



# Navaie (نوایی)

BY JEANETTE GALLANT

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## INTRODUCTION

“Navaie” or “Navā’i” ( نوا ) is a folk song believed to have originated in the county of Torbat-e Jām ( تربت جام ) in Khorasan (Xorasan) province in northeastern Iran. The original text of “Navaie” was written in the eighteenth century by the poet Abd al-Baqi, better known as Tabib Isfahani (also spelled Tabib Esfahani). Isfahani was a *tabib* or court physician to the Persian King, Nadir Shah, who ruled from 1736–47.

Nazar-Mohammad Soleymani, born in 1908, is believed to be the song’s composer. Soleymani grew up in the Torbat-e Jām region in the village of Jozeghan near the Afghan border. An acclaimed player of the *dotār*, which is a two-string long-neck lute-like instrument, Soleymani hails from a family of dotarists and is considered to be one of the area’s most acclaimed *baxšis*, or bards of sung poetry. “Navaie” would later become popularized by Gholam-Ali PourAtaai, a *dotār* master often credited as the song’s composer.

The piece traditionally has been played in *dastgah-e nava* or *dastgah-e mahur*. This cross-cultural rendition uses *dastgah-e nava* because of the mode’s similarity to the minor scale in the Western tradition. “Navaie” is now so well known that most Iranians – young and old – would say they are familiar with it. My sincere thanks to my co-researcher, Iranian academic and santurist Dr. Peyman Heydarian, for his work in putting this short history together.

A large part of this song’s appeal is that it has a sense of mysticism which is so much a part of the Persian aesthetic. The song is about love, but a spiritual kind of love which is conceived as a ‘place’. The term ‘nava’ means ‘home’. As such, the type of love being described is a sort of nurturing, spiritual love that one needs to survive. To be without this kind of love means one would be ‘homeless’ (*bi nava*). The refrain, “navaie, navaie”, thus calls us to go to this place.

The English translation of the Farsi text, of course, does not do justice to the beauty of the poem. I am very grateful (and indebted) to Anita Asadi Nasab, a specialist in Iranian language and literature, for working with me on the English translation. The poem borrows from an old Persian version of two lovers, similar to that of Romeo and Juliette in the western world. By explaining a few metaphors, the meaning will become clearer. For instance, the female (called Leili) is being asked to come to this special place of love because youth passes by quickly. But, Leili is reluctant to get into the caravan (i.e.: to fall in love). The image of the bird reflects a wild part of us that wants to fly off and leave this universe in search of this spiritual home. Though the lover doesn’t want to suffer, he knows that when the bird ‘sits’ it not only has reached its spiritual homeland, but knows its true self. The ‘wonderful land of love’ or ‘feast of love’ describes a love that is a necessary type of sustenance, and a place where lovers meet on equal terms. Falling in love (i.e.: ‘following your caravan’) might create such deep emotion (i.e.: ‘heavy tears’), but it also has the ability to do the impossible (like creating mud in the desert). One must ‘tread lightly’ to protect this special place called, “Navaie”.

## ENGLISH TRANSLATION

### Refrain

نوایی نوایی نوایی نوایی

جوانی بگذرد تو قدرش ندانی

Navaie, Navaie, Navaie, Navaie,

Youth is fleeting, so appreciate it before it has passed!

### Verse 1

ندی غمت در نهانخانه دل نش

ندی به محمل نش یلی که ل ی به ناز

Longing nests hidden at the bottom of my sorrowful heart

with the same beauty and grace as Leili sitting perched upon the saddle.

### Verse 2

ی وحش ن مرغی مرنجان دلم راکه ا

ندی که برخاست مشکل نش ی ز بام

Don't let my heart suffer because my heart is like a wild bird which,

if it flies away, may not easily return.

### Refrain

نوایی نوایی نوایی نوایی

جوانی بگذرد تو قدرش ندانی

Navaie, Navaie, Navaie, Navaie,

Youth is fleeting, so appreciate it before it has passed!

### Verse 3

بنازم به بزم محبت که آنجا

ندی مقابل نشی به شاه پی گدا

I cherish the wonderful land of love,  
where a beggar and a king can sit face-to-face as equals.

### Verse 4

می به دنبال محمل چنان زارگر

ندی ام ناقه در گل نشی که ازگر

I will follow your caravan shedding such heavy tears  
that the desert would become muddy and cause your caravan to stop.

### Refrain

نوایی نوایی نوایی نوایی

جوانی بگذرد تو قدرش ندانی

Navaie, Navaie, Navaie, Navaie,

Youth is fleeting, so appreciate it before it has passed!

### Verse 5

به دنبال محمل سبکتر قدم زن

ندی به محمل نشی مبادا غبار

Follow the caravan and tread lightly  
lest dust rises up and falls upon it.

### Refrain

نوایی نوایی نوایی نوایی

جوانی بگذرد تو قدرش ندانی

Navaie, Navaie, Navaie, Navaie,

Youth is fleeting, so appreciate it before it has passed!

# Navaie (نوایی)

Traditional Persian Folksong

Arranged by Jeanette Gallant

A ♩ = 68

Soloist

Na - va - ie, - na - va - ie, - na - va - ie, - na - va - ie. Ja - va -

*p* *mp* *p*

SOPRANO

ALTO

TENOR

BASS

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9

nie - beg - za - rad - to ghad - rash - na - da - nie, Ja - va - nie - beg - za - rad - to ghad - rash - na - da - nie. Na - va -

*mp* *p* *mp* *p*

Na - va -

*p*

Na - va -

*p*

Ah, -

*p*

Ah, -

*p*

17

ie, na - va - ie, na - va - ie, na - va - ie. Ja - va - nie\_beg - za - rad\_to ghad - rash\_ na - da - nie, Ja - va -  
 mp p mp p <

ie, na - va - ie, na - va - ie, na - va - ie. Ja - va - nie\_beg - za - rad\_to ghad - rash\_ na - da - nie, Ja - va -  
 mp p mp p <

ie, na - va - ie, na - va - ie, na - va - ie. Ja - va - nie\_beg - za - rad\_to ghad - rash\_ na - da - nie, Ja - va -  
 mp p mp p <

Ah, Ah  
 mp p mp p <

Ah,  
 mp p mp p <

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25

1.

nie\_beg - za - rad\_to ghad - rash\_ na - da - nie, Gha - mat dar na - han - kha - ne del\_ ne - shi - nad. Gha - mat  
 mp mp mf mp <

nie\_beg - za - rad\_to ghad - rash\_ na - da - nie. Ah,  
 mp p mp mf

nie\_beg - za - rad\_to ghad - rash\_ na - da - nie. Ah,  
 mp p mp mf

Ah, Ah,  
 mp p mp mf

Ah Ah,  
 mp p mp mf

33

dar na-han-kha-ne del ne-shin-nad. Be na-zi ke Lei-lie be mah-mel ne-shi-nad. Be na-

*mf mp mf mp*

Ah, Ah,

*mp mf mp mf*

Ah, Ah,

*mp mf mp mf*

Ah, Ah, Ah

*mp mf mp mf*

Ah, Ah,

*mp mf mp mf*

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41

zi ke Lei-lie be mah-mel ne-shi-nad. Ma-ran-jan de-lam ra ke in morg-he vah-

*mf mp mf*

Ah Na-va-ie, na-va-ie, na-va-ie,

*mp mf mp p*

Ah Na-va-ie, na-va-ie, na-va-ie,

*mp mf mp p*

Ah

*mp mf mp*

Ah

*mp mf mp*

49

shie. Mar-an-jan de-lam ra ke in morg-he vah-shie. Ze bum-ie\_ ke bark-hast o mosh-

*mp* *mf* *mp* *mf*

na-va-ie.\_ Na-va-ie,\_ na-va-ie,\_ na-va-ie,\_ na-va-ie.\_ Ah,

*mf* *p* *mf* *mp*

na-va-ie.\_ Na-va-ie,\_ na-va-ie,\_ na-va-ie,\_ na-va-ie.\_ Ah,

*mf* *p* *mf* *mp*

Ah,

*mp*

Ah,

*mp*

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56

kel\_ ne - shin - nad. Ze bum - ie\_ ke bark - hast o mosh - kel\_ ne - shin - nad.

*mp* *mf* *p*

Ah

*mf* *mp* *mf* *p*

Ah

*mf* *mp* *mf* *p*

Ah

*mf* *mp* *mf* *p* *mp*

Na-va, na-va-

Ah

*mf* *mp* *mf* *p*

Na-va, na-va -



**D**

62 *a tempo*

Na - va - ie, na - va - ie, na - va - ie, na - va - ie. Ja - van - nie - beg - za -

*rit.* Na - va, na - va - ie. Na - va - ie, na - va - ie. Na - va - ie,

Na - va, na - va - ie. Na - va - ie, na - va - ie. Na - va - ie,

- - - ie. Na - va - ie, na - va - ie. Na - va - ie,

- - - ie. Na - va - ie, na - va - ie. Na - va - ie,

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**E**

70 3.

rad - to ghad - rash - na - da - nie, Ja - va - nie - beg - za - rad - to ghad - rash - na - da - nie. Be - na - zam be - baz -

na - va - ie. Na - va - ie, na - va - ie. Ah,

na - va - ie. Na - va - ie, na - va - ie. Ah,

na - va - ie. Na - va - ie, na - va - ie. Ah,

na - va - ie. Na - va - ie, na - va - ie. Ah,

78

me mo-ha - bat\_ ke an - ja. Be na-zam be\_ baz - me mo ha - bat\_ ke an - ja. Ge-da - ie\_ be sha -

*mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

Ah, Ah,

*mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

Ah, Ah,

*mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

Ah, Ah,

*mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

Ah, Ah,

*mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

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86

hie\_ mog - ha - bel\_ ne-shi - nad. Ge-da - ie\_ be sha - hie mog-ha - bel\_ ne-shi - nad. Be\_ don -

*mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

Ah

*mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

Ah

*mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

Ah

*mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

Ah

*mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

94 4.

bal me-mah-mel che-naan zar o ger-yam. Be don-bal me-mah-mal che-naan  
*mf mp mf*

Ah, Ah,  
*mp mf mp mp mf*

Na-va, na-va, na-va-ie. Na-va, na-va,  
*mp mf mp*

Na-va-ie, na-va-ie, na-va-ie. Na-va-ie, na-va  
*mp mf mp*

Ah, Ah,  
*mp mf mp mf*

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100

zar o ger-yam. Ke az ger-ye am nag-he dar gel ne-shi-nad. Ke az ger-ye am nag-he dar  
*mp mf mp*

na-va-ie. Ah, Ah  
*mf mp mf mp*

ie, na-va-ie. Ah, Ah  
*mf mp mf mp*

Ah, Ah  
*mp mf mp mf*

108

gel\_ne-shi - nad.

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G

120

Na - va - ie, na - va - ie, Na - va - ie,  
*mp* *mf* *mp*

Na - va - ie, na - va - ie, Na - va - ie,  
*mp* *mf* *mp*

Na - va - ie, na - va - ie, Na - va - ie,  
*mp* *mf* *mp*

Na - va - ie, na - va - ie, Na - va - ie,  
*mp* *mf* *mp*

132

5.

Be don-bal me-mah-mel sa-bok-tar\_ gha-dam  
*mp* *mf*

na-va - ie. Na-va - ie, na-va - ie. Ah,  
*mf mp mf mp mp mf*

na-va - ie. Na-va - ie, na-va - ie. Ah,  
*mf mp mf mp mp mf*

na-va - ie. Na-va - ie, na-va - ie. Ah,  
*mf mp mf mp mp mf*

na-va - ie. Na-va - ie, na-va - ie. Ah,  
*mf mp mf mp mp mf*

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142

zam. Be don-bal me-mah-mel sa-bok-tar\_ gha-dam - zam. Ma-ba-da\_ gho-ba - rie\_ be mah  
*mp mf mp mf*

Ah, Ah,  
*mp mf mp mf*

Ah, Ah,  
*mp mf mp mf*

Ah, Ah,  
*mp mf mp mf*

Ah, Ah,  
*mp mf mp mf*

149

mel ne - shi - nad. Ma - ba - da\_ gho - ba - rie be mah - mel ne - shi - nad. Na - va - ie, na - va -

*mp* *mf* *mp*

Ah Na - va - ie, na - va -

*mp* *mf* *mp*

Ah Na - va - ie, na - va -

*mp* *mf* *mp*

Ah Na - va - ie, na - va -

*mp* *mf* *mp*

Ah Na - va - ie, na - va -

*mp* *mf* *mp*

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157

-ie, na - va - ie, na - va - ie. Ja - va - nie beg - za - rad to ghad - rash na - da - nie, Ja - va - nie beg - za -

*mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

ie, na - va - ie, na - va - ie. Ja - va - nie, beg - za - rad to ghad - rash na - da - nie. Ja - va - nie, beg - za -

*mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

ie, na - va - ie, na - va - ie. Ja - va - nie, beg - za - rad to ghad - rash na - da - nie. Ja - va - nie, beg - za -

*mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

ie, na - va - ie, na - va - ie. Ja - va - nie, beg - za - rad to ghad - rash na - da - nie. Ja - va - nie, beg - za -

*mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

ie, na - va - ie, na - va - ie. Ja - va - nie, beg - za - rad to ghad - rash na - da - nie. Ja - va - nie, beg - za -

*mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

165

rad to ghad - rash na - da - nie. *mf* *p*

rad to ghad - rash na - da - nie. *mf* *p*

rad to ghad - rash na - da - nie. *mf* *p*

rad to ghad - rash na - da - nie. Na - va, na - va - *mf* *p* *p*

rad to ghad - rash na - da - nie. Na - va, na - va - *mf* *p*

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170

*rit.*

Na - va, na - va - ie. *mf* *f* *mp*

Na - va, na - va - ie. *mp* *f* *mp*

- - - - - ie. *f* *mp*

- - - - - ie. *f* *mp*

# Navaie (نوايي)

Arranged by Jeanette Gallant

**A** ♩ = 68

Daf

Setar

*p* *mp*

7

*p* *mp* *p*

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13

*mp* *p* *mp*

19

*mf* *mp* *mf*

25

*mp* *mf* *mp*



C

31

*mf* *mp* *mf*

37

*mp* *mf* *mp*

43

*mf* *mp* *mf*

PLEASE DO NOT COPY

49

*p* *mp* *mf*

57

*mp* *mf* *mp*

E

63

*mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

70

*mf* *mp* *mf*

76

*mp* *mf*

**F**

82

*mp* *mf* *mp*

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88

*mf* *mp* *mf*

94

*mp* *f* 16 bar improvisation

4

**G**

**H**

100 12 bar a cappella section

**I**

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