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(4) The Origins Of Karbala's Tragedy

Life is an eternal conflict of truth and evil
God having granted power to the devil
To rule the hearts of those who love this world
And care not the banner of truth to unfurl.
The forces of darkness were perturbed
For soon their kingdom would be disturbed
At first, they ridiculed and scoffed
To their dismay, they found themselves dwarfed.
They fumed and fret; threatened and cajoled
They offered Muhammad a chief's role
They asked him to stop preaching Islam
Or else they would cause him bodily harm.
Abu Sufyan was their chief – a mortal foe
The grandson of Ommaya, the lowest of low
The progeny of Abd Shams, the brother of Hashim
They were steeped in enmity, which was ever lasting.
Envious were they, of the position of Hashim
Whom God had honored with things everlasting
Muhammad was thus their bitter foe
Whom they longed to see cast low.
Karun, Firaun, Namarood and Suddad
The four aces of arch-devil Iblis' cards
Were the brains behind the notorious Abu Sufyan
To destroy Islam and cause Muhammad harm.
Harut and Marut, the two fallen angels, were glad
The four Aces had mastered everything evil and bad
Abu Sufyan became their living agent
To them his services he joyfully lent.
They issued the call, they summoned aid

Each helper, they said, would be well paid
Thus started persecution of the new faith,
With all means that symbolized envy and hate.
They thought to themselves, the easiest way,
We are Muslims why not say?
Hit from within the Hashemites
That would throttle Islam, without a fight.
The decree of God none can stop
It flows like a river, with a drop to start
None can withhold its onward march
Be they friends or foes at large.
And so was the case with Islam's flow
Many became Muslims, just for show
Pagans at heart, they hid their line
To wreck vengeance, in course of time.
They behaved as friends; they cloaked their pretense
For Muslims in name, were they from hence
They spread their tentacles, in many homes
They tightened their grip over Islam's dome.
Ali, they knew, was the seedling's strength
To guard it, he would go to any length
He would with pleasure sacrifice his rights
Rather than see Islam hurt in a fight.
They knew, that Ali was just a lad
When his mission, the Prophet declared
He was among the first to profess Islam
And stand by the Prophet through storm and calm.
When others ridiculed and threatened
He stood, by him alone, and unfrightened
He declared him his brother and heir
Destined to serve and his mission share.
They had heard Muhammad at Khybar declare
"This Alam is for one whose qualities are rare
He is the beloved of Muhammad and his God
Ever victorious is he, in the cause of Lord."
They had had also heard the sermon at Ghadir-e-khum
It left, for doubt, hardly any room
Ali was Muhammad's heir, by God's decree
Assigned to keep Islam pure and free.

They had watched him even before
How Ali in stature grew more and more
He slept in Prophet's bed in the midst of strife
While hundreds lay in ambush, each with a knife.
The Prophet's end was drawing near
The dissension started, as he had feared
He ordered the dissenter's to go to war
But they guessed what the order was for.
Death of the Prophet was a grievous blow
Old enmities erupted like a volcano
Busy with the funeral were the Hashemites,
Unheedful of the maneuverings and internal strife.
Abu Bakr was declared Caliph in the interim
He soon nominated Omar, to succeed him
The Caliphate became, thereafter, Othman's turn
Before the mantle, despite opposition, on Ali dawned.
Ali, with his characteristic zeal, lost no time
He acted sternly, to save Islam from further decline
Firmly entrenched in power by now, the Ommayad's frowned
And dared the simple and straightforward Ali for a showdown.
The hero of Islam knew neither malice nor fear
Renowned warriors had fled before him from the rear
He defeated the crafty Moawiyah, time and again
But alas! Treachery and trickery ultimately gained.
The internal rot had spread too deep, alas!
Corruption and nepotism was practiced en-masse
Ali, had soon to pay with his dear and precious life
Engrossed in prayers, he was struck with a knife.
And so was the case with his eldest son,
Most generous of all men was Hassan
He was fond of recluse and quietude
He was the symbol of patience and fortitude.
The roots of seedling were still shallow
A little shake up would render the ground fallow
Muhammad's labor would thus be wasted
Before the world its fruit had tasted.
And thus the treaty with Moawiyah Hassan chose
Rather than fight him like an open foe
The time was not ripe for the showdown

A lot remained for preparing the ground.
This he knew would fall to Husayn's lot
To put his foot down and stop the rot
It would cost his life there was no doubt
But it had to be timed the tyranny to oust.

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