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(6) The Journey To Mecca

It was 26th of Rajab sixty-first of Hijri
The heat was unbearable, boiling point the degree
The caravan was ready with young and old
This was the day, the Prophet had foretold
"A day will soon came when my dearest Husayn
Will leave Medina, in indescribable grief and pain
To meet his fateful destiny, in a far off land
With his family and few friends, a tiny band"
With grief in the air, the atmosphere was surcharged
With heavy hearts the Medinites silently watched
Can it be true that their most beloved Husayn,
With his family and friends, would all be slain?"
They pleaded with him to drop the risky journey
He was priceless in all terms, including money
Or take with him their strong young men with arms
Who would ensure him against any possible harm
They also pleaded that Ali Akbar be left behind
So that, when memory of Prophet came to their mind
They could look to him, for he was his very image,
From head to foot, in looks, mannerism and gait.
Husayn was silent, how could he explain?
Islam was sinking! There were many to be blamed!
It was his martyr's cup, how could he reveal
The plan of God to erase the cancerous evil.
He apologized; to grant their wish he was not able
Such love, such feelings were indeed laudable!
He would, however, remember them in his prayer
His daughter, Sugar, he was leaving to their care.
Seriously ill, she cried her heart out

They were leaving her, she had no doubt
Destiny's hand was beckoning the Imam
Proceed he must, was God's command!
Towards holy Mecca the caravan slowly proceeded
A farewell journey: no explanation was needed
The guardian of truth was himself out to uproot
The weeds of untruth, with his devil destroying boots.
From Kufa they sent an urgent pathetic appeal
In the name of God, from the helpless people
"Truth is being trampled, we look to you
To oust this tyranny, come to our rescue."
"You, as our Imam, must heed our solemn call
And save Islam, from its impending downfall
There is no time to lose, we anxiously await
Please come at once and do not be late."
He knew that treachery is a satanic vile
And the Kufians in this were ahead by miles
Time and again, Ali they had shamelessly betrayed
Fickleness and shifting loyalty, was their trait.
They had addressed him as their Imam
He was, therefore, in painful duty bound
To heed their call, despite past experience
It was a supreme test for Imam's holy license.
Ordinary spiritual beings can easily foretell
The coming events, as well as, misfortune dispel
The fountainhead of spiritualism knew much more
The things, that were destined for him, in store.
He was so attuned to the will of Almighty God
His every act bore the stamp of the Merciful Lord
Destiny's plan had to be implicitly carried out
By none other than Husayn there was no doubt.
As his emissary, he sent his cousin, Muslim Ibn Aqil
To see things for himself; their pulse to feel;
He received a hearty welcome he wrote to Husayn
Little did he realize their vile, treacherous game.

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