

On Women's Day

I wave no feminist flags
And yet --
And yet you will provoke me so!

You name a Woman's Day for me;
To whom do the other days belong?
Shall I thank your condescension,
Or applaud your sensitivity?
Shall I beat a drum and say:
Here at last is recognition for me?
Do you say I equal you,
Or are you afraid of ambiguities --
Did you befool your neighbour too,
Or, unblushing, have you deceived yourself?
Are you covering your guilt
At neglect silent, unstated?

Pedestals are so convenient --
You can stand me up on one,
For periodic washing of the deity --
So soul-satisfying for you:
To ring the bells and light the lamps,
To fix the days for worship --

This Being that you attempt
To tie down with legal sanctions
That define the limits of your panic --

..

That you veil for fear of yourself,
That you violate because you're powerless....
It has a power unreckoned
Because it inhabits your subconscious --
Do not choose to quarantine
This creature of light and shadows;
For she resides in a space

Beyond the reach of your hand --
Inviolable is her soul
Lifting itself to you in love;
Mistake not her reverence
For the breaking of her spirit --
Her breath shall touch you
Only if she chooses to include
You in her Infinity.....