

THE INK OF SCHOLAR IS MORE HOLY THAN THE BLOOD OF A MARTYR

AL-ZAHARAWI (THE FATHER OF SURGERY)

*The man was a legend , a legend indeed
But much about him has not been revealed
Radiant as ever his enduring legacy
Once inspired many now a lost history
He was a chronicle of the golden ages
A book of our eminent past that lost so many pages
The golden times when discoverers were born and inventions were made
Alas the footmarks in sand, how soon they fade
Why not let the man himself tell his story
A story of his intellectual brilliance and glory
Did you bother to know who I am?
Or you were too busy cramming for an exam
Does the name al Zaharwi ring a bell?
If not then listen well for I have plenty to tell
Those white men call me Abulcasis, that wretched name
As if Abu al Qasim Khalaf ibn al-Abbas Al Zahrawi would not have brought
me enough fame
It was in the streets of Qurubah*

*I grew up to be
The person I became
For the world to see
Madina Azahra my city of light.
Brighter than the sun, ever so bright
Ornament of the world Qurtubah, my homeland
Once dazzled many, now a piece of barren land
It was not so long ago
Mere centuries have passed.
Unpleasant about pleasant times
Is that they never last
You can call me a physician or a surgeon if you want.
They call me the father of surgery but I do not intend to flaunt
I gave away everything to this profession.
Every second my life, every ounce of my passion.
My fame reached even the distant lands.
They said I perform miracles with my hands.
No doubt I was honored to have served the royalty.
But if I did not treat the poor equally what kind of a doctor would I be?
Surgery had fallen into the hands of uncultivated minds of that time.
I wanted it to be an act to save lives not some insidious crime.
From forceps to litho trite I invented all these surgical tools.
But they can be deadlier than the deadliest weapons in the hands of fools.
I poured into al- Tasrif fifty years of my medical career,*

*All the lessons of my life, the very essence of my life
For five hundred years they treated it as medical bible.
Some of them still find its teachings reliable.
Now I might just be an old page in the book of history.
Forlorn and forgotten, being a silent witness to my nation's misery
I have no desire for the credit that I truly deserve.
Since my purpose was only to serve
Millions of people that I saved
Towards a safer future the path that I paved
What I want from you is to work hard and be second to none.
What I want from you is the desire to learn and not to earn.
I have done a lot
Will you do the same?
Will you make me proud?
Do justice to my name?*