

Another Day Has Passed

The breath's smoke clings to all the windows,
again a city disappears.

In the playhouse of day and night, only I remain
and this fortress of stone and brick.

There are footfalls of bleeding apprehensions.

Creeping lizardlike

a crowd of loquacious women rustles
toward me.

The branch flowering on the heart's window wilts with the heat of pain,
someone's disapproving glance stops at the frontiers of trust.

And today, too, it transpired that

the special condition of love's contract
was consigned to the account of a paper relationship.

Every page of the heart's book is witness
that the book has remained unread.

When the scratch of the black reed-pen cried out
the careworn circle of hearing contracted—

someone's name separated from another's
and expectation drew a line across the country of hearts.

When winds spoke

all the inhabitants of the house switched off the lights and went to sleep.
Another day has passed.

Translated from Urdu by Waqas Khwaja