A Few Questions I Pose to the Unicorn
By Tawfiq Sayigh

In our inaugural dawn,
In the pageantry of conferring names,
When the legions streamed
Past the dais,
All animals, like paraders, paired together.
You headed the pageantry
Without a mate.
All felt whole, contented,
Marching in uniform stride,
You led them alone
Like the horn in the middle of your head;
Trippingly, with anxious steps,
You searched with sight and sniff
For her, the never-to-be-found even
In Highest Paradise.
In the magnificent dawn,
In the sweeping pageantry,
Only you and God were solitary.

And as He sought his Virgin
You sought yours;
For centuries He pursued her,
Searchèd in every corner,
Felt blissful upon finding her, and transformed.
Like you, He loved virginity,
And like you, He preserved it.
A true deity and a fabulous beast:
Would the sequel differ?
He wanted her to be His love
So she became the beloved
And a mother
So she concealed Him for nine months
Then gave birth to Him as He had wished,
And she fed Him honey and milk.
A true deity and a fabulous beast.
Your endeavor was the same,
So how could the sequel differ?
Did not her consecrated blood
Seek to drink His blood
Though it was not more sanguine than your blood?
And the thirty-three years,
Are they longer in God's life span
Than the hours in your life span?

Your love for the virgin
Is God's love for her;
The two-horned's shunning her,
To him, she is a land forbidden,
A sacred ground.
The others
Turn their pores into
Organs of sexuality,
Altars for blasphemy and obscenity.
They writhe
Spread open their legs,
Blasphemers
In the face of heaven.

And in your long night's journey,
Across furrows and rugged ground,
Waterways and hills,
How often
In dark nights
You gleamed as you scurried
Along the outskirts of scattered houses,
Slipped by like a luminous thought.
The ruminants were startled when they saw you
With a cloven left hoof
And a head unblinkerred.
They leaned to the right,
Taking pleasure from the hips,
Groping about their concupiscent regions,
For a hand that was not theirs.

And along the trails,
And among the trees,
You encountered them and dazzled their eyes:
Did glances not refresh you?
Did a resolution not entice you?
Did your legs not exhort you to rest?
And your veins to return for just one night?
Did the perfidious forts not fluster
And dispatch to you
Calls, commands, cries for help?
But the radar of your nose did not quiver,
You alien lover,
Who cannot be dislodged,
You legend of truehearted love
Given to fabulation,
Not existence.
(Our ancient ancestors
Allowed the taking of your flesh,
And "we ate it")
Yet, faster, you ran, faster,
Two wings in your feet,
Curls in your tail
Seeking the lonesome one
Who calls, cries for help, commands?