

An Exiled Bird

Adeeb Kamal Ad-Deen

Poetry

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Adeeb Kamal Ad-Deen (Babylon, 1953) is an Iraqi-Australian poet, journalist, and translator who holds degrees in Economics and English Literature from the University of Baghdad, as well as a Diploma of Interpreting (Arabic–English) from the Adelaide Institute of TAFE, South Australia.

He has published 31 poetry collections in both English and Arabic, including *Fatherhood, Something Wrong, My Life My Life, and An Exiled Bird*.

He won the major prize for Iraqi poetry in 1999. His work has been translated into many languages, including Italian, French, Spanish, Persian, and Urdu.

A substantial number of articles and books have been written about his poetic style, and many researchers have earned PhD and Master's degrees from universities in Iraq, Algeria, Lebanon, Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt, Iran, and India through critical studies of his work.

As a translator, he has translated short stories and poems into Arabic from writers in Australia, Japan, New Zealand, China, and the United States.

Adeeb Kamal Ad-Deen lives in Australia as an Australian citizen. He was a special guest at Friendly Street Poets in Adelaide in 2004 and at Gallery de la Catessen in Adelaide in 2006. His poetry has been published in *The Best Australian Poems 2007* (edited by Peter Rose) and *The Best Australian Poems 2012* (edited by John Tranter), as well as on numerous Australian websites and in magazines and journals such as *Southerly, Meanjin, and Friendly Street Poets*.

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PREFACE

This collection by Adeeb Kamal Ad-Deen (b. 1953, Iraq) continues the poet's preoccupations with the mystical force of the Arabic letter and Sufi symbolism, and in his later work, with exile from his homeland. He has earned his distinctive position within contemporary Arabic poetry, as recognized by his many publications and awards. Now living in Australia, he continues to grow his reputation through the English translations of his work.

An Exiled Bird advances Kamal Ad-Deen's lifelong exploration of the mystery of the letter and the texture of the human spirit. Here, that task is infused with the complexities and realities of displacement. That said, his poems transcend place and defy nostalgia, speaking in a voice that converses with the sacred and the secular, the private and the political.

The poems in this collection reflect recurring motifs such as the bird as a figure of exile, the sea as a representation of distance and separation, circus performers as a metaphor for the absurdity of life, ash as the fragile remains of grief and loss, and the prophetic claims of madmen.

Many of these motifs come together in the poem, *The Wolf Said: I Am the Sea*, a poem in twenty-five fragments. The wolf of the title denies help to a drowning man, and instead 'said: / I am the sea!' Here, the sea is a barrier between a homeland and a place of exile; and becomes an emblem of struggle and endurance. Whether the drowning man reaches the supposed respite of the shore or not, he is destined to meet the same fate.

Fire is used as a metaphor for human violence, where

For the fire has disguised itself in costumes:
No flames or smoke emerge from it,
Yet its sting, of course,
Is more fierce and savage.

This motif conjures the destructive forces that have plagued the recent and ancient history of Iraq, which originated in the human pursuit by some for power and greed.

Set against these violent images is kamal Ad-Deen's sustained exploration of the sacredness of Arabic letters, which in the Muslim tradition, hold divine revelations and spiritual resonances. This continuing connection to the Arabic language is part of an assertion of his identity and can be seen as a metaphor for his survival in a place of refuge where culture, language and customs are strange. I would also like to view it as the tool of inter-cultural communication, that navigates the entanglements of meaning through translation, yet it persists and thrives, even when (as stated in *The Wolf Said: I Am the Sea*)

Every letter is an alphabet of pain.

There are also poems infused with love and gentleness, such as *Magic*, where a kiss is an act of love, admiration, and adoration; both given and received. In it is not, love persists despite life's struggles, especially those witnessed in his homeland. It also weaves together Iraqi history and mythology, referencing revered Sufi and literary figures as well as the ancient Epic of Gilgamesh.

Several poems in *The Exiled Bird* span multiple pages, each section a poem in its own right, but also in conversation with those fragments that come before and after it. *Inheritance* explores a range of influences from around the globe, including many poets and mythical characters, and can be viewed as a homage to their legacies. It evokes a sense of yearning to learn from the lives and works of others, yet at times it examines feelings of creative doubt. The final stanza is a dedication to his father's legacy who 'bequeathed me nothing but a tear', and how this, and his faith, are the sources of his poetic inspiration and purpose.

Within these poems, the bird of exile of the title is not merely a metaphor but a living presence. Wounded and defiant, it soars across moments of memory and silence, hunted by crows and wolves, bemused by the absurdity of both circuses and of life: 'a song tired of repeating its words' (from *The sea and the mirror*).

The Exiled Bird is filled with surreal imagery but infused with hope; it delves into the personal and the political, the commonplace and the mystical. It is a

credit to Kamal Ad-Deen to overcome the trials of exile and to continue writing poetry, an act many displaced artists are unable to sustain. The poem, *The Tales of Meaning*, reflects this profound struggle in deeply moving language and imagery, where

Meaning tortured me. Meaning led my house to exile, arrested my questions,
Locked me in rooms of the forgotten, brought me out to you enchanted, to
find you in the same room, naked in the language of silver, and I was
bewildered.

It my hope that this collection will introduce many new readers to his work.
We are fortunate that Kamal Ad-Deen continues to create work that is so
profoundly relevant to global conversations about exile, language, and identity
that we can all engage with today.

Dr. Vivienne Glance

August 2025

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The Wolf Said: I am the Sea!

1.

**The wolf was walking along the seashore
When a drowning man cried out for help.
The wolf laughed at what he saw.
But the drowning man screamed:
Save me from the sea!
The wolf laughed again and said:
I am the sea!**

2.

**To shoot yourself in the head
Is easier than writing the same poem
A thousand times
With one letter
And one dot.**

3.

**The fire repeats itself.
This time, the fire emerges
From the window or from the wall.
But it is not the fire I once knew,
For the fire has disguised itself in costumes:**

No flames or smoke emerge from it,
Yet its sting, of course,
Is more fierce and savage.

4.

The writer with schizophrenia died
After reaching an extreme age
He spoke about love but practiced hatred,
Translated about lovers but danced with executioners,
He wept before God
To raise his glass of wine high to the tyrant.

5.

On your large mirror,
I wrote so much
Because it taught me so much.
But I try to forget it
And forget its scattered shards here and there:
On the bed,
On the table,
In the passport,
And in the book of my complete poetry.

6.

The hounds of time chased me long in the desert,
But the sight of the rising moon enchanted me,
So my poem fell prey to the savage chase
And the silver contemplation.

7.

To be without feet
And to be asked every day
To walk on the high circus rope
And beneath you are fire, drums, and the audience:
That is the poem.

8.

Do not number or title your poems,
For the letters of your poems
Are damnably similar,
Just as the drops of your blood
Are damnably similar.

9.

I remember you:
You used to walk here,
Sometimes writing the song's words,
Sometimes undressing,
Sometimes trying to listen to me,
Sometimes sleeping beside me like a tired cat.
I remember you well
With your endless names
And your countless faces,
I remember you to the point of forgetfulness.

10.

Poetry tries to save me from what I am in.

I thank it greatly
And I try to shake its hand,
So I extend my hand to notice that its fingers
Are the fingers of a homeless man
Sleeping naked in the street,
Completely naked.

11.

Death does not resemble the wolf or the snake,
Death resembles only itself.
That is the heart of the poem.

12.

Nothing remains of you
Except fragments of a dream.
I collect them on my bed every morning
With great gentleness
Because they are pure ashes.

13.

All my life, I did nothing
Except let my wounded body
Bleed as it drowned in the Euphrates (1),
Drowning before my eyes
Like a dead bird.

14.

In our globalized age,
The poet stopped dreaming,

So the poem stopped at the red traffic light
For a long time,
Until it was said that it began begging from passersby.

15.

When I received my new collection,
I discovered that the publisher had placed
My name as the title of the poem,
And the poem as the title of the letter,
And the letter as the title of the dot,
And the dot as the title for me.

16.

How can I wipe your tears
When I am mute
Created without hands or feet?

17.

Every letter is an alphabet of pain.
Every letter is an alphabet of the sun.

18.

Every letter that does not begin with the love
Of the One who says,
"Be, and it is,"
Is not a letter.
This is what the poet said, for whom they erected
A great statue of envy and hatred.

19.

When my heart filled with embers,
The poem's scent overflowed with longing.

20.

My critic friend wanted to write about my poems,
But he discovered that writing about them
Is like walking on the high circus rope
Above fire, drums, and the audience.
So he hesitated,
While he was still at the circus door
With the entrance card in his hand.

21.

How can you describe the forest
Without naming the trees and flowers
Or painting the feathers of the crow and the dove?
How?

22.

In exile,
All my dreams ended,
So I had to mend my old dreams
One by one.
And every time I mended a dream,
I kissed it as a lover kisses his beloved,
Then I gently threw it into the sea.

23.

**When the anthology editor
Decided to choose a poem for me,
He chose an old poem, a very old one.
I don't know why he chose it;
Because it was tattooed with the blood of Enkidu (2)
And the tears of Gilgamesh (3)?**

24.

**She, the passionate reader, told me:
Your poems have unforgettable images,
And their sea is mysterious and frightening,
But they are not fit for love.
Because love poems
Must be simple to the point of naivety
And naked to the point of delirium.**

25.

**Because I see so many crows in my dreams,
I decided to paint my night with white colour!**

^^

(1) Euphrates: A large and historical river that originates in Turkey and passes through Syria and Iraq. It was mentioned in the heavenly books.
(2) Enkidu is a major character in the Epic of Gilgamesh, a wartime companion and loyal friend of the King of Uruk, Gilgamesh. When Enkidu died, Gilgamesh wept bitterly for him.

(3) Gilgamesh: A legendary historical king of the Sumerian state of Uruk, an important hero in the myths of ancient Mesopotamia, and the main character in the Epic of Gilgamesh, which is the first epic poem in history to explore the secret of immortality.

A Statue

In a fit of mad rage,
I burned all your pictures.
I didn't know then
That the ashes of your pictures
Had been embodied in my memory,
In a complete statue that lacked nothing.
A statue I touch with the fingers of a miser
Every day,
And I am amazed
That the warmth still lingers within it.
And I am amazed,
After kissing it again and again,
That its heart still beats!
Yes,
All the statues in my memory
Were shattered, headless.
Only your statue
Remained complete,
Lacking nothing but the words!

Inheritance

1.

When Ted Hughes died,
He bequeathed me his crow, trapped in a cage.
Because his crow knew nothing
But heresy and blasphemy,
I set it free at once.
But the crow did not fly far,
As I had expected.
Instead, it perched on the electricity pole
Near my balcony,
Staring at me with hateful eyes
And a black heart.

2.

When Sylvia Plath (1) committed suicide,
She bequeathed me her small red mirror.
Because I do not like women's mirrors,
I threw it into the nearby river.
But the mirror did not sink quickly,
As I had expected.
Instead, it travelled from river to river
Until it reached the sea,

Where it turned into a grand ship of mirrors.

3.

When Charlie Chaplin died,
He bequeathed me his mocking laugh,
His hat, and his cane.

I did not benefit from his mocking laugh,
For I am no good at acting.

Nor did I benefit from his hat-

When I placed it on my head, I wept.

And I did not benefit from his cane-

When I leaned on it,

I tumbled to the ground,

Rolling for a long, long time.

4.

When Dante died,
He bequeathed me his book: Inferno.

Because I truly live in hell,

I did not find the book enjoyable,

Despite its magnificent language

And magical imagery.

So I donated it to the Society of Atheist Poets,

Who accepted it reluctantly.

5.

When Dic El-Jinn (2) died,

He bequeathed me his collection of deep elegies

For his beloved, whom he killed
In a moment of doubt and madness.
Because I hate all elegies,
I gifted it to the city librarian,
Who mistook it for a book about jinn,
Then threw it back at me, shouting:
“Take your book and leave, you madman!”

6.

When Tagore died,
He bequeathed me his long white beard.
Because I could never wear his magnificent beard,
Nor could I sell it to anyone,
I gave it to the owner of an accessories shop,
Who took it from me with great dignity
And threw it, in front of me, into the trash bin!

7.

When Lorca was killed,
He bequeathed me the bullets that killed him.
I was at a loss for what to do with them.
Then it occurred to me
To gift them to the director of the World Poets’ Museum.
He was stunned by the bullets
And even more stunned when he saw
Lorca’s blood on them,
But he remained silent, like the silence of graves.

Thus, I departed his elegant glass office,
Leaving him bewildered with his stone eyes
And mute heart.

8.

When Sinbad died,
He bequeathed me his enchanting book of tales
About gold, silver, and women.
So I decided to sail the sea
To where Sinbad had sailed.
But I found no gold, silver, or women.
Instead, I found an ancient book
Written by the local historian, saying:
“Here Sinbad arrived.
And because of his many lies, delusions, and whims,
We held a feast for him and roasted him”.

9.

When Beckett died,
He bequeathed me his great play
And his miserable clowns with their deep delirium.
I wondered what to do with all that.
But one day,
I wrote a great alphabetic play
About the absurdity of waiting,
A play no one ever watched
Because no one ever performed it.

10.

When Hemingway committed suicide,
He bequeathed me the gun he used.
I wondered what to do with it.
Then it occurred to me to try shooting myself
In the head,
As Hemingway had done before me.
But I was sad,
Indeed, I cried bitterly
When I found the gun empty of bullets

11.

When Jan Dammo (3) died as a stranger
In the land of kangaroos,
He bequeathed me an empty bottle of wine.
I immediately donated it
To the World Alcoholics' Association,
So its members rejoiced and danced with immense uproar,
While exchanging curses and insults.

12.

When Mahmoud Al-Breikan (4) was killed,
He bequeathed me his poem: "The Lighthouse Keeper."
I was confused about what to do with it.
But he visited me, the dead man,
In my poetic moment
And held my hand so that I could write

My poem about him:"The Lighthouse Keeper Killed".

13.

When Al-Tawhidi (5) died,

He bequeathed me the remains of his burned books.

I did not know what to do with them.

I sat before them

And wrote, with tearful eyes,

A poem about the smoke rising from them.

And whenever people passed by, they mocked me,

Saying: "A madman burned his books,

And another weeps over them."

14.

When Al-Hallaj (6) was crucified and burned,

He bequeathed me the ashes of his body.

I was bewildered with them.

But one sunset,

I put them in small bags

And scattered them in the Tigris (7).

I scattered one bag every year

And I am still in this state:

Neither I die

Nor do the bags run out.

15.

When Gilgamesh (8) died,

He bequeathed me his disappointment

**And his useless search for the secret of immortality.
I could do nothing for his disappointment,
For it was mythical in heart and lips,
And I never thought of the secret of immortality.
In the age of globalization,
Immortality belongs only to charlatans,
Clowns, and scoundrels.**

16.

**When my father died,
He bequeathed me nothing but a tear.
I was at a loss for what to do with it.
But one dawn,
I put the tear in my palm
And extended my palm to God,
To whatever God willed.
And it returned to me with dozens of letters
And hundreds of poems.**

^^

- (1) Sylvia Plath: A famous American poet who lived a tormented childhood and a miserable life with her husband, the famous poet Ted Hughes, before ending her life by committing suicide.
- (2) Dic El-Jinn: An ancient Arab poet famous for his debauchery and his elegy for his lover whom he killed and mourned throughout his life.
- (3) Jan Dammo: An Iraqi poet famous for his vagabondage and alcoholism. He arrived in Australia in the late nineties of the last century as a refugee and died a quick and mysterious death in Sydney.

- (4) Mahmoud Al-Breikan: A famous Iraqi poet known for his asceticism, his seclusion, and his truly profound poem: “The Lighthouse Keeper”. He was killed by a thief. I wrote a poem about his death entitled: “The Lighthouse Keeper, Killed”.
- (5) Al-Tawhidi: A unique Iraqi writer, Sufi and philosopher. He lived in the Abbasid era. He burned his books at the end of his life after he found that true writing only brings its writer poverty and sorrow.
- (6) Al-Hallaj: One of the most famous Sufis of Baghdad. He lived in Baghdad during the Abbasid era and was crucified there after being accused of heresy.
- (7) Tigris: A large river that originates in Turkey and reaches Iraq, irrigating its capital, Baghdad, and other Iraqi cities with its fresh water and unique beauty.
- (8) Gilgamesh: A legendary historical king of the Sumerian state of Uruk, an important hero in the myths of ancient Mesopotamia, and the main character in the Epic of Gilgamesh, which is the first epic poem in history to explore the secret of immortality.

The Crow and the Dove

When the crow flew away and did not return,
The people on Noah's Ark cried out in terror.
Only I - and I was a little boy -
Saw the crow's wing,
I mean, saw the blackness of its wing,
So I threw a stone at the crow.
Did I hit it?
I did not know.
Did I kill it?
I did not know.
Why was I the only one who saw
The blackness of the crow
And the people did not see it?
I did not know.

2.

When the dove returned with the olive branch,
The people on the Ark cried out happily.
But the crow quickly returned
To shout at me with a hoarse voice:
"You wretch,
Why did you throw the stone at me?"
The crow approached me
And struck my eye,
So the letters appeared on my forehead
Violent, full of mystery and secrets.
Then it pecked at my skull,
And blood gushed out violently, like a waterfall.

3.

The people got off the Ark happily and joyfully,
Led by the dignified Noah who contemplated
The horror of what had happened.
I tried to stop
The waterfall of blood that covered
My head and face.

**So the dove approached me
And placed on my head a handful of ash:
A small handful,
Full of mystery and secrets.**

4.

**So I have remained in this state
For thousands upon thousands of years:
The crow pecks at my skull,
And blood gushes out violently, like a waterfall.
And the dove places,
In vain,
A handful of ash on my skull!**

\

Your Beautiful Neck

Once,

I wanted to kiss your neck with an unparalleled madness

But your neck turned to me,

Suddenly,

And cut me in half;

Half was struck with madness

And half was struck with letters and madness.

*

Thus, I wrote about your neck

With letters of kisses,

And I wrote about your absence that extended

As long as God willed

With letters of absence.

Indeed, I wrote about your ghosts,

Which haunted me day and night,

With letters of ghosts.

*

Then I translated what I wrote about you

Into countless other languages.

I translated what I wrote about you

**Into the language of the drunk;
Drunk on love, wine, and desires,
Into the language of the mystics, dervishes, and the wise,
Into the language of the deprived, the persecuted
And the lost,
Into the language of the drowned, the ruined, the refugees,
Into the language of dreams and delusions,
Into the language of hallucinations and delirium,
Into the language of magicians, sorcerers, and astrologers.
But the best language I translated into,
What I wrote about you and your kisses,
Was, alas, the language of those sentenced to exile,
I mean the language of those sentenced to death.**

Astonishment

The one who invented sleep was truly a genius.

Every time I go to sleep,

I find myself transformed into a bird,

So I feel happy.

When I wake up,

I find myself transformed into a tree,

So I feel warm.

But when I have my breakfast,

And I watch the television

Displaying the great disasters of the universe

One after another,

I feel that I am a human being

So I am struck with astonishment!

After...

1.

After Noah's crow died,
It left me a secret: its black feathers
And its terrifying screech in a black bag.
It said:
Do not play with the feathers,
Or your days will turn black.
Do not listen to the screech,
Or you will go deaf.
But I opened the bag,
Scattered the feathers in the sea,
So the sea turned black.
Then I scattered the screech in the air,
So my letters wept long in pain,
And still do.

2.

After I walked a thousand years on the shore,
I found, on one strange dawn,
The remains of Noah's ark.
I entered it with tearful eyes
And a heart fluttering like Noah's dove.

I prayed in it for a thousand years,
Wept for a thousand years,
Slept on its bare, ancient wood
For a thousand years,
And contemplated the sun and the moon within it
For a thousand years.
But alas, I met no survivors.

3.

After Abbas ibn Firnas* drowned,
He left me his large wings
And asked me to continue the journey.
I wore them,
And in the blink of an eye,
I fell like Abbas ibn Firnas into the sea.
But the sea was merciful to me,
Leaving me a floating corpse
On its waters for eternity,
A happy corpse that speaks the secrets of letters
And unlocks the mysteries of speech.

4.

After Hermann Hesse died,
He left me his great manuscript: Siddhartha.
I read it madly, day and night,
And read it madly in various languages,
Until I realized that woman is a vessel of gold,

**And gold is a vessel of woman,
Pleasure is a vessel of air,
And air is a vessel of pleasure.**

5.

**After I danced long in my youth with Zorba,
My feet grew weary to the point of exhaustion.
So I sat for a long time on the shore's sand,
And perhaps I slept,
Seeing various wars,
Ships sinking,
Corpses floating,
And endless storms.
When I awoke,
I found Zorba a beautiful lie
And his dance my greatest illusion.**

^^

* Abbas ibn Firnas (810 – 887 CE) was an astronomer, engineer, musician, and Arabic-language poet lived in Andalusia. He was reported to have an experimented of bold flight ended by his death

An Overdose of Pain

1.

A quarter of a song,
Half a dance,
Three-quarters of a body;
That is my secret that lost its way forever.

2.

A quarter of a woman or a child,
Half a man,
Three-quarters of a boat;
That is a happy family
Drowned just now in a sea of darkness.

3.

A quarter of the Euphrates,
Half a god,
Three-quarters of a myth;
That is Babylon, which has baffled history,
As it searches for its sons who stir up chaos and strife.

4.

A quarter of a lover,
Half a madman,

**Three-quarters of a bed;
That is a complete love story
Shared by millions of internet visitors,
As the story of Adam and Eve.**

5.

**A quarter of a letter,
Half a dot,
Three-quarters of a scream;
That is a letter-based poem
Whose poet committed suicide yesterday
After taking an overdose of pain.**

It was Not...

**It was not my fault
That I lost the seven Eid dirhams
Near the gate of the Iraqi Museum
And blamed Gilgamesh (1) for what had happened.
For he said to me:
I am like you, O child,
I lost my friend and the herb of my soul.
I am like you, unable
To save the eye of Eid from the eye of tears.
Then, as I crossed the bridge,
I found Al-Hallaj (2) crucified,
And I wept for the great humiliation that befell him.
But it was not my fault.
- So he said to me -
"This is the trial of love, O lover,
You, who are astonished by what has happened
Or will happen.
It is a trial to see what others do not see**

And to know from God what they do not know.
So wipe your tears,
For I will be burned tomorrow,
And my ashes will be scattered the day after
At the corner of the bridge.
Wipe your tears,
For you may weep in silence more than I did
And be crucified in secret
On the bridge of exiled letters.
But it was not my fault
When I found Al-Sayyab (3) in Albab Alsharqi (4),
Leaning on his cane, alone,
Barely able to walk.
I said to him
As we approached the mosque
And left the Freedom Monument behind:
How are you, Abu Ghilan?
He said: Give me a cigarette first.
And after exhaling its smoke,
He added, in a low voice:
Beware of this time
And the lies of this time.
It was not the fault of my heart, which was destined

**To be the Tigris (5) of a dream
And the Euphrates (6) of a letter, love, and longing.
It was not the fault of the Song of Rain,
O poet who will see
Enough horror to kill a country
Whose night never stops hallucinating,
Nor its dawn ever muttering.**

^^

- (1) Gilgamesh: A legendary historical king of the Sumerian state of Uruk, an important hero in the myths of ancient Mesopotamia, and the main character in the Epic of Gilgamesh, which is the first epic poem in history to explore the secret of immortality.
- (2) Al-Hallaj: One of the most famous Sufis of Baghdad. He lived in Baghdad during the Abbasid era and was crucified there after being accused of heresy.
- (3) Al-Sayyab (1926-1964) is a famous Iraqi poet and one of the most important contemporary Arab poets. He lived a life full of suffering and illness. One of his most famous works is the poem “The Rain Song.”
- (4) Albab Alsharqi: an area in Baghdad.
- (5) Tigris: A large river that originates in Turkey and reaches Iraq, irrigating its capital, Baghdad, and other Iraqi cities with its fresh water and unique beauty.
- (6) Euphrates: A large and historical river that originates in Turkey and passes through Syria and Iraq. It was mentioned in the heavenly books.

Magic

** A yellow leaf **

A leaf falls from my big tree every day,
Yellow in color, of course.
Yesterday I kissed something amazing
So the tree returned to the leaf.
Sorry, I meant the leaf returned to the tree
It came back green, so green.
Is this the magic of the kiss
Or the magic of the woman I kissed in amazement?

** The labyrinth of poetry**

Your kiss brought me back to the labyrinth of poetry
Humbled,
laughing,
mocking.
Oh...

How weak I was then,
For your kiss to bring me back,
Without any resistance,
To the labyrinth in which I was lost
From cradle to grave
In the company of all the madmen of the earth
And its ascetics
And its lost lovers
For all eternity.

** Be gentle with me**

I was sleeping
On a floating plank near the shore.
Now,
The plank has moved toward the great sea.
O plank, be gentle with me,
For it was nothing but a kiss.
Be gentle with me, for I have forgotten the sea,
Everything that belongs to the sea:
Its waves, dreams, floods...
I have even forgotten the letters S, E, A!

A Garden

The garden is far away in a far country.
The garden is empty except for strangers
Waving their hands in ambiguous ways.
Is it a greeting?
What kind of greeting?
And why are they waving their hands
While the rain is pouring heavily?
We don't know each other!
Never!
Why, then, do they insist on waving: greeting?
Is it a custom in this beautiful, lonely garden
Or in this country?
Or because the rain has gotten heavier and heavier?
I know the rain gets heavier,
And I've often seen it get heavier and heavier.
And every time the ground is almost drowned
I think something will happen
In
this
garden.

But no!

I mean nothing new is happening or will happen.

But no!

Strangers are waving their hands!

Some of them wore nylon coats over their clothes,

Some held newspapers over their heads,

Some took shelter under trees

Or under sheds.

Some of them laughed,

Some kissed their love,

And some - few - were crying.

Was I crying?

No!

But the rain was pouring down hard.

And the garden was getting more mysterious and strange.

A Dialogue in Lost Time

A journalist with soft lips

And a wonderful perfume asked me:

"Describe yourself in one word!"

I replied: "A bird."

* "A bird? Where?" And she laughed.

_ "Between the sky and the earth."

"Beautiful." She lit a cigarette, exhaling its smoke gently.

* "So, you are a poet?" She asked.

_ "Yes, in lost time."

* "I don't understand. What does lost time look like?"

_ "Lost time is also a bird,

But it is bigger than me.

Its wings are larger than the wings of my letter.

And when it flies, I forget how to fly,

So I run after it like a lost child."

The Stranger

The stranger stopped at the spring at sunset,
He stopped to drink, and so did his horse.
There, he found a human eye,
A human hand,
A golden mask,
A golden egg,
And a large book.

*

The stranger gazed at the spring's water for a long time,
Until the spring spoke to him:
O stranger,
Choose one thing and no more.
Know that the eye will make you see the unseen,
The hand will make you a brave warrior,
The mask will make women, in every time and place,
Race to meet you,
The egg will make you the richest of the rich,
And the book will make you the wisest of the wise.
The stranger laughed at the spring's words
Until his eyes filled with tears.

And he said: Thank you, O spring,
I do not want the eye or the hand,
Not the mask, nor the egg, nor the book.
I am the stranger,
I have no land or goal,
No destination, no desire, no decision.
I have tried wisdom, the unseen, women,
Pleasure, wealth, and wars.
Yet I found nothing to help me
With my enduring torment and destined fate.
Then the stranger fell silent for a long time and said:
O spring,
Do you have a cure for boredom?
* The spring said: No.
Do you have a cure for alienation?
* The spring said: No.
Do you have a cure for death?
The spring said: No.
The stranger laughed again
Until his eyes filled with tears.
*
The spring felt ashamed of the stranger's words,
And its water began to pale, little by little,
Until, after forty days,
It became a mere trace of nothingness.

The Ney's Question

The ney asks me about the meaning of life,
And insists a lot on the question.
So I answer: The kisses of my beloved.
It weeps, it weeps for a long time,
Until I become
The air that moves through its holes,
Carrying the lament of tears.

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

The ney is a traditional flute in Asia, used in classical, folk, and Sufi music

Hamlet the Suicide

When Hamlet knew that people everywhere
Were damn sick
Of his black confusion and black hesitation,
He decided to disappear from the stage forever.
The next day,
The theatres of the world,
From east to west,
Staged countless plays of the Prince of Denmark,
Performed by the mad, the half-mad,
And, of course, the quarter-mad.
The most astonishing to the audience were:
Hamlet and Gilgamesh and the Serpent.
Hamlet in Babylon, stripping naked.
Hamlet and Sinbad.
Hamlet the Pharaoh.
Hamlet the Oilman speaking Sanskrit.
Hamlet playing roulette in a desert tent.
Hamlet in a Mexican hat and a Cuban cigar.
Hamlet and the Devil's eyes.
Hamlet opening a secret museum in Madagascar.

Hamlet on YouTube

Weeping for drowned refugees in the sea.

Hamlet begging the dictators for forgiveness.

Hamlet drinking adulterated alcohol day and night.

Hamlet delivering a Facebook speech

Instead of a throne speech.

Hamlet without a *H* or a *T*._

Hamlet with two heads and one eye.

Hamlet the transgender.

Hamlet the impostor.

Hamlet the suicide.

Scream

When you asked me to fly,
I told you: I am not a bird.
I have no feathers.
I have no wings.
I do not know how to fly.
I cannot see at night.
There is no air here for me to fly.

*

You didn't like all these answers, of course.
And it was a magical scene
When you shot me
With a shocked heart,
Tearful eyes,
And a hoarse voice.
But, fortunately or unfortunately,
I did not die.
And remained alive
To see the policeman,
The journalist,
The critic,
The surgeon,

**The magician,
And the madman
Gathering around my corpse
To identify it.**

**It was a very funny scene,
And a very sad one,
Because none of them recognized me,
Not even you!
And I was right in front of them
Screaming my name,
Screaming loudly day and night.
But it seems that the screams of the dead
Cannot be heard by the living,
Or by those who can be called the living.**

An Ordeal

What a soul;
It carried the sun in its right hand
And the moon in its left,
And remained complaining
Of the darkness until its last breath.

*

What a soul;
It dreamed of its new childhood shoes,
So it drowned in the river.
It dreamed of the date of the kiss,
So it flew over the bed of sorrow and tears.
And it dreamed of the song of love,
So they filled its beautiful youth
With songs of war and terror.

*

What an ordeal;
To have a soul
Like the wings of a colourful butterfly
In the time of bats.

Eye of a Needle

In the eye of the needle,
I was born, lived, and wandered,
And wrote countless poems
About love and deprivation,
About death and delirium.
Thus, I created my letters, one by one,
Giving each letter a universe,
And each dot a star.
In the eye of the needle,
I was born, wept, prayed, loved,
Became mysterious like a talisman, and got lost.
In the eye of the needle, I lived until... I died.

And He Had a Memory

**It is amazing that your memory is a minefield,
But what is even more amazing
Is that you find under every mine a letter.**

*

**And because you found in your memory
Countless mines,
That is, countless letters,
You decided to take amazement
To the furthest extreme:
To turn your letters into fables.**

*

**Yes,
You turned them into small and large fables,
Light and heavy,
Full of talismans or clear as the clothes of the homeless,
Colourful as the sun or dark as darkness,
Funny as the laughter of children
Or tearful as the tears of a mother
Who lost her son in war.
And you began exporting these fables night and day,**

**By airplanes, ships, and on the backs of camels,
To the land of the Romans and the Indians,
To the land of the Blacks and the Panthers,
To the land of necks ripe for harvest,
And to the land of Waq Waq*.**

**Your fables now have large markets of illusion,
And endless demands.
They have friends, quasi-enemies,
Devotees, heretics, and imitators.**

Ah...

**How great your fables are!
Your bankrupt fables, filled only with pain and regret,
Your fables that everyone loved,
Everyone adored,
Yet did not pay a single penny for them.
Even the airplanes that carried them got tired
Of circling around themselves,
The ships that carried them met an unknown fate,
And the camels that carried them on their backs
While crossing deserts and valleys returned to you
Complaining of hunger and thirst.**

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

*Land of Waq Waq: A fictional, imaginary land about which many mythical stories have been written.

O You Who Sail Alone

1.

O letter,

The red pirate will fight you,
The pirate who tore down the throne
And handed it over to the rabble,
Because in your heart is a wave of childhood moons.
The blue pirate will fight you,
The pirate who pushed everything
Into a whirlpool of death
After killing his brothers
And selling his sons in the slave market,
Because in your heart is a wave of suns.
The yellow pirate will fight you;
The pirate of the mad, the effete,
And the eaters of corpses.
The black pirate will fight you:
The pirate of the wicked unbelievers.
And the wind pirate will fight you,
The one who changes his course
Whenever the wind changes its address.

2.

Yes,

That is your glory, O letter.

All the pirates excel at hating you

Because you proposed a dot for beauty and love.

And tried to establish,

If only in imagination,

A new sea in which pirates cannot sail.

Yes,

That is your glory,

O you who sail alone,

Except for your dot: your bare wood

That the waves toss forever and ever.

The Sea and the Mirror

1.

The woman swam in the sea,
So the sea swam in the mirror.
The mirror shattered for an unknown reason,
So the woman was lost,
And the sea, of course, was lost too.

2.

The woman sat on my tree
And exchanged my branch for the bird's eggs.
I wanted to capture the scene,
But the image appeared naive,
Feathers flying from it,
And the woman appeared naked,
Clouds flying from her.

3.

Life is a song tired of repeating its words:
The nests of the sea,
The bridges of the sea,
And the birds of the sea.

4.

My beloved,
I wanted to write about you,
But I couldn't,
Because the letter cannot sit on the paper.
It flies at times,
Weeps at others,
Changes its masks constantly,
And tries to commit suicide night and day.

5.

My beloved,
You are a ship searching for a port.

**Your journey will never stop
Because your sea never stops
Raving and flooding.**

6.

**Whenever I was confused, I rushed to the poem
And knocked on its door like a madman.**

7.

**In the great circus,
Every time I learned a terrifying game,
They asked me to learn a new one:
A game even more horrifying.**

8.

**In the zoo,
I contemplated the tiger for a long time,
Until it spoke to me and said:
Your sadness resembles me,
But your fangs are larger than mine.**

9.

**All my sea dreams surrendered
To the obsessive gray.
Only a few fertile dreams remained,
So I danced with them in the mirror,
The dance of barbarians.**

10.

**The last time I consulted my memory,
I said to it:
I want to exchange my life for something else.**

It laughed and said:

Unfortunately, I don't deal with ancient ships.

11.

When the sea saw me collapsing,

It decided to tell me a few jokes.

The jokes were really funny:

The more I laughed,

The more I drowned!

12.

My letters were braver than me.

In the last scene,

They all tried the cup of poison

And enjoyed the taste of death

Drop

By

Drop.

13.

After the mirror shattered,

The sea poured out of it,

And its secrets entered quietly at times,

And with great anger at others,

Into my small apartment under the door,

Until my apartment was completely flooded.

At that time, I cried for myself

Because I don't know how to swim,

And I've never tried the art of floating.

14.

Why is it written for the owner of the mirror

To stare in bewilderment

At the woman's naked body and weep?

15.

After the mirror shattered,

The woman came out naked through the door

And entered the sea

Through the hole in my memory, dancing on embers.

16.

But the sea did not return home tonight

For it was sold after a fake auction.

And people were ordered

To speak in a low voice on the beach

Or to replace their words with signs,

And to strip naked day and night

Because nudity is permissible, healthy, and free,

As the daily sea news bulletin says.

17.

When the mirror shattered,

The squadron leader asked me:

Why are you trying to fly so low

That your airplane

Almost touches the rooftops of houses?

At that moment, I remembered that in my childhood,

I used to hunt scorpions in the backyard of the house.

While my happy childhood friend

Was collecting stamps with butterflies drawn on them.

18.

The woman came out of the mirror or entered it.

It doesn't matter.

Life repeats itself every day.

19.

Because I often looked at the mirror

And at the sea that poured out of it

Carrying fragments of the soul,

I began to write my poems

With a feather that fell from Noah's crow.

Alain Delon

Is it fair, my friend Alain,
To lend me your eyes in a terrifying hanging scene,
Those strange eyes,
Mysterious,
Breathtaking,
Dazzling,
As you walk with terrified feet to the guillotine?
Is it fair to do this to me in a cinematic scene
- And I, the pursued, exiled actor-
For the scene to end quickly
After four minutes or less,
And for the director to reward you
With a bag full of gold,
Along with a crowd of blonde women
Devouring every piece of you,
Eating your lips like honey?
While I end up re-enacting the scene every day
For seventy years,
Walking with terrified feet to the guillotine,
With those strange eyes,
Mysterious,

**Breathtaking,
Dazzling,
Then the director rewards me
With a rusty bag full of dust,
And a crowd of monkeys
Jumping around me, laughing mockingly?
Is this fair, my friend Alain?
Is this fair, my beautiful friend?**

Fell and Ended

Drops fell from memory,
Perhaps from the heart,
Or from the eye.
If they fell from memory,
They are surely poems.
If they fell from the heart,
They are drops of blood without a doubt.
Or from the eye, they are, of course, tears.
They might be all of these or none of them
What matters is that they fell to the ground,
They fell, and everything ended,
They fell and ended.

The Illusion Maker

**The tailor who deceived the emperor,
Dressing him in clothes of illusion,
Until he paraded him before the people,
Completely naked.**

This tailor transformed

- After the emperor was hanged in a joyful celebration-

Into a TV broadcaster who read the news

In a strange way;

He only moved his lips,

And the people imagined they were hearing him!

My Friend Darwin

**My friend Darwin insists
That the origin of man is a monkey,
While I insist that his origin is a bird!
He tells me about genes and natural selection,
And I tell him about poetry and poetic imagination.
He is always filled with happiness,
While I am always filled with doubts.
So, I climb the cloud of my poem every day,
Trying to fly like a real bird,
Or an imaginary one,
Hoping to feel happy like him,
Even if just once!**

A Dialogue with Gilgamesh's Snake

The snake that stole Gilgamesh's herb,
I found it in a legend.
It was sleeping on the sand,
Rather, it was pretending to sleep.
Since I was fascinated by the world and Gilgamesh,
I was not frightened by it,
And I asked it: Did you really steal
The herb of immortality from Gilgamesh
And leave him to face his greatest despair?"

The snake raised its head,
And said: Yes.

I said: How fortunate I am to meet you!
I want something of the secret of your immortality!

It said: O you, no immortality is for you,
Unless you carry me around your neck day and night,
And endure my anger and whims,
To the point where I may coil
Around your neck whenever I wish!

I replied terrified: No, no, no.

It said: You have no choice but to follow me

**If you want something of my secret.
But I will exhaust you for a lifetime,
For my skin changes endlessly,
And my whims and paths change endlessly.
While you will follow me with bare feet
And a bewildered heart.
The sun will burn you,
Thirst and hunger will torment you,
And deprivation will tear you apart!
I don't think you can bear all this.
So get out of my sight, you man...
And play the game of your despair far from me,
O grandson of the miserable Gilgamesh!**

The Unhappy King of Letters

The happy kings of the earth gathered in a grand celebration.
They came from the east and the west,
From the north and the south,
Crowned with crowns of gold and silver,
Or with crowns of fruits and feathers,
Or with crowns of skulls and bones.
They were white and black,
Red and yellow,
Old and young.
And after delivering their hollow speeches,
I climbed the stage to deliver mine,
I mean my letter-based poem that protests
Against heads rolling in vain in wars,
Against wars that ignited volcanoes of hatred and blood,
And against blood that floods the streets
Of the poor and the destitute.
But the happy kings of the earth
Prevented me from delivering my speech,
I mean, my letter-based poem,
Because I am not a king like them, as they claim,
And I am unhappy as they claim too.

The Sun of the Poem's Cup

In the midst of a mysterious and violent dream,
I was given a cup from which
A small sun sprang,
A sun that never stops shining
And knows not how to disappear or die.
Until, when I awoke,
I found it beside me on the bed.
I rejoiced, even danced madly,
Then I grew fearful for the cup,
Until fear surrounded me from every side,
I feared for it from every eye,
Or soul,
Or hand,
Or tongue.
The cup laughed as it saw my deep confusion,
And said: Put me in the center of your heart,
For it is the only place
Where thieves cannot reach.
So, I quickly, joyfully,

Placed it in the center of my heart
And asked: What is your name?
The cup laughed again and said:
Have you not recognized me?
I am the cup of the poem,
I am the sun of the poem's cup,

I am the one who will give the ashes of your fading life
The letter of immortality,
O poet, besieged by death from every side.

A Song to Man

1.

This is a song I have prepared for you,
A very simple
And very short one.
A song that speaks
With great longing about the letters of LOVE,
And tries with great insistence
To draw for it two wings,
And a nest in the end
A nest large enough for the egg of an exiled bird
With no name or address.

2.

I suppose you will help me
In listening to it
Or repeating its simple words with me.
Perhaps you will give it
Something like a rhythm
If your heart beats with some kindness
And is not made of wood or stone.
Perhaps you will rise and dance to its rhythm

**If your heart has known deprivation
And has been burned by the fire of abandonment.**

3.

But do not dance the dance of monkeys,

Nor the dance of wolves,

For that will surely ruin the text.

Dance like me: the Sufis dance,

Or the dance of orphans in the shelter

On Eid day,

Or dance the dance of the drowned

If you have one leg.

But if you hate everything

Even yourself,

Do not dance at all.

Be content with your hidden brutality

And do not try to spread it on the ropes

Even if you can dance

The dance of a person sentenced to death!

Thank You, O Sea

Once, the sea opened its secret wallet to me,
And I saw the sunken ships,
The wrecked ships,
The ships that time has consumed,
And the ships still tossed by the waves,
Carrying the bones, tears, and screams of refugees.

*

I was never happy
To see this secret wallet,
For it made me cry until my eyes swelled.

*

I wiped my tears and whispered to my heart:
"I do not love the secrets of the sea,
Nor its sunken and wrecked ships,
Nor those filled with the bones of the dead.
I love the sea's joys on the shore."

*

But one day, I discovered- or it was revealed to me-
That the sea's joys on the shore are mere nonsense;
The women and their strange shapes,

**The women and their odd dances,
The women and their endless lies by the seashore.**

**Thus, both joys and secrets
Fell in a single stroke of fate.
Thus, the sea became beautiful
Without secrets or sunken ships,
Without women, dances, or lies.**

**Yes,
The sea became lonely,
Blue like my lonely heart.**

**I wiped the tears of my letters and whispered
To my heart:
Thank you, O sea,
Thank you for being exactly like me.**

Commandments

1.

O letter,

At the moment you enter the stage,

Naked as a fish in water,

You will be surprised by the letters surrounding you:

Letters of mercenaries and scoundrels,

Letters of madmen and impostors,

Letters of sufis, lovers, and prophets.

You will be surprised, as you enter the stage,

Naked as a child born in this very hour,

By the tears of those letters,

Or their regret,

Or confusion,

Or lies,

Or delirium,

Or their eternal loss.

2.

And to hold the cloud of the soul on the stage

And release it to God's sky,

You must remain steadfast

Amid the circus,
And meditate in the garden of the dot,
And rejoice in the arena,
And sing inside-outside the choir,
And dance on the tightrope.

3.

When you complete your difficult role
-With overwhelming success or certain failure-
Heading toward the exit,
Remember,
O letter,
Those letters you met
In the circus or the arena,
In the choir or the garden,
Or on the tightrope.
Remember their painful ache and fleeting joys.
Remember how you revealed,
With the secret of the sufis
And the longing of lovers,
Their tears,
Their regret,
Confusion,
Lies,
Delirium,
And their eternal loss!

The Tales of Meaning

Seven fruitful years passed with tales of birds and beasts, seven fruitful years passed with tales of black honey, lilies, and water, and seven carefree years passed, knowing no home, no address, no meaning, while I manifested in the language of the mysterious body. I erased rains that never fell, clouds that never feared, and lakes from the bitter marshes of my childhood. I complained of my pain to the years, but no years could understand this blue ache. I complained of my murdered meaning to silver words: no use, to sand words: no use, to fire words: no use, so I fled in terror. The circle of high palm fronds spun in my body, and the wind passed. Years went extinct: what should I do to escape a dream that possesses my side, takes me to exile, buries me alive, pulls me out, stands me before God alone, and loses me, Only to meet me at night and cut off my head as I cross the walls of wisdom. The head falls into the river of collapsing bricks. I shout to the crowd: "This is my head, beware!" The stunned body remains violent, knowing no path or meaning to death. Meaning tortured me. Meaning led my house to exile, arrested my questions, Locked me in the rooms of the forgotten, brought me out to you enchanted, to find you in the same room, naked in the language of silver, and I was bewildered. Ages passed as I manifested in your nakedness until my eye died, and my ear fell silent, unable to utter words. Barefoot ages passed, fruitful with thorns. My teeth inflamed, fell. The diseases of the world rose in my body. Worms ate the toes of my feet. Death wrapped around my side, and the wolf of molten gold tossed me, until the fox laughed: the fox of my friends from the excess of my heart's childishness. Summer wept at my shameless nakedness, And the cloud cleared away from me, left me.

Then I saw the dead fighting at your door for an eternity. So I asked, as a mad prophet, about your meaning: Your name: Who are you?

The past fell, and what comes arrived, and the hours cleared away- no use. My body turns green like grass and dies like sand, And is lost in the river of words- no use. I am killed, or my head is raised on a spear, my name is called in the wind-no use. For your languages have killed me. Diseases did not eat

me, nor did the sword slaughter me, nor did the past besiege me with the call to the shameless sea. From between your languages emerges a naked body, Opening the door of the grave to the door of the house, calling me. So I age quickly, while among the childhood names of my youth. Your naked body calls me a bitter apple. It calls me, and I wander exile: the exile of sand, the exile of the grave, the exile of cities strangled by meaninglessness, until I reach the clouds.

Chopin and the Sea

My dear Chopin,

I will take with me the dances of your fingers

On the piano and go to the sea.

I will drink them with the dances of the waves,

May this wonderful wine heal the wounds of the poem.

*

The dances of your fingers on the piano

Light the candle of the soul

With a waterfall of roses and the scent of peace.

Perhaps you draw hope?

Yes,

Draw hope as a cloud of rain

In the middle of the desert of this time.

*

Does your language dance?

Yes, it dances, dances, and dances.

It is the dance of the letter if it flies in longing

To a dream that fled far, far away

Outside every meaning, description, and image.

*

Here I am, sleeping alone on the beach,
Except for the overflow of your spirit.
Your fingers on the piano dance near my ears,
And my heart's longing drinks them slowly,
Sip by sip,
Until the time of the poem's dawn arrives,
And the moment of time's completion.

The Miracle's Letter

I was born a long time ago,
A long time in darkness and light.
I used to shine to the point of burning,
Even turning into ashes.
But — and this is my miracle —
I would gather my ashes
And quietly scatter them over my poems,
So they would ignite with the secret of their letters,
Like the heart of a lonely orphan
Expelled from the orphanage
On a rainy night.

Between Life and Death

Since we parted,
More than one war has broken out,
More than one earthquake,
And disaster has swept over us.
The sky has rained upon us more than once;
Black rain,
Red rain,
Rain filled with shrapnel.
Since we parted,
We have eaten more than one kind of bread;
Bread filled with terror,
Bread filled with sand and gravel,
Bread filled with hunger.
And we have been exiled more than once;
To the land of Waq Waq*,
To the land of the mad, the addicts, and the drunk,
To the land of the white, the black,
The red, and the yellow.
It doesn't matter.
What matters is that I still imagine you alive,

Even though I am certain you have passed away

In one of those wars,

Or in one of those rains,

Or in one of those breads,

Or in one of those happy exiles!

^^

*Land of Waq Waq: A fictional, imaginary land about which many mythical stories have been written.

*A Blind Man Dancing with a Woman Who Owns
All the Eyes of the World*

Blind,
To be blind,
And dance with a woman who owns
All the eyes of the world;
That is love,
That is blind love.

*

Well,
The dance was wonderful,
But it lasted only for a while.
Then the world collapsed,
And all the eyes of the world fell into darkness.

*

Don't trouble yourself, the woman is gone.
Or rather, she flew away
After stealing a piece of your heart
And then throwing it away.
Where?
You cannot see.

**You are blind,
And that is a very good thing,
For you will spend all your life
Imagining where she threw your heart,
Or the piece of your heart.**

Where?

On the bed?

On the makeup mirror?

In the absurd cup of night?

In the river of darkness?

Blind,

You are blind.

You saw nothing

And understood nothing,

But you were dancing with a woman

Who owns all the eyes of the world.

A Savage Forgetfulness

In the garden of the soul,
Forgetting walked laughing ahead of me.
So when I called out your name,
After a long separation,
I was stunned,
No, I was shocked,
For the crescent was not moonlit,
Nor was the dot shining.

*

After a separation of forty years,
You came and knocked on the door,
I was lying on my exile,
Which is wide enough for seven seas,
And I had nothing to offer
To a queen turned beggar,
To a lover who sold her beloved
At the dream of the first kiss,
To a woman who does not understand
The music of time's stabs.

*

After forty years,
I wasn't who I was,
But you were as you always were:
A woman of masks that no longer serve any purpose
On a planet of the naked, even without a fig leaf,
A woman of honeyed words that went extinct
Like primitive languages,
Primitive symbols,
And primitive tribes.

*

Thus, forgetfulness began
To dance before me in a savage dance,
Until I let the features of your face
Fall along a path
Stretching from my heart to the navel of my soul,
A path where life disappears
Like the sun sinking into the sea at dusk,
A path where letters commit suicide,
One after another.

A Strange Angel

**You exploded a spring,
So I rejoiced.
And you turned it into a river of love,
So I danced to the point of madness.
Then you returned and filled the river
With snakes, scorpions, and beasts!
I was confused, I trembled until I screamed:
How can I deal
With all these snakes, scorpions, and beasts
When I don't even know how to swim?
You didn't respond with a single letter,
Only your tears replied like rain.
Now,
After half a century
Of this mythical scene that never leaves
The heart and soul,
I content myself by painting you
As a strange angel
Dancing among snakes, scorpions, and beasts.
And whenever the painting or its talismanic secret fades,**

I rush to your cheeks

To moisten the painting with some of your tears,

Bewildered, without a doubt.

My Mythical Dream

Last night,
I dreamed that I opened
The window of my life wide,
And the day was astonishing.
So I started drinking it gently and quietly.
Then I went back to sleep
To wake up in the evening,
The window was still open as it was
And the stars were shining, shining,
Lighting the sky.
So I extended my magic little spoon
And started eating them star by star.
When I was full,
I returned to my mythical dream
With great slowness.

A Poem about the Garden

My father rose from his hemiplegia
To water the roses in the garden.
Pieces of gold and candy fell around me,
And seven birds chirped above my head
In very cheerful colors
And very cheerful music.
I danced a little
And began to collect the pieces of candy,
But I found them, alas, rotten,
And the pieces of gold,
And I found them, alas, fake.
I looked at my father to find him
A lifeless corpse on the ground.
Like any child shocked by the sight of death,
I began to cry beside his corpse.
I cried for a long, long time
Until I turned, after seven birds,
I mean after seven ages,
Into an old man
Watering the roses in the garden,
The garden that never existed.