتٍ إيلا ثم

من يهن يسهل الهوان عليه

*Belittlement is easy for those who are humble
Wounding a dead man causes him no pain*

Be humble because just as wounding a dead man does not hurt him, belittlement at the hands of others does not 'hurt' humble people. This is also تشييه ضمني

فقر الحمار بلا رأسٍ إلى رسنٍ

فقر الجهول بلا عقلٍ إلى أدبٍ

*The unintelligent ignorant person's need for adab
Is like the headless donkey's need for rope*

Intelligence is the requisite for learning adab. A fool lacks adab. So then how can he learn adab? Does a headless donkey need a rope? Obviously not. Likewise, a man without intelligence does not need adab.

و هل يروق دفيننا جودة الكفن

لا يعجبن مضيما حسن بزّته

*An oppressed man should not be fascinated by his smart clothes
Does quality of the kafan delight a man in his grave?*

- This type of question is called استفهام إنكاري (a question whose answer is obviously negative).

- This is once again تشبيه ضمني The oppressed person is compared to a man in his grave and the clothes of the former is compared to the kafan of the latter.

فهى الشهادة لى بأنى كامل

إذا أئتك مذمتى من ناقصٍ

*When you hear me criticised by somebody imperfect
Then that is testimony that I am perfect*

As long as I am not criticised by somebody perfect (accomplished), the criticism of others does not matter. In fact, it is proof of my perfection. If I am imperfect, why has no accomplished person criticised me?

There are two types of استعارة in this line:

1. استعارة تبعية

- The word أئتك is derived from الإتيان which means 'to come'.
- Criticism does not come to anybody. Instead, he is informed by others. The Arabic word for being informed is derived from الإخبار The poet was supposed to say إذا أخبرت بدمتى . . . However, he compared الإخبار to الإتيان and then used a derivative of the latter i.e. أئت

2. استعارة مكنية

He compare مذمة (criticism) to a human being but sufficed with only mentioning مذمة and an attribute of the human being i.e. الإتيان In other words, he mentioned the مشبه به but not the مشبه

مخافة فقرٍ فالذي فعل الفقرُ

من ينفق الساعات في جمع ماله

*The one who spends hours amassing wealth because he fears
poverty,
Then what he is doing is poverty*

و يشيب ناصية الصبي و يهرم

الهمّ يخترم الجسم نحافة

*Worry makes a fat man thin
It makes a lad hoary and old*

و أخو الجهالة في الشقاوة ينعم

ذو العقل يشقي في النعيم بعقله

*Due to intelligence the intelligent man suffers in his bounty
Yet the ignorant man enjoys his hardship*

An intelligent person ponders over the consequences of events and is cognisant of changing circumstances. Thus, he worries despite his comfort. On the contrary, an unintelligent person does not ponder over changing circumstances and the future. Hence, he has no worries and enjoys himself even in hardship.

و ارحم شبابك من عدوّ ترحم

لا تخدعنك من عدوّك دمة

*The tear of your enemy should not deceive you
Pity your youth from a merciful enemy*

حتى يراق على جوانبه الدّم

لا يسلم الشرف الرفيع من الأذى

*Lofty status is not safe from harm
Until blood is spilt on his sides*

A man of status is always envied and will always have enemies until he eventually sheds the blood of his enemies and those who hate him. After killing some of them, the rest will fear him and acknowledge his status.

عن غيّه و خطاب من لا يفهم

من البلية عدل من لا يرعوي

*Reprimanding one who does not desist from deviance
And speaking to a person who does not understand is a calamity*

و من الصداقة ما يضرّ و يؤلم

من العداوة ما ينالك نفعه

*Some enmity may benefit you
Some friendship may be harmful and cause pain*

و فعال من تلد الأعاجم أعجم

أفعال من تلد الكرام كريمة

*Actions of those begotten by noble parents are noble
Actions of those begotten by ignoble parents are ignoble*

- The crux of this line is that actions are based on lineage. Noble actions are the result of noble lineage while ignoble actions are the result of ignoble lineage.

- أعاجم is the plural of أعجم which means non-Arab. However, it is used in the meaning of لعام (wretched, ignoble people) because that is how Arabs regarded the non-Arabs.
- The word أعجم is derived from العجم meaning inability to speak. Thus:
 - Animals are called العجماء
 - Anyone who cannot speak Arabic is called أعجم من الجبل (dumber than a mountain).

و لم نذمم أياديك الجساما
بأرض مسافر كره الغماما

و لم نخلل تفقّدك الموالي
و لكنّ الغيوث إذا توالّت

*We are neither tired of your endless concern
Nor do we criticise your great favours
But when it rains nonstop in the land of the traveller
He dislikes the clouds*

I am a traveller and I need to continue with my journey, but your kindness and gifts prevent me from doing so. I compare my inability to continue my journey due to your kindness to the traveller's inability to continue his journey due to incessant rain. He gets upset when he sees more clouds because the clouds signal further delay. Similarly, I am not tired of your gifts. I appreciate them, except that they cause further delay in my journey.

فلا تقنع بما دون النجوم
كطعم الموت في أمر عظيم

إذا غامرت في شرف مروم
فطعم الموت في أمر حقير

*When you pursue desired honour
Then don't suffice with less than the stars
The taste of death in a trivial cause is
The same as its taste in a significant cause*

Message: Do not hesitate in pursuing lofty ambitions because ultimately we all have to die.

آفته من الفهم السقيم

وكم من عائب قولاً صحيحاً

*How many people criticise speech that is sound
(Because) their understanding is not sound*

قدر قبح الكريم في الإملاق

و الغنى في يد اللئيم قبيح

*Wealth in the hand of a wretched man is evil
Like the evil of a generous man in poverty*

- Wealth in the hands of a wretched man is evil because of his failure to discharge its rights. Furthermore, it often leads to pride and arrogance. On the other hand, poverty or insufficient resources is bad for a generous man. Seeing the destitute, widows and orphans, he yearns to help them but lack of resources prevents him from doing so.

- Mutanabbi should have supposed to say قدر قبح الإملاق في الكريم (like the evil of poverty for a generous man). However, he did not do so on the basis of poetic necessity and in order to maintain the قافية
- The word قدر is منصوب due حذف الخافض i.e. there is a حرف الجر before it that is محذوف

و الدرّ درّ برغم من جهله

و يظهر الجهل بي و أعرفه

*Unawareness of me is apparent and I know it
But the pearl is a pearl despite those who don't know it*

Their unawareness of who I am does not diminish my status and accomplishments.

و هدّبت شعري الفصاحة له
لا يحمد السيف كلّ من حملة

قد هدّبت فهمه الفقاهاة لي
فصرّث كالسيف حامدا يده

*Intelligence enabled him to understand me
Eloquence made my poetry easy for him to understand
I am like the sword that praises his hand
The sword does not praise everyone who carries it*

There are two reasons why he understands my poetry; he is intelligent and I am eloquent. By praising his understanding and appreciation of my poetry, I am like the sword that praises his hand. The sword does not praise every hand that carries it. Despite the sharpness of the sword, it is useless in the hands of a coward or unskilled fighter. Anyway, just as the sword does not praise any and every hand that

carries it, I do not praise anybody and everybody. In short, I am not praising him for nothing.

و يصطحب الإنسان من لا يلائمه

و قد يتزيا بالهوى غير أهله

*Sometimes people who don't love wear the garments of love
And (sometimes) man is accompanied by people who do not suit him*

- The word يتزيا is on the scale of تفعل which portrays تكلف (). Thus, the implication of يتزيا بالهوى is that such people are at great pains to demonstrate their love yet they:
 - a. Make a mess of it (as explained in the commentary of Barquqi)
 - b. Do not actually love you
- There is استعارة مكنية in the first half. الهوى (love) is compared to الثوب (a garment). However, the poet only mentioned الهوى and sufficed with mentioning a quality of الثوب

تعبت في مرادها الأجسام

إذا كانت النفوس كبارا

*When souls are great
Their bodies get tired trying to attain their goals*

Great people tire themselves in order to achieve the goals.

و كثير من البليغ السلام

فكثير من الشجاع التوقي

*Defending himself from you is too much for the brave
Greeting you is too much for the eloquent*

Nobody hurts you on the battlefield. The most that they can do is save themselves from you. Even off the battlefield you have so much of awe that the barely manage greeting you.

فإنّ المسك بعض دم الغزال

فإن تفق الأنام و أنت منهم

*If you excel the creation whereas you are one of them
Then certainly musk is also part of the gazelle's blood*

Excelling the rest of the people although you are one of them is not farfetched. It may be likened to the excellence of musk over the rest of the blood of the gazelle. Musk is found in the gazelle and it is nothing more than blood.

أو يبصر الخيل لا يستكرم الرمكا

من يعرف الشمس لا ينكر مطالعها

*One who knows the sun does not deny how high it rises
One who sees the horses does not think much of work horses*

Just as those who know the sun do not dispute how high it rises and just those who have knowledge of horses never overrate certain types of horses, those who know you will never dispute your excellence.

و لكنّ صدم الشرّ بالشرّ أحزمُ

و ما ذاك بخلا بالنفوس على القنا

*That's not because we do not want to share our lives with the spears
But rather repelling evil with evil is prudence*

Explaining the reason for wear steel armour before going to the battlefield, he explains that it is not due to fear of death. Instead, it is

because prudence demands that evil should be repelled with evil.
Going to battle unprepared and ill-equipped is stupid.

أنف العزيز بقطع العزّ يجتدع

ليس الجمال لوجه صحّ مارنه

*The beauty of a face does not depend on a straight nose
An honoured man's nose is cut by cutting his honour*

- Not every face with a straight nose is good looking. When a man's honour is 'cut', he is disgraced and when he is disgraced, he is like a man with a disfigured (crooked) nose.
- The reason for mentioning the nose and not any other part of the body is that the Arabs have a tendency to refer to the nose when referencing disgrace. The translation of *أُرغم الله أنفه* is 'may Allah cover his nose in dust'. However, it is used in the meaning of 'may Allah disgrace him'.

دواء كلّ كريم أو هي الوجع

و المشرفيّة – لا زالت مشرّفة –

And the sword – May it always shine – is the cure or ailment of every nobleman

- *دواء* is *خير* and its مبتدأ is *المشرفيّة*
- The words *لا زالت مشرّفة* constitute a *جملة معترضة* for the sake of *دعاء*
- The sword is the nobleman's cure because through it he achieves his ambitions and becomes a king.
- However, he may be killed by the sword before attaining his ambitions. If this happens, the sword is not his 'cure' but his 'ailment'.

فليس تأكل إلا الميت الضبع

لا تحسبوا من أسرتم كان ذا رمق

*Don't think that your prisoners had any life in them
Hyenas only eat carrion*

Due to fear and cowardice your prisoners are actually dead. By attacking and capturing these 'dead' people rather than living people (brave, fearless fighters) you are like hyenas. Hyenas only eat dead animals (carrion).

و قد يُظن جبانا من به زمع

قد يُظن شجاعا من به حرق

*Sometimes a weak person is regarded as brave
And sometimes a person who is trembling with anger is regarded a
coward*

و ليس كل ذوات المخلب السبع

إن السلاح جميع الناس تحمله

*Weapons are carried by all the people
But not all clawed animals are lions*

- Just as not every clawed animal is a ferocious lion, not every person who carries a weapon is brave.
- خبر is مبتدأ and خبر is السبع This خبر and خبر combined are ضمير الشأن (ليس of اسم) (the اسم of اسم) is خبر of خبر

إذا عظم المطلوب قلّ المساعدُ

وحيد من الخلان في كل بلدة

*Without friends in every city
When the objective is great, helpers are few*

(I am without friends . . . أنا وحيد . . . The poet meant that is محذوف مبتدأ a خبر of is the وحيد friends . . .)

مصائب قوم عند قوم فوائدُ

بذا قضتْ الأيام بين أهلها

*That's the decree of time among the people
The difficulties of some people benefit others*

و لكنّ طبع النفس للنفس قائدُ

وكلّ يرى طرق الشجاعة و الندى

*Everybody sees the ways of bravery and generosity
But the nafs is guided by its nature*

Despite knowing what is bravery and generosity, many people are cowards and stingy because of their nature.

و كثير الحب بالجهل فاسدُ

فإن قليل الحب بالعقل صالح

*A little of love with intelligence is good
Plenty of love with ignorance is bad*

و أعياء دواء الموت كل طبيب

وقد فارق الناس الأحبة قبلنا

*People before us parted from their loved ones
(Finding) a cure for death tired every doctor*

إذا جعل الإحسان غير ريب

و الترك للإحسان خير لمحسن

*Not being kind is better for the kind
When he leaves his kindness incomplete*

و ربّ كثير الدمع غير كئيب

فربّ كئيب ليس تندي جفونه

*There is many a sad man whose eyelids do not get wet
And there are many who shed lots of tears but they are not sad*

و يجهد أن يأتي لها بضرب

و في تعب من يحسد الشمس ضوءها

*Tired is the one who envies the light of the sun
Yet struggles to bring anything like it*

على عينه حتى يري صدقها كذبا

من صحب الدنيا طويلا تقلبت

*The person who accompanies the dunya for a long time will witness it
turn before his eyes so that he will see its truth as lies*

Message: The conditions of life gradually change and are never permanent. Happiness is replaced with grief and wealth is lost. Often times the passage of time reveals to man his misjudgement of people

and events. Conveying the same meaning another poet, Abu Nawaas, said:

إذا امتحن الدنيا لبيب تكشفت له عن عدوّ في ثياب صديق

*When an intelligent man examines the dunya it shows him
an enemy in the garb of a friend*

يكن ليّله صباحا و مطعمه غصبا

و من تكن الأسد الضواري جدوده

*When ferocious lions are a man's ancestors
His night is day and his food is booty*

If a man's ancestors were brave and fearless like lions, he too will live like a lion, brave and fearless. The darkness of the night will not deter him from combating his enemies and he will live off the booty he takes from them. Some commentators note that the words يكن ليّله صباح are based on the following statement of another poet:

فبادر الليل و لذّاته فإنما الليل نهار اللبيب

*Hasten to (do not overlook) the night and its pleasures
The night is the day of the intelligent*

In the above line of Mutanabbi there are two types of تشبيه

- a. تشبيه مقلوب – He used the مشبّه in the place of the مشبّه به and vice versa. What this means is that he was supposed to say, 'when a man's ancestors were ferocious lions . . .' However, to create مبالغة he said, 'when the ferocious lions were a man's ancestors'. The مبالغة here is to portray his ancestors as braver than the lions.

- b. تشبيهه بليغ – Instead of saying يكن ليله كصباح (his night is like the day), he said يكن ليله صباحا (his night is the day). In other words, he omitted the تشبيهه بليغ He also omitted the وجه الشبه Hence, this is تشبيهه بليغ

أُنْ تَحْسَبُ الشَّحْمَ فَيَمْنُ شَحْمَهُ وَرُمْ	أَعِيذُهَا نَظَرَاتٍ مِنْكَ صَادِقَةٍ
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I pray that your (generally) sound observations are protected from judging the swelling of a fat man to be fat

Your observations are generally sound. However, I pray that you be protected from misjudging a swollen body as well-built. The message in this line is actually: Do not misjudge a fake poet as a poet! Well, in view of the preceding lines, that is what Mutanabbi meant. However, we could attach a much broader meaning to it: Do not misjudge a pretender!

Mutanabbi was asked about the مرجع of the ضمير التأنيث in أعيذها and he replied that it is نظرات This means that the ضمير was used before its مرجع Is this correct? May the ضمير was used before its مرجع? The majority of grammarians disallow it. However, Akhfash, permitted it citing the aayah فَإِنَّمَا لَا تَعْمَى الْأَبْصَارُ as substantiation. He claimed that the مرجع of the Other grammarians disagree. They say that this is not إضممار على شريطة التفسير but rather إضممار قبل الذكر

وَمَا انْتِفَاعُ أَخِي الدُّنْيَا بِنَظَرِهِ	إِذَا اسْتَوَتْ عِنْدَهُ الْأَنْوَارُ وَالظُّلُمُ
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*How will a man in the dunya benefit from his eyes
When he sees no difference between light and darkness*

This is the sequel of the previous line. Mutanabbi meant: You must differentiate between me and the fake poets just as you would differentiate between light and darkness.

فلا تظنّ أن الليث يتسمّ

إذا رأيت نيوب الليث بارزة

*When you see the teeth of the lion showing
Don't think that the lion is smiling*

When the lion shows his teeth, nobody thinks that he is smiling. Likewise, when I smile at the fool, he should not be bluffed and think that I am happy with him.

فما لجرح إذا أرضاكم ألم

إن كان سرّكم ما قال حاسدنا

*If you are pleased by what those who are jealous of us say
Then (remember that) there is no pain in a wound that pleases you*

I am happy so long as you are happy. Hence, if hearing people who are jealous of me criticise me makes you happy, then I am also happy. Of course, such criticism is like a wound, but it is like a painless wound.

إن المعارف في أهل النهى ذمّم

و بيننا لو رعيتم ذاك معرفة

*There is acquaintance between us if you consider
Surely acquaintance is a responsibility among men of intelligence*

- بيننا is a مقدم and its مبتدأ معرفة So the actual sentence is (we know each other)
- (جملة معترضة) اعتراض is لو رعيتم ذلك

- The لو رأيت أن بيننا of ذلك is the مضمون of the actual sentence i.e. (if you consider that we know each other)
- The meaning of the second half is that intelligent people are especially considerate towards those whom they know. They treat acquaintance as a pledge and a responsibility which must not be neglected.
- In short, the poet is telling Saif-ud-Dawlah that even if you do not love me, you should consider that we know each other and intelligent people do not turn a blind eye at those whom they know.

العزمو شرّ ما يكسب الإنسان ما يصم	شرّ البلاد مكان لا صديق به
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*The worst of places is one in which you have no friend
And the worst thing man earns is what makes him blameworthy*

و شرّ ما قنصته راحتي قنص	شهب البزاة سواء فيه و الرخم
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*The worst thing my hand caught is a prey
That is shared by grey falcons and vultures*

- Falcons are regarded as majestic birds whereas vultures are regarded as despicable birds.
- Mutanabbi was upset with Saif-ud-Dawlah for treating him no different that certain poets who he regarded as inferior than himself. It is as if he was saying: How could you treat me the same as so-and-so? How could you give me the same as what you gave him? You should have given me more!

من اللقاء كمشتاقٍ بلا أملٍ

و ما صباية مشتاق على أملٍ

*The yearning of one who desires and hopes to meet
Is unlike the yearning of one who desires with no hope*

- There is a مضاف محذوف in أملٍ كمشتاق بلا أملٍ The مضاف محذوف is صباية . . .
Therefore, the text should be understood as كصباية مشتاقٍ

أنا الغريق فما خوفي من البللِ

و الهجر أقتل لي مما أراقبه

*Leaving her kills me more than what I anticipate
I am drowning, so why should I fear getting wet*

- ما أراقبه refers to the wrath of her family
- If her family lay their hands on me, they will kill me. But that does not matter because separation from her is killing me even more. Does a drowning person fear getting wet?
- Isn't this تشبيه التمثيل? He is comparing the صورة of him not fearing being killed by her family because he is already dying from the pains of separation from her to the صورة of a drowning man who does not fear getting wet with the rain.
- Isn't this also تشبيه ضمني? The تشبيه was expressed without useage of any تشبيه أداة

فِي طُلُوعِ الشَّمْسِ مَا يَغْنِيكَ عَنْ زُحَلٍ

خُذْ مَا تَرَاهُ وَدَعْ شَيْئًا سَمِعْتَ بِهِ

*Take what you see and omit what you hear
In the rising of the sun there is no need for Saturn*

Comparing the person being praised to the sun and his ancestors to Saturn, the poet is telling us to praise the man for his qualities rather than the qualities of his ancestors. You can see the man's qualities but you can only hear of his ancestors' qualities, you cannot see them. Why look for Saturn when you have the sun?

وَلَكِنَّهُ مَنْ يَزْحَمُ الْبَحْرَ يَغْرَقُ

وَمَا كَمَدْتُ الْحَسَادَ شَيْءٌ قَصَدْتُهُ

*The grief of those who envy me is not something I intended
But the one who jostles with the sea will drown*

I do not bother of those who envy me. Hence, I did not aim to make them grief. However, the reason for their grief is that they tried to compete with me and they failed. Remember that if you jostle with the sea, you will drown.

إِذَا كَانَ طَرَفُ الْقَلْبِ لَيْسَ بِمَطْرُقٍ

وَإِطْرَاقُ طَرَفِ الْعَيْنِ لَيْسَ بِنَافِعٍ

*Lowering the gaze is of no benefit
When the gaze of the heart is not lowered*

This is a message to the pranksters that he's not looking at them does not mean that he is unaware of them. He does not look at them with his eyes, but he looks at them with his heart (i.e. he is aware of their behaviour).

و من لك بالحرّ الذي يحفظ اليدا

و ما قتل الأحرار كالعفو عنهم

*Nothing kills free people like forgiveness
But who can guarantee you a free man who guards favour?*

- The word قتل is فعل ماضى and the ما preceding it is نافية
- الأحرار is the مفعول of قتل and therefore منصوب
- The words الحرّ and الأحرار are اسم in the meaning of مثل and it is the فاعل of قتل
- The words الحر and الأحرار have been used in the meaning of الكريم and الكرام (decent, honourable people).
- The meaning of the first half is that by forgiving a decent person you 'kill' him i.e. you subdue him.
- The gist of the second half is that most people are not كرام and that's why they so often forget the favours that were done to them.

و إن أنت أكرمت اللئيم تمرّدا

إذا أنت أكرمت الكريم ملكته

*When you honour a decent person, you become his owner
But when you honour an indecent person, he becomes arrogant
(it goes to his head)*

- This is merely emphasis of the previous line.
- Becoming his owner means he is subdued to you.

مُضَرَّ كَوْضَعِ السِّيفِ فِي مَوْضِعِ النَّدَى

وَضَعِ النَّدَى فِي مَوْضِعِ السِّيفِ بِالْعَلَى

*Generosity in the place of the sword harms loftiness
Just like usage of the sword in the place of generosity*

Each person needs to be treated in a manner that he deserves. Those who deserve punishment should not be forgiven and those who deserve forgiveness should not be punished. Leaders lose their reputation when they fail to differentiate in this regard.

وَمَنْ وَجَدَ الْإِحْسَانَ قَيْدًا تَقَيَّدَ

وَقَيَّدْتُ نَفْسِي فِي ذِرَاكِ مَحَبَّةٍ

*I have confined myself to your presence out of love
Whoever benefits from kindness confines himself (to the person who is kind to him)*

I am staying with you because I love you and the reason I love is that you are so kind to me. Your kindness is what is preventing me from leaving. Be unkind and people will leave you. Be kind and they will never leave you.

وَأَغْيِظُ مَنْ عَادَاكَ مِنْ لَا تُشَاكِلُ

وَأَتَعَبُ مَنْ نَادَاكَ مِنْ لَا تُجِيبُهُ

*The most tired of those who call you is the one whom you do not answer
The angriest of your enemies is the one whose actions you don't replicate*

For example, he swears you thinking that you would swear him too. However, when you do not swear him, he gets even angrier.

وكم بعد مولده اقتراب

وكم ذنب مولده دلال

*So many errors are caused by being spoilt
So often estrangement is caused by closeness*

His parent's spoiled him and that is why he is taking advantage of them. This, however, does not apply to the parent-child relationship only. A young inexperienced teacher may make the same mistake. He was too lenient with the learners and that is why they are now taking advantage of him. Another example could be that of a king who gave one of his ministers too much of liberty to do as he desired. Eventually the minister does something which he thinks will be overlooked by the king whereas it actually annoys or even angers him.

فحلّ بغير جازمه العذاب

و جرم جرّه سفهاء قوم

*Many crimes are committed by fools
But the punishment lands on people other than the perpetrators*

- The word **و رُبّ** is مخذوف in the beginning. Therefore understand the text as . . . جرم

و تأتي على قدر الكرام المكارم
و تصغر في عين العظيم عظامها

على قدر العزم تأتي العزائم
و تكبر في عين الصغير صغارها

Ambitions materialise according to determination
Noble achievements materialise according to noble mindedness
Small achievements appear big in the eyes of small people
Great achievements appear big in the eyes of great people

- The second line is an example of two aspects in Arabic rhetoric, طباق and مطابقة There is طباق between:
 - a. تصغر and تكبر
 - b. العظيم and الصغير
 - c. عظامها and صغارها
- There is مطابقة between the components of the two halves.

إذا لم يكن في طبعه و الخلاق

و ما الحسن في وجه الفتى شرفا له

A handsome face is not the reason for a man's honour
When there's no beauty in his nature and demeanour

- The الحسن is مرجع and its ضمير هو لم يكن of اسم

و ما أهله الأذنون غير الأصادق

و ما بلد الإنسان غير الموافق

A man's town is not the town that does not agree with him
His close family are not ones who are not his friends

Commentators of the Diwan explain that the purpose of this line is to encourage people to travel. Thus, Mutanabbi says that every town that agrees with you is your town and whoever is your friend is your family.

كما يوجع الحرمان من كفّ رازقي

و ما يوجع الحرمان من كفّ حارمي

*Deprivation does not hurt the palm of a person who does not have
As it hurts the palm of a person who has*

س و أشهي من أن يملّ و أحلى

و لذيق الحياة أنفس للنفّ

*The pleasure of live is more enjoyable and sweeter to the soul than
being bored of*

ل حياة و إنما الضعف ملا

و إذا الشيخ قال أفّ فما مل

*When an old man says uff, he's not tired of life
He's tired of his weakness*

فإذا وليّا عن المرء وّي

آلة العيش صحة و شباب

*The tools of life are health and youth
When they leave a man, he (also) leaves*

يا فيا ليت جودها كان بخلا

أبدا تستردّ ما تهبّ الدن

*The dunya always takes back what she gives
If only her generosity were miserliness*

- There is استعارة in this quote. The dunya is compared to a woman but the latter is not mentioned. Instead, two actions of a woman (تستردّ and تهبّ) are mentioned. This is استعارة مكنية
- There is also طباق between جودها and يُحلا

فَظْ عَهْدًا وَلَا تُتَمِّمُ وَصَلًا

و هي معشوقة على الغدر لا تح

She is loved despite her treachery

She neither guards past relationship nor does she allow such relations to be completed

عَالَ فِيهِ وَ تَحْمَدُ الْأَفْعَالَا

رُبَّ أَمْرٍ أَتَاكَ لَا تَحْمَدُ الْفَعْلَ

Many matters may reach you about which you may not praise the doer but you will praise the action

عَدَمُ الشَّاءِ نَهَايَةُ الْإِعْدَامِ

رَفَلْتَ فِي حُلِّ الشَّاءِ وَ إِنَّمَا

You boasted in the garments of praise

Not being praised is the ultimate poverty

وَ إِنِ الْوَشَايَاتِ طَرَقَ الْكَذِبُ

مَا عَاقَنِي غَيْرُ قَوْلِ الْوَشَاةِ

Nothing stops me other than the talk of tale carriers

Their talks are a means for spreading lies

The reason I do not visit you is that I fear being slandered by people who carry tales. There tales spread a lot of lies.

أَنْكَرَ أَظْلَافَهُ وَ الْغَبَبَ

و مَنْ رَكَبَ الثَّورَ بَعْدَ الْجَوَادِ

*The one who rides an ox after riding a horse
Will not like its hoofs and dewlap*

- الغيب is a fold of loose skin that hangs from the throat of cattle and other animals. In English it is called dewlap.
- The preceding lines in the Diwan indicate that in this line Mutanabbi is praising Saif-ud-Dawlah. Comparing Saif-ud-Dawlah to a horse and other kings to cattle, he explains that after staying with Saf-ud-Dawlah, he will never enjoy the company of any other king.

فَعَلِيهِ لَكَلَّ عَيْنٍ دَلِيلٌ

وَ إِذَا خَامَرَ الْهَوَى قَلْبَ صَبٍّ

*When love penetrates the heart of a lover
Each of his eyes prove his love*

- His eyes show the love that he hides in his heart. Look at his eyes and you'll realise that he is in love.

مَ فَحَسَنُ الْوَجْهِ حَالُ تَحَوُّلٍ

زَوْدِنَا مِنْ حَسَنِ وَجْهِكَ مَا دَا

*Allow us to enjoy the beauty of your face for as long as it remains
Because facial beauty is a condition that changes*

وَ لَا انْتَهَى أَرْبٌ إِلَّا إِلَى أَرْبٍ

مَا قَضَى أَحَدٌ مِنْهَا لِبَائَتِهِ

*Nobody ever fulfils his need for the dunya
No need ends except to another*

Message: Man's worldly needs never come to an end. In this regard, the pre-Islamic poet, Umayyah bin Abi-Salt, said:

تموت مع المرء حاجاته و تبقى له حاجة ما بقي

Man's needs die with him

But as long as he's alive, he always has a need

أقامه الفكرُ بين العجزِ و التعبِ

من تفكّر في الدنيا و مهجته

*The one who ponders over the dunya and its soul,
Pondering will leave him between helpless and tired*

By pondering over the dunya and the fact that he will inevitably also leave the dunya, he feels sad and fearful. However, when he realises that this is ordained by Allah and he cannot escape it, he finds himself between two conditions; helpless and tired.

و حسبُ المنايا أن يكنّ أمانيا

كفى بك داءً أن ترى الموتَ شافيا

*Seeing death as your cure is sufficient illness
It is sufficient for death to be your hopes*

- The كفى in بك داءً is the مفعول of كفى (ضمير أنت) كاف and كفى is the فاعل of كفى (This is unlike the word كفى بالله in الله كفى because here the word كفى is the فاعل of كفى)
- كفى بك داءً أن ترى الموتَ شافيا is the فاعل of كفى
- He means: If you think that your solution is in dying, then you must be very ill.

قد يوجد الحلم في الشبان و الشيب

فما الحداثة من حلمٍ بممانعةٍ

*Young age does not prevent a man from being tolerant
Tolerance is found in youth and the aged*

و صدق ما يعتاده من توهم
و أصبح في ليلٍ من الشك مظلم

إذا ساء فعل المرء ساء ظنونه
و عادى محبيه بقول عداته

*When the actions of a man are evil, his thoughts are evil
And he believes his usual suspicions
He becomes hostile to his friends due to what his enemies say
And he enters a dark night of doubt*

تكلفُ شيءٍ في طباعك ضده

و أسرع مفعولٍ فعلتَ تغيرا

*The fastest of your actions to change is
To force yourself to do something contrary to your nature*

و قصر عما تشتهي النفس وجده

و أتعب خلق الله من زاد همّه

*The most tired of Allah's creation is the person with great ambition
But his strength is insufficient for attaining his desires*

- همّ is in the meaning of همة which means ambition
- وجده is the فاعل of قصر
- Some commentators observe that in this line Mutanabbi is talking of himself. Thus, he is saying that he is the most tired of Allah's

creation because he has great ambitions but he lacks the monetary ability to pursue them.

و مركوبه رجلاه و الثوب جلده

و فى الناس من يرضي بميسور عيشه

*Among the people is he who is happy with whatever he has in life
Yet his conveyance is his feet and his clothing is his skin*

- Mutanabbi is criticising such people for lack of courage and ambition. They are content with their inferior living standard, even though they have no conveyance and insufficient cloths.
- مركوبه رجلاه is كناية for not having a means of transport.
- الثوب جلده is كناية for not having sufficient cloths.

و أعرفها فى فعله و التكلم

أصادق نفس المرء من قبل جسمه

*I befriend a man's soul before his body
I recognise his soul from his actions and speech*

متى أجزه حلما على الجهل يندم

و أحلم عن خلّي و أعلم أنه

*I tolerate my friend knowing that
When I repay his insolence with tolerance, he regrets*

جزيتُ بجود التارك المتبسم

و إن بذل الإنسان لي جود عابسٍ

*If a man shows me the generosity of a frown
I repay him with the generosity of one who refrains with a smile*

و لا كلّ فَعَالٍ له بمتمّم

و ما كلّ هاوٍ للجميل بفاعلٍ

*Not every intender of good does it
And not every doer of good completes it*

هَذَا و يَخْطِي المَرَادَ بعد اجْتِهَادٍ

قَدْ يَصِيبُ الْفَتَى الْمَشِيرُ و لَمْ يَجْ

*Sometimes a man gives sound counsel without exertion
But misses the point after exertion*

In the Diwan the words يُشَوِي الصواب are used instead of يُخْطِي المَرَاد However, the meaning is the same.

لَمْ يُحَلِّمْ تَقَادُمُ الْمِيلَادِ

و إِذَا الْحَلَمُ لَمْ يَكُنْ فِي طَبَاعٍ

*When tolerance is not in a man's nature
Being born earlier will not make him tolerant*

Message: Because tolerance does not come with age, the opinion of the aged is not necessarily better than the opinion of a young man.

فَمِنَ الْعِجْزِ أَنْ تَكُونَ جَبَانًا

و إِذَا لَمْ يَكُنْ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ بَدُّ

*When death is unavoidable
Being a coward is helpless*

جزيتُ على ابتسامٍ بابتسامٍ
لعلمي أنه بعض الأنام

لما صار ودّ الناس خبّا
و صرتُ أشكّ فيمنَ أصفويه

*When love of the people became deceptive
I repaid a smile with a smile
And I doubted the person I chose
Because I know that he is one of the people*

فلا يذر المطيّ بلا سنام

و من يجد الطريق إلى المعالي

*I am amazed at the person who finds the way to loftiness
Yet does not leave his conveyance without a hump*

- The preceding line in the Diwan is . . . عجبْتُ لِمَن له . . .
- مَن له on معطوف is مَن يجد الطريق
- I am astonished at the man who finds the way to loftiness but does not undertake the journey i.e. he wastes the opportunity.

كنقص القادرين على التمام

و لم أرَ في عيوب الناس شيئاً

*Among the people's faults I have not seen anything
Like incompleteness on behalf of people who are able to complete*

صديقٌ و لا يفضي إليه شرابٌ

و للسرّ مَنّي موضع لا يناله

*Secrets have such a place in me which no friend can find
And to which alcohol cannot penetrate*

I never share my secrets with any of my friends. I never expose any of my secrets, not even in the state of intoxication.

و خير جليس في الزمان كتابُ

أعزّ مكان في الدنيّ سرّج سابع

*The noblest place in the world is the saddle of a horse
And throughout time the best person to sit with is a book*

- دنيا is the plural of دنيّ
- سابع is a fast horse
- The horse's saddle is the noblest place because seated on his saddle he is able to meet kings, fight his enemies, flee from injustice, protect himself from many forms of evil and attain a lot of good.
- The book is the best person to sit with because sitting with a book requires no formalities and you do not have to hide any of your secrets from it. There is no fear of being harmed by a book.

و كم أسدٍ أرواحهنّ كلابُ

أيا أسدا في جسمه روح ضيغم

*O lion in whose body is the soul of a lion
How many lions there are whose soul are dogs!*

Praising the courage of Saif-ud-Dawlah he says that he has the courage and bravery of a lion. Other kings punish their opposition like lions (they afflict their opposition with severe punishment) but lack courage and bravery. Due to their lack of courage and bravery they are like dogs. Thus, Mutanabbi describes them as dog-hearted lions.

وكلّ الذى فوق التراب ترابٌ

إذا نلتُ منك الودّ فالمال هينٌ

*When I've gained your love, then wealth is insignificant
Everything above the sand is sand*

وجهة له من كلّ قبح برقعٌ

قبحا لوجهك يا زمان فإنه

*May Allah spoil your face, O Time!
It is a face that is veiled with every evil*

- قبح الله وجهك i.e. محذوف of a فعل that is مفعول مطلق of قبحا
- There are so many evils in the face of time that it is as though time veiled her face with these evils.

أني بما أنا بالك منه محسودٌ

ماذا لقيتُ من الدنيا و أعجبها

*What have I experienced in the dunya! And most astonishingly
I cry for the reasons for which I am envied*

- استفهام is ماذا لقيت but obviously حقيقة الاستفهام is not intended. Instead, it is a شكاية (complaint) and its purpose is تعظيم (to highlight the extent of his difficulties).
- This version has أعجبها (the most astonishing aspect of the dunya). A second version has أعجبه (the most astonishing of my difficulties)
- In this line Mutanabbi is conveying the same meaning as the adage

رُبَّ مغبوطٍ بدواء هو دأؤه

Often a man is envied for a cure which is his ailment

من اللسان فلا كانوا و لا الجودُ

جود الرجال من الأيدي و جودهمُ

*The generosity of (other) men is with their hands while theirs
Is with the tongue – May they and their generosity not be!*

With their hands, other people give charity. They are generous. These liars promise to give charity, but that is the most to their charity – empty promises.

رأي غيره منه ما لا يرى

من جهلت نفسه قدره

*The man who does not know his worth
Others will see in him what he does not see*

An arrogant man does not realise how worthy he really is. Thus, others will see his faults but he will not.

و تُحسّ نفسي بالحمام فأشجعُ

إني لأجبن من فراق أحبّي

*I am afraid to part from my loved ones
Yet I perceive death and I become daring*

Although I am afraid to part from the people I love, I am daring and bold in fighting the enemy on the battlefield, despite the possibility of being killed . . . Separation from my loved ones is a greater problem than death.

و يُلَمِّ بِي عَتَبُ الصَّدِيقِ فَأَجْزَعُ

و يَزِيدُنِي غَضَبُ الْأَعَادِي قَسْوَةً

*The anger of the enemies makes me harsher
But the reprimand of a friend touches me and I fret*

عَمَّا مَضَى مِنْهَا وَ مَا يُتَوَقَّعُ

تَصِفُو الْحَيَاةَ لَجَاهِلٍ أَوْ غَافِلٍ

*For an ignorant or negligent man life is clean
From what past and what is awaited*

In life there are two people who never have any worries and regrets; an ignorant man and an inattentive man who neither bothers of taking heed from past events nor bothers of future consequences, in particular situations that he may not be able to bear. On the contrary, an intelligent person ponders over the dunya, ponders over past events and thinks of the future, will he manage or not. Thus, life is never 'clean' for him.

و يَسُومُهَا طَلَبُ الْحَالِ فَتَطْمَعُ
مَا قَوْمُهُ مَا يَوْمُهُ مَا الْمَصْرَعُ

و لِمَنْ يُغَالِطُ فِي الْحَقَائِقِ نَفْسَهُ
أَيْنَ الَّذِي الْهَرَمَانِ مِنْ بَنِيَانِهِ

*To the one who deceives his nafs regarding the truth
And burdens it with seeking the impossible thus, it becomes greedy
Where is the one who built the pyramids?
Where's his people, When did he perish and how did he die?*

- يَغَالِطُ فِي الْحَقَائِقِ نَفْسَهُ means he promises his nafs that she's going to live forever and that there is nothing for her to fear.

- طلب الخال refers to a life of very long (almost eternal) life in which there is no difficulty and hardship.
- الهرمان means the two pyramids and this refers to the big and the middle pyramids.
- الذى الهرمان من بنيانه (the one/king whose buildings include the two pyramids). This is كناية (allusion) to might and strength.
- The crux of this is that everybody has to die.

و فى التقرب ما يُفضي إلى التهم

توهم القوم أنّ العجز قرّينا

*People think that (my) inability made us close
And in being close there is cause for suspicion*

- القوم are the people he praises in his poetry
- Gist of the first half: The people I praise think that I stay close to them due to my inability to earn a livelihood.
- Gist of the second half: They cannot be blamed for such suspicion. Keeping close to people does cause them to be suspicious. Thus, they think that *he just wants my assistance*.

بين الأنام و لو كان ذوي رحم

و لم تزل قلة الإنصاف قاطعة

*Unfairness always severs ties between people
even if they be relatives*

Explaining the reason for severing ties with the people he mentioned in the previous line, he says that if unfairness results in severing of ties with family members, why should I not sever ties with these people who are not even related to me?

فإنما يقظات العين كالحلم

هَوْنٌ على بصري ما شَقَّ منظرُهُ

*Ease for my eyes that which is difficult for it to see
Because wakefulness of the eye is like a dream*

- شَقَّ of فاعل because it is the مرفوع is منظره
- ما صعبتْ رُؤْيُهُ is ما شَقَّ منظرُهُ The meaning of
- refers to المكارم (noble actions) ما شَقَّ منظرُهُ
- Difficulty in seeing noble actions is كناية for paucity.
- I so seldom see people engaging in noble actions that when do, it is as if I am seeing a dream.
- So the meaning of the second half is that what you see while awake is so similar to a dream.

شكوي الجريح إلى العقبان و الرخم

و لا تشكّ إلى خلقٍ فتشمتُهُ

*Do not complain to a person thereby making him happy
Like the complaint of a wounded person to the eagles and vultures*

Do not complain to somebody who will rejoice at your difficulty. If you do so, you will be like a wounded person who complains to wild birds that await his death so that they may eat his flesh.

و لا يغرّك منه ثغرٌ مبتسم

و كن على حذرٍ للناس تستره

*Be cautious of people but conceal your caution
Don't be deceived by the opening of the smiling person's mouth*

Message: Do not be deceived by people's smiles.

و أعوز الصدق في الأخبار و القسم

غاض الوفاء فما تلقاه في عِدّة

*Loyalty has diminished so you don't find it in promises
And truthfulness in information and oaths is rare*

و من ذا الذي يدري بما فيه من جهل

كدعواك كلّ يدّعي صحة العقل

*Like you, everybody else (also) claims sound understanding
And who knows his (own) ignorance?*

- Message: People seldom acknowledge their ignorance.
- The استفهام in the second half is not محمول على الحقيقة Instead, it is استفهام إنكار (The aim is to say: Nobody acknowledges his ignorance.)

و لا بدّ دون الشهد من إبر النحل

تريدين لقيان المعالي رخيصة

*You wish to attain loftiness with ease
To get the honey it's necessary to be stung by the bees*

- The actual meaning of رخيصة is cheap. Therefore, using it in the meaning of ease (effortless attitude) is based on مجاز
- Anything attained without effort is cheap. (The reason why it is cheap is that no effort is required for it.) In other words, ease (lack of effort) is the مسبب and being cheap is the مسبب
- Hence, this is مجاز المسببية i.e. usage of the مسبب in the meaning of the مسبب (إطلاق المسبب على السبب)

كمن جاءه في داره رائد الويل

و ليس الذي يتبع الويل رائدا

*The one who seeks the rain as a scout is not
Like the one to whom the scout of rain comes*

- تاء يتبع was actually يتبع but إدغام took place between the first and second تاء
- رائد means scout, a person who is sent to search for suitable pasture and places where the rain falls and collects.
- The words الويل رائد were used on the basis of مشاكلة (similarity with the words الويل رائدا)
- The apparent meaning is that those people who have to send a scout to look for rain are less fortunate than those who do not have to do so because the rain 'comes to them'. However, the poet's aim is that 'you are fortunate that he came to you'. Some commentators say that he meant: You are like the clouds that rain on us thus, saving us the need to travel in search of pastures.

و لا التذكير فخرٌ للهِلالِ

و ما التأنيث للشمس عيبٌ

*Being feminine does not harm the sun
Being male is no pride for the moon*

This line is taken from Mutanabbi's eulogy of Saif-ud-Dawlah's mother. In the preceding line he said she had better qualities than any man. Hence, if other women were like her, they would excel the men. Having said that, he reminds his audience that it is not impossible for a woman to excel men. After all, the sun is brighter than the moon yet

the sun is feminine and the moon is masculine. Alluding to the same meaning, another poet said:

و الشمس ليس بضائر تأنيثها و تزيد بالنور المنير على القمر

*The sun is not harmed by being feminine
Instead, it shines even more than the moon*

و لكن لا سبيل إلى الوصال

و مَنْ لَمْ يَعشِقْ الدنيا قديماً

*Who never loved the dunya in the past?
But (unending) union is impossible*

- The استفهام in the first half is for إنكار The poet actually means: There is nobody who never loved the dunya.
- There is a مضاف محذوف before the word الوصال i.e. دوام That is why the word unending was added to the translation.
- وصال is the union of lovers.
- The meaning of this line is that just as the lover never enjoys perpetual union with his beloved, the lover of the dunya too will never stay in the dunya forever. Just as the lover eventually parts from his beloved, one day the lover of the dunya will also have to part from her.
- In terms of Arabic rhetoric, is this not تمثيل (comparison of one صورة or حال to another)?

جمعتهم الدنيا فلم يفرقوا

نبكى على الدنيا و ما من معشرٍ

*We cry for the dunya yet there are no people whom
The dunya gathered and they did not disperse*

و لا الأمن إلا ما رآه الفتى أمنا

و ما الخوف إلا ما تخوّفه الفتى

*Fear is only what man fears
Safety is only what man thinks is safe*

و عناهم من شأنه ما عانا
هـ و إن سرّ بعضهم أحيانا
هـ و لكن تُكدر الإحسانا

صحب الناس قبلنا ذا الزمانا
و تولّوا بغصّة كلّهم من
رُما تُحسن الصنيع ليالي

*People before us accompanied time
And the issues of time that affect us affected them as well
All of them left it with a lump in their throats
Even if it sometimes pleased some of them
At times its nights do good
But then it spoils its kindness*

- His message in the first two lines is that throughout time people suffered various difficulties.
- In the second line he tells us that hardly anybody left the world having attained all his goals.
- In the third line he tells us that sometimes, people are treated well, but not for too long. Happiness and comfort are soon followed by sadness and discomfort. Another poet said:

الدهر آخذ ما أعطى مكدر ما أصفى و مُفسد ما أهدى له بيد

*Time takes what it gives, dirties what is clean and
spoils the gifts it gives*

- There are four cases of استعارة in these lines.

1. الزمان (time) is compared to a human being, but only الزمان and a لازمة (quality) of time are mentioned. The لازمة of time mentioned استعارة مكنية سرّ This is صحب
2. In the third line the nights are compared to a human being, also by way of استعارة مكنية
3. There is استعارة تبعية in the poet's usage of the word تُكَدَّر He used the word تُكَدَّر in the meaning of تُفْسِد Basically, he compared التكدير to الإفساد and then used a derivative of the latter.
4. There is also استعارة مكنية in the words تُكَدَّر الإحسانا The poet compared kindness to clean water but only mentioned kindness (the مشبّه) and a لازمة of water (the مشبّه به). The لازمة that he alluded to is كدورة (to be muddy).

مَحَا الذَّنْبَ كُلَّ الذَّنْبِ مَنْ جَاءَ تَائِبًا

و إِنْ كَانَ ذَنْبِي كُلَّ ذَنْبٍ فَإِنَّهُ

*Even if I have sinned every sin
The one who comes having repented deletes all sin*

The text of Ibn 'Abbad has the words كُلَّ الذَّنْبِ (all sins) but the Diwan has the words كُلَّ الْخَوْ (total deletion). Either way, this line is based on the hadith التائب من الذنب كمن لا ذنب له (The one who repents for his sin is like the one who has no sin).

*Abu Hudhaifa Muhammad Karolia
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Lenasia*