

Complaining of Age

by **Bakhtiyar Vahabzade (born 1925)**

When I was 15 and 20,
I was thinking 40 is an old age.
I am reaching 50 now.
Still I have my childhood wishes
Whirling in my brain.

As if it were yesterday
When I was going to school
Munching on sunflower seeds
And carrying my rucksack on my back.

As if it were yesterday
When I was riding my horse made of reeds.
I cannot feel my age - what can I do?

The heart is the same heart,
The wishes are the same wishes.
My heart flies now to highlands, now to lowlands -

What are these feelings in my heart?
I feel sometimes as if I am yesterday's kid,
I laugh at these strivings...

But I don't blame myself,
Time was so short,
Time has been flying...
As soon as we lose our youth
We grasp life with four hands.

Like trees, our roots go deeper
As we grow older.
Look! There is a rumpus in the courtyard.
The kids are running and climbing the fence.
I would give anything now to be able to play
Hand in hand with them
And escape into my childhood...

I want to play hide-and-peek,
Along these meadows, across these fields.
I want to hide so that
Old age cannot find me ever...

But age manifests itself sometimes,
There are so many hidden beats in the heart,
When I am short of breath in the street,
I blame the stones or the ascents on my way.

When I lag behind my children,
I cannot blame the stones or the ascents, I know

But when I admire beauty,
I feel the same age as my son.

Translated by Jala Garibova