

A Tear and a Smile By Kahlil Gibran

I would not exchange the sorrows of my heart
For the joys of the multitude.

And I would not have the tears that sadness makes
To flow from my every part turn into laughter.

I would that my life remain a tear and a smile.

A tear to purify my heart and give me understanding
Of life's secrets and hidden things.

A smile to draw me nigh to the sons of my kind and
To be a symbol of my glorification of the gods.

A tear to unite me with those of broken heart;
A smile to be a sign of my joy in existence.

I would rather that I died in yearning and longing than
that I live weary and despairing.

I want the hunger for love and beauty to be in the
Depths of my spirit, for I have seen those who are
Satisfied the most wretched of people.

I have heard the sigh of those in yearning and longing,
and it is sweeter than the sweetest melody.

With evening's coming the flower folds her petals
And sleeps, embracing her longing.

At morning's approach she opens her lips to meet
The sun's kiss.

The life of a flower is longing and fulfilment.
A tear and a smile.

The waters of the sea become vapor and rise and come
Together and are a cloud.

And the cloud floats above the hills and valleys
Until it meets the gentle breeze, then falls weeping
To the fields and joins with brooks and rivers to return to
the sea, its home.

The life of clouds is a parting and a meeting.
A tear and a smile.

And so does the spirit become separated from
The greater spirit to move in the world of matter
And pass as a cloud over the mountain of sorrow
And the plains of joy to meet the breeze of death
And return whence it came.