

PRICE OF LIBERATION

I am supposed to bear it
The pain, the hurt, the shock
Without a sigh or a cry
For I am a woman
Independent, educated, liberated
Not a gentle housewife.

I can be jilted and ditched by a lover
Deserted and abandoned by a husband
I can cross my own roads
Find my own path
In agony, anguish or sorrow
And I'm not supposed to sigh or cry
For I am a woman
Independent, educated, liberated
Not a meek and mild housewife.

I can be lonely and unloved
I don't need loving words or a kiss
Or the security of a husband's arms
Or a friend's warm embrace
I have no soul, they think
Only 'brains'
I can confront a hostile world
Climb mountains, scale peaks, fall from roof-tops.

Indulge in the ritual of living
In an alien city amidst strange faces
Without a sigh or a cry
For I can think
And communicate, buy my own clothes
I have a mind of my own
Strong opinions, insight, outspoken views
I can grow in my career.

See lawyers, send tax returns, buy insurance
Live in a tower like the Lady of Shalott
Imprisoned
Without a cry in the wilderness
In memory of shattered dreams and
Broken promises of love
Without a sigh or a tear
Or ugly nightmares of fear
For I'm not a helpless, obedient housewife.
She is 'good' and I am 'bad'
For I am a woman
Independent, educated, liberated
And society makes me pay for it.

Shehla Burney