

Do not ask of me

Do not ask of me, my love,
that love I once had for you.

There was a time when
life was bright, and young and blooming,
and your sorrow was much more than
any other pain.

Your beauty gave the Spring everlasting youth;
your eyes, yes your eyes were everything,
all else was vain.

While you were with me, I thought, the world was mine.
Though now I know that it was an illusion
that's the way I imagined it to be;
for there are other sorrows in the world than love,
and other pleasures, too.

Do not ask of me, my love,
that love I once had for you!

Woven in silk and satin and brocade,
those dark and brutal curses of countless centuries:
bodies bathes in blood, smeared with dust,
sold from market-place to market-place,
bodies risen from the cauldron of diseases
pus dripping from their festering sores -
my eyes must also turn to these.

You're beautiful still, my love
but I'm helpless too;
for there are other sorrows in the world than love,
and other pleasures too.

Do not ask of me, my love,
that love I once had for you!

Translation by Shaheen Sultan Dhanji