

I Have Spat Out This Poem

I have spat out this poem
There, lick it up
with your long tongue
I endured
and changed your name
I swallowed fire
and did not consider you the sea
I took pride in my earth-brown complexion
and pride in the color of your blood
and laughed at the color of your blood
I drank up my teardrop
and dried up like the desert
I spent the night
and did not wait for morning
shattered the lamps
and burnt my hands
flung their ashes
to the seventh sky
from which no one wishes to return
Picking pearls from seashells
I tossed them into the sea
and filled my fists with glass
Have you ever seen the color of actual blood?
No, this is not a wound
I have covered the wound
and filled the cut with my own flesh
given away my eyes

and pieces of my body
made another human
If I were God
I would have blown my breath into it!

Translated from Urdu by Waqas Khwaja