

## Ghazal

(pronounced "ghuzzle")  
is an Arabic word that means "talking to women."

The Ghazal was developed in Persia in the 10th century AD from the Arabic verse form *qasida*. It came to India with the Mogul invasion in the 12th century. In India and Pakistan, Ghazals are a popular form and are often set to music.

### Form

A traditional Ghazal consists of:

- **5-15 couplets**, (7 is most common)
- **a refrain** (a repeated word or phrase) at the end of both lines of the first couplet and at the end of the second line in each succeeding couplet
- one or more words before the refrain are **rhymes or partial rhymes**
- the lines should be of approximately the **same length** and meter.
- **a final signature couplet** (the poet uses her name and more directly tells her thoughts or feelings to the reader)

### Style

- Each couplet should be a poem in itself. (They should not be connected outside of the refrain.)
- The refrain provides a link among the couplets, but they should be detachable, quotable, grammatical units.

### Excerpt from **Even the Rain**

*By Agha Shahid Ali*

What will suffice for a true-love knot? Even the rain?  
But he has bought grief's lottery, bought even the rain.

"our glosses / wanting in this world" "Can you remember?"  
Anyone! "when we thought / the poets taught" even the rain?

After we died—*That was it!*—God left us in the dark.  
And as we forgot the dark, we forgot even the rain.

Drought was over. Where was I? Drinks were on the house.  
For mixers, my love, you'd poured—what?—even the rain.