

**The Evening**

It looks as if  
Every tree is like a temple,  
Deserted, spiritless, old,  
Searching for excuses for its desolation down the ages.  
Every balcony stands empty,  
Every doorway quiet.  
Under the roof-top the sky is like a priest,  
Ash-covered body, crimson-marked forehead,  
Sitting there, head bowed—God knows how long.

It seems as if  
Some hidden wizard  
Has cast a spell upon the sky,  
Keeping evening forever rocking within the lap of time.  
Night cannot fall, nor daylight ever set.  
The sky is waiting for the spell to break:  
The chain of silence fall away, the wheel of time to turn,  
A knell to sound, an ankle bell to ring,  
A statue stir, a girl cast off a veil.

*Faiz Ahmed Faiz*  
(translated by  
*Baidar Bakht and*  
*Kathleen Grant Jaeger*)