



## MARĀ BEBUS

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*Marā bebus* (Kiss me), the title of one of the most popular songs (*taṣnif*) of mid-twentieth century Iran. Its music was composed by Majid Vafādār and its lyrics by Ḥaydar Reqābi (Hāla); it was sung by Ḥasan Golnarāqi.

As a student, Reqābi was a member of the National Front and a strong supporter of Moḥammad Moṣaddeq (q.v.). After the *coup d'état* of August 1953, he went into hiding but was eventually allowed to leave the country and go into exile. When Reqābi visited his friend Vafādār for the last time, the latter played the music he had composed and asked his friend to write the lyrics. Reqābi began writing the words at once and promised to finish before leaving the country. Having spent his last night with his girlfriend, he telephoned from the airport and dictated the lyrics to Vafādār. His words are passionate and heart-felt.

The song did not have much success at first, when it was sung by the little-known singer Parvāna, but it remained fresh in the memories of Vafādār and his friends. Three years later, Golnarāqi, the son of a prominent *bāzāri* merchant, who was well known for his eloquent *ḡazal* singing, visited the famous musician Parviz Yāhaqqi (q.v.) at the recording studios of the National Radio, where Yāhaqqi was playing the violin and Mošir Homāyun Šahrdār the piano, to the music of this song. Golnarāqi, who knew the words, started singing along quietly; without the knowledge or consent of any of the musicians it was recorded by the sound engineer and was later presented to Noṣratallāh Mo'iniān and others who were in charge of broadcasting. They were pleased with the singing and decided to release it. However, Golnarāqi's



father opposed to the idea of his son becoming a well-known singer, because of his religious convictions. They eventually decided to broadcast the song under an assumed name during 1957. It had an immediate success and was thus immortalized. Golnarāqi never sang another song, though he did make a re-recording of this particular song later on. This later version is what remains in the archives of the Iranian National Radio.

*marā bebus / barāy-e akārin bār / to-rā kodā negahdār / ke miravam ba-su-ye sarnevešt / bahār-e mā gozašta/ gozaštahā gozašta / man-am ba jostojū-ye sarnevešt.*

*dar miān-e tufān ham-peymān bā qāyeqrānhā / gozašta az jān bāyad bogzašt az tufānhā / ba nimašabhā dāram bā yār-am peymānhā / ke bar-foruzam ātašhā dar kuhestānhā.*

Kiss me / For the last time / May God keep you safe / Because I am going towards my fate / Our spring is over / The past has gone / I am going to search for my fate.

In the midst of a storm, I will be in union with boatmen / Ignoring life one has to pass through the storm / At midnights I have vows with my friend / So that I can set alight fires in the mountains.

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