

My life, my life!

Adeeb Kamal Ad-Deen

Poetry

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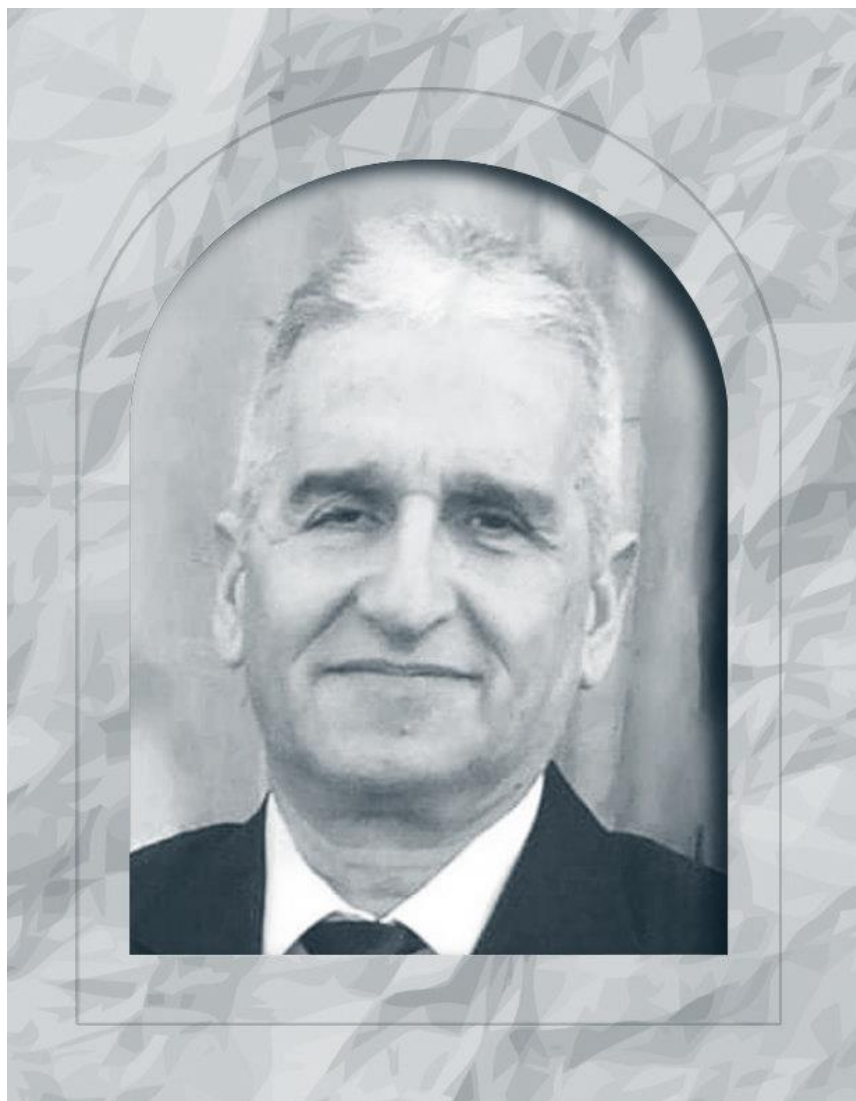
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Adeeb Kamal Ad-Deen

Adeeb Kamal Ad-Deen is a poet, journalist and translator who has degrees in Economics 1976 and English Literature from the University of Baghdad 1999 plus a Diploma of Interpreting (Arabic-English) from Adelaide Institute of TAFE, South Australia 2005.

He has published 25 poetry collections in English and Arabic and won the major prize of Iraqi poetry in 1999. His poetry has been translated into many languages such as Italian, French, Spanish and Urdu. A huge number of articles and books have been written about his poetry style and a lot of researchers have earned doctorates and master's degrees in the Universities of Iraq, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Iran and India by writing critiques of his works.

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

Adeeb Kamal Ad-Deen now lives in Australia as an Australian citizen. 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), on many Australian websites and in magazines and books, such as *Southerly*, *Meanjin* and *Friendly Street Poets*.

www.adeebk.com

Introduction

Of letters and dots, words, language and life

Anne-Marie Smith

The most recent non-Arabic volume of Adeeb Kamal Ad-Deen's work was published in France in 2017. When Najeh Jegham discussed Adeeb in the preface he wrote for the work he translated entitled *La lettre et les gouttes de l'amour**, he summarized the traumatic circumstances of an exiled creator like him: 'What do you do to face the violence of history?' he asked. 'What is left when all is lost and ruins get worse and worse, the destructions go on, the cradle of humanity resembles more a tomb, and the light from shell exploding upon shell, when the earth of Mesopotamia is all demolition?'

'Language, uncompromising language remains', he added arguing that because language is born from life it has 'a necessary and salutary role' in preserving it. We are led to understand that beyond its entity for creativity and beauty, language can also serve as a tool that ensures survival.

'I will kindle a letter from a letter

So I can keep being visionary all my life.'

My poem swims and laughs

The struggle of the questioning mind

Adeeb's title to his book sets us on an enquiry trip and gives us a hint into the Adeeb Kamal Ad-Deen's sensation of existentiality. Can we then be forgiven for asking if "*My life, my life!*" is the book title -what, according to Adeeb, is the question?

The many themes and struggles in Adeeb's poetry are felt when the protagonist has participated first-hand to a process in an absolute and authentic ritual.

'If you want to write a poem about the rain

You can only write

When your soul-before your body-has been wetted by the rain'.

That is the poem

A poet's spirit will suffer intense pain and agony. Adeeb talks of the string of questions he must face every night:

'I see many question marks

Dancing above the heads every night.

So I stop writing sometimes...' *A false dance*

This is reminiscent of the search for meaning or truth in one's existence- a principle of Albert Camus' philosophical existentialism.

The dilemma of exile

Although we might think that exile versus home can be a clear-cut dichotomy which Adeeb compares to heaven and hell, as hinted below,

'So murmur the poem of exile

When you are at home.

And murmur the poem of home

When you are on the train of Heaven

That goes to Hell'. *That is the poem*

it is also possible to encounter a different interpretation of home as a place filled with endless tricks that exile can top up with further tricks, leaving the reader wondering if living in exile can be as false as staying home.

'Exile is an additional trick

Of the endless tricks of the homeland' *Drowning my memory in the water*

The challenges of imagery and memory

For Adeeb images act as covers, no matter how clever the metaphor, no matter how thin the disguise, it does not allow reality to be exposed in full .He refers to theatrical masks of a Shakespearian nature and other common example of disguises caused by dust, imagery and figuration:

The statues tell more lies than their makers.

The statues tell more lies

Than the faces of their dictators and kings. *A false dance*

Another poem also points out that memory also can create serious hassles for the human mind.

‘My letter struggles against blindness to see you

Or to see the ash of your memory’. *The ghost of your last poem*

The bluntness of truth

There is no compromise emerging out of Adeeb’s voice. The reality of life must stay visible. Native English language speakers often use the idiomatic phrase ‘naked truth’ yet Adeeb here gives us a literal interpretation of naked truth as an entity that we can only see when naked or uncovered:

‘He was completely naked.

His face was covered with dust’...

Death loves the naked only! ... *A false dance*

Truth is obtained by uncovering any false or fake images, by taking away any interfering substance- metaphors, rain, water, light or fire that may hide the nature of personal reality. You cannot cover truth with an image, because truth is a positive assertion which is described negatively by use of its antonym –lies.

The rain always surprises my memory

With its beautiful lies.

So I welcomed it happily with my tears. *A false dance*

Truth can take the form of continuous statement, of repeated self-expression:

‘My letter sat in the middle of the night naked

In front of the mirror

And began to write my elegy through the hours,

The days and the years’. *A piece of gold*

The love of language, words and letters

Truth is brought to us via language. Truth is discovered by the viewing of bodies baring all, of naked women, and of the dead who, we are told to be naked when faced by others.

To affirm truth we use language that gives each letter of the alphabet a sacred nature rendering words and expression a weapon of truthfulness, which allows the poet to be himself, to be mad and be liberated, often by women who provide a mirror into his soul.

‘To live without a dot,

It means you live without a letter.

To live without a letter,

It means you live without a mirror’.

A mirror of the letters

Survival depends on the poet being able to face himself through women, words and crucially self-reflexion.

‘In the exile there is no mirror to see yourself.

So the poet looks in his letter as a mirror

Day and night’.

Drowning my memory in the water

Close observation of the work of Adeeb Kamal Ad-Deen may even encourage the reader to explore whether words, in their customary definitions, are just processes of the poet’s imagination and can in fact exist.

... ‘The poem,

I mean the sentence,

I mean the word,

By its nine letters

Cannot be born

As long as they can’t reach each other

In the end!

A poem without a title

Poems

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- 16 *No, no and no*
- 18 *My poem swims and laughs*
- 21 *A mirror of the letters*
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- 80 *Gilgamesh's tears*
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- 85 *The ghost of your last poem*
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- 89 *Searching for the knob of the door*
- 91 *A piece of gold*
- 93 *The eternal drowned*
- 94 *The sign of the tragedy*
- 95 *A white piece of paper*

My life, my life!

A leaf has dropped from the tree,
That is my life.
The bird has landed and picked up that leaf
And has gone back to the top of the tree.
The tree is very high
And its leg is smooth like a curse.
The bird does not open its mouth
To let me live or die.
The bird does not stop flapping its wings.
The bird does not care for me at all
And I weep or laugh or scream:
My life, my life!

No, no and no

Do not approach the fire
Because its lights are misleading like the woman's body.
Do not go to the cities of the bridges, pleasure and the ships
Because the bridges are convex,
The pleasure is a mine that floats over the water
And the captain does not stop drinking alcohol
And cursing the passers-by day and night.
Do not wear- even for a joking matter- the bird's wing
Because the dawn is killed on the threshold of the house.
Do not watch the film of tears, deprivation
And the black mirrors
Because you have seen it a thousand times
Without understanding anything of it
Or of its heavy tears.

*

You spend your life meditating through
Your prospects and your lost self,
Do not speak with the sea after today
Because it does not like speaking to the strangers,
Although it is strange too.
Do not trust the legend because it is the lie of history
Nor the novel
Because it is obsessed with those who have no names
While they are falling from the wall of memory

Or from the hotel's window.

Do not trust the painting because it is a scribbling pain

Nor the statue because it is a worship of the body.

Finally,

Do not praise the poem

Because it will end after a line from now,

Without any meaning at all,

Just repeating: No, no and no!

My poem swims and laughs

I will kindle a letter from a letter
So I can keep being visionary all my life.

*

I will kindle a night from a night
Until I find the dawn.

*

I will kindle a dream from a dream
Until I build for my soul a skyscraper of light.

*

The sea is very close.
It is extended like a dream in front of me,
But in the poem, I have heard its waves very blue
And I touched its blueness
Falling from the fingers of my palm.

*

When the sun of my life disappears
The wind will pass through my memory
And not find a letter to receive
Or meditate or blow with as it used to.
Will the sun of my life be sad?
Or will it passby
As the passer-by who does not care about anyone?

*

A letter that spoke a lot about the spinster bomb,

When grown-up
The letter married it
Giving birth to a great war.

*

A letter taught me poetry until I lost my memory.
When I went to complain,
The letter never knew me.

*

The poem of the letter led me to the well of death
Instead of the well of love or the well of wisdom.

*

The wells of journeying are countless:
The first is the well of gloominess
Then the well of fear,
The well of hunger,
The well of pleasure,
The well of deprivation,
The well of moan
And the well of exile,
But to find a water well
It means you have found the magic lamp.

*

The letters looked at the piece of a paper
Asking me as an innocent child:
Why are you writing?
I was confused by this question
And I answered in a hurry:

I do not answer such questions!

*

As a king of the sea

I decided to draw a sea-sized painting of the sea.

That is impossible.

So I painted the sea with the seventy years of impossible.

*

I will kindle my memory with a handful of letters and papers

Because it is a memory that burns forever

And does not know reassurance

Just as the beggar knows the loaf of bread.

*

Was my memory a wandering bird

Flipping over my head throughout life?

Or was it a river wrestling forever

With a huge dam that was built in

A secret location?

*

I put the sea in my poem

So my heart flooded and wept,

But my poem was still swimming and laughing.

A mirror of the letters

To live without a dot,
It means you live without a letter.
To live without a letter,
It means you live without a mirror.

*

You can simply make a mirror.
Take a large fragment
From the glass of your shattered window
Wash it well of your bitter memories,
Wash it with water or tears.
Put on its face the drops of your blood,
Let it dry under the sunlight.
Now tell me:
What do you see?
Tell me very quietly:
What do you see?
Please do not scream.
Do not scream for help.
Do not shed tears.
Do not murmur.
Do not mock.
Do not laugh or even smile.
Just, tell me: What do you see?
And I promise you

I will keep your secret forever.

That is the poem

1.

The long poem is boring.

Do not write it

Unless you want to write about the whole journey;

Gilgamesh's journey for example.

And the short poem looks like a matchstick.

So place your cigarette near it before lighting.

2.

The bad poems are like foolish friends.

Try to delete them from memory

Before putting on a piece of paper.

3.

If you want to write a poem about the rain

You can only write

When your soul - before your body - has been wetted by the rain.

4.

Each poem has a sun.

(Do you know that?)

Each poem has an exile.

(Can you believe what I say?)

So murmur the poem of exile

When you are at home.

And murmur the poem of home

When you are on the train of Heaven

That goes to Hell.

5.

On the occasion of mentioning Hell,
Write as much as you can
About the Hell-on-Earth
Because it has extended now
And has almost joined with the Hell-on-Sky.

6.

If you love the sea
And you want to write about it,
Do not take a picture with it
While wearing formal wear
As the stupid poets do.
Go to it naked,
Completely naked,
Like Abel and Cain.

7.

The ideological poets are funny
Because they write one poem for all lifetime,
One poem uses all the metonymies and the metaphors
To prove that the dictators,
Despite all the rivers of blood
Those have been made by them,
Are just doves of peace.

8.

If you are a poet so be a lover.
Thus, you can get the complete poem of madness.

9.

The mirror looks like a woman,
But the woman does not look like the mirror
Unless you kiss her.
That is the poem.

Yes, no, maybe

In the book that I had rewritten for a thousand times,
I wrote a dedication saying a lot, but I forgot it.
Forgetfulness is a great disease that afflicts the lovers,
The crazy and the exiled.
His symptoms are writing poetry and knocking on
The letter's door in vain.
Sometimes-
And this is a secret that I hope no one will believe-
They knock on the door of death.
It is not important who is knocking on the door of death.
It is important that I hear the knock on the door now,
But I will not open the door
Until I finish writing this poem.

*

I moved a lot from one city to another,
I mean from poem to poem.
I was travelling by bus, plane, or dream
With eyes full of tears,
This is a bad habit without a doubt
For those who have trouble with sleep.
Who said: life is a dream?
I do not know, but he was not a liar at all.

*

Although the poem is not numbered

I try to put the correct number on it until I become balanced.

I mean: until I do not turn into a flying letter or a lost dot.

*

The alcoholic poet died.

He was falling out of bed during his sleep.

I was falling out of bed during sleep like him

Although I was not drinking at all.

Could this bring laughter? Perhaps.

*

The alcoholic poet began jumping of joy on the bed

While I read for him a poem about alcohol and the embers.

But he told me

While I try in vain to comb my hair in front of the mirror:

My friend, so stay, you try and your hair refuses.

The dialogue of poetry and hair ended

When a bomb dropped between us.

He went to the end of the dot to die alone.

And I went to the end of the letter to die alone as well.

There was only a time difference in our death.

*

This is a book about love,

But it is not specific for lovers.

The lovers are watching tenth-grade films now

To practice the art of kissing.

In my time the letter was the way to get it,

So the letter was afflicted with

The burning passion and naive songs.

I spent forty years
Releasing it from passion and naivety
Until it turned into rock.
Am I a piece of rock? I do not think so.

*

Prophets were lovers as well,
Lovers with eyes that kohl made more beautiful.
They loved the truth and wrote their messages to God
So He accepted them with good acceptance.
Now I am living in a time when there are no prophets in it,
But there are monkeys of every kind
Chewing letters and dots,
Dancing on theatres,
Playing with millions of dollars,
And shooting with lightning speed
At everybody that does not agree with them
Even if it is just a boogie type.

*

The interrupted sentences-not the short ones-
Are the backbone of the poem.
The poor drown in the sea and the rich will laugh
From the depths.
They drink cognac with ice and lemon.
And when the bombs drop on the heads of the poor
Some stupid broadcast men and more stupid broadcast women
Transmit the happy news on television channels in a hurry.
I am glad that I do not have a television.

I sold it days before the war
And I spent the night alone contemplating
The whiteness of the wall like any great philosopher.
*

I have wished deeply to paint my poetry in colour,
But I live in a narrow apartment.
The owner of the building has prevented me
From introducing colours into the apartment.
Although he pities me,
Buys copies of my books at a symbolic price
Sends me every week a sum of money.
So I can pay him as a rent
Or as a price for the air that I breathe constantly!
Is that funny?
Yes, no, maybe.

Shahrazad

You will tell the tales - what beautiful tales they are!-
To Shahryar watching your lips astonishingly.
You will claim that great wars have broken out,
And the loaded ships with gold sank on the high seas,
Kings have been hanged and then relieved from the cross,
Thieves have ruled Baghdad's alleyways,
Lovers have become mad of love and suffering of love
And women practiced magic and sex
In the river, in the evening and candle time.
You will claim that you have been with Sinbad
On each ship.
And the doors have been opened for you
And the daughters of your gender,
For their desires, machinations and lies.
King Shahryar will be astonished by your great tales
He who meditates every night in your lips,
Then in your neck
To see how the sword can get a position in it!
He will be amazed as you lead him like a blind man
Out of the realm of illusion
Then into the realm of illusion.
Shahryar will forget little by little
The tragedy that has quaked him
And made him pure ashes.

He will pay attention to you:

To every tale,

To every dream,

To every word,

To every letter

Until he becomes at the end of your magic tales

A happy and peaceful child,

A child without a memory!

There are doors

Do not get very happy
When the door of love is open for you.
There are doors whoever enters them
Will only come out lost or absent-minded.

*

My beloved, your apples are ripe!
So where is the problem?
In the rain or the wind or the orchard?

*

Instead of cursing the darkness
I will write one poem with one letter,
But the language has been out of action
For a thousand years
And the letters are in an eternal strike.

*

The half-lighted rooms
Wait the total darkness every night
Or a lightning bolt burns everything.

*

I will lie down with my exhausted body
On the relaxing bed of exile.
Before I fall asleep
I knock on the door of the dream seven times.
Maybe it could fix my life

Which has been destroyed by time
Seventy times in a legendary success.

*

When the mood of the poem changes
In less than a minute
To get darkened
After it has been as clean as a mirror.
The poet does not know what to do:
Does he cry or laugh or break the mirror?

*

Love is a very old joke.
You should laugh or pretend to laugh
Whenever you hear it
So that time does not become angry with you
Throwing more ash or the letters of ash
On your poem.

*

Thank you,
Who I do not know your name
And I will not know
Because you made me a poet
With your heart that looks like a black rainbow,
Your shaking nakedness
And your hellish kisses.

*

The door was suddenly opened.
The letter came out of the poem absent-minded,

Hallucinating,

Grumbling

And laughing with tearing eyes.

If the sea wakes up from its sleep

The sea said to me once:

I am in love.

I wanted to ask it: Why?

But I wept.

*

I am afraid to go to ask the sea.

It has been half a century since we parted.

The heart of the sea is large,

But it does not love the strange questions

Nor the strangers' questions.

*

I am now like the sea

Looking at people only.

I am not smiling or laughing.

I am not speaking any words or signs.

I am not asking, of course, any questions.

*

I do not want to throw a stone at the ship:

The captain's ship,

The naked women

And the dog that does not stop barking,

But time has thrown me like a stone

On the beach of hell.

*

The sea hates chess.
Its favorite hobby is to sleep, deep sleep,
But if it wakes up from its sleep feeling terrified
It will begin suffocating the pawns, the queens, the kings,
The bishops and the knights
One by one.
Its mind does not become comfortable at all
Unless it ends up suffocating and drowning them,
All of them.

A false dance

The dance - I mean the trip - was false
Because it was full of the crocodiles' tears
And the fake magicians' drums.

*

Who will believe that the earth is raining
And the sky is shaking about what it has seen?

*

It is important that we do not fall apart.
So as not to fall apart
We should heal our collapsed bodies
Night and day
When they are waving goodbye.

*

After finishing their violent dance,
The dancers come out in a long row
To enter the quiet, fearful hall of death
To strip one by one.

Yes,
Death loves the naked only!

*

The statues tell more lies than their makers.
The statues tell more lies
Than the faces of their dictators and kings.

*

The woman turns her face right and left
Like the poet's heart,
But she wants to play only a little bit.
While the poet wants to create a sun
To shine through the darkness
Of his tormented and cursed spirit.

*

I see many question marks
Dancing above the heads every night.
So I stop writing sometimes
And stop saying the allowed speech another time.

*

In the war of the letter
There are flags for everything.

*

The rain always surprises my memory
With its beautiful lies.
So I welcomed it happily with my tears.

*

The letter spent his life dreaming of settling down.
In the end, he did not get only a suitcase
And a fake passport
Issued by the kingdom of the dot,
The kingdom that did not exist
Only beyond the borders of the geography of course.

*

The mirror collapsed in front of me on the ground.

When it had collapsed

The woman's image collapsed in my heart.

*

To complete the number,

Your death must have countless and endless gates!

*

My beloved, I did not find you on your doorstep

-As was the promise-

But I found my corpse lying on the road.

I carried it over my back quietly

And I went without a goal.

*

When I knocked on the door of my life

That was carved from old wood like a curse,

The devils came out of every slit!

What kind of mistake is this?

I have written my poem with an orphan child's tear
And I read it to an absent-minded listener.

*

How can a burnt memory
Uncover the holy light's mystery
While it only dreams of extinguishing its fire?

*

The man is fragile
And the woman is more fragile,
But he searches for her throughout life
To complete writing his poem of great fragility.

*

My poem is the sun that shines only at night.
What kind of mistake is this?

*

The poem is you.
You who her secret has dropped in the sea of darkness.

*

A large gray cloud stood in front of my window
Raining and thundering all night.
I opened my window laughing,
I said to the cloud:
I know you; you are one of my old poems!

*

As a person who throws bread
For the swimming duck in the lake,
I have thrown my letters astonishingly on the blank sheet.
After writing a thousand poems,
I ask: Is this the way for poems to be written?

The child in the mirror

As a child who was looking in the mirror
And finding his head without hair
So he decided to add hair to his image in the mirror,
I looked at the mirror of my spirit
And I found my letter without a dot
So I put him a dot.

Why?

Is it to bring back the cloud of my childhood?
Or is it to not get a touch of madness?

*

The poetry- I mean the poem- has shown
This morning without any clear meaning
Or an understandable reason.
Who said that the poem needs a clear meaning
Or an understandable reason to shine
Or to commit suicide?

*

I have been taught to write poetry in a narrow room.
I am still moving among dozens of countries
From a narrow room
To another more narrow one,
But I have made my dream wider
Pushing the walls of my room little by little
Until my room becomes the size of a great sea.

*

Those who love the letter and the letter loves them
Have been infected with the curse of talent,
I mean the curse of flying
At the height of one arm above the ground.

Etiquette

Sitting in the public garden

Requires a lot of art of etiquette.

I should smell the rose that has shined this morning,

Raise my hand in greeting the bird in its high nest,

Answer the questions of the grass and its gentle chat,

Avert my eye from the lovers exchanging kisses,

Steady when I see the sun's charming light

On the lake page.

A mirror's fragment

I ran a lot in the desert of the mirror
To find the woman,
But I found my feet ahead of me
Day and night.

*

I did not miss my home a lot.
Because there was not a well or a mirror.

*

The woman of the mirror got old,
Got very old.
When she had died I entered her room
To collect the fragments of the mirror,
But I did not find a trace of the woman or the mirror.

*

The dead lined up in my memory.
They never told me about their trip.
They carry mirrors of red or yellow or blue or black clay.
The domination was for the black colour,
Alas.

*

The mirror of the bird is the most beautiful mirror
In the world.
It is more beautiful than the mirror of the river
Or the mirror of the woman.

It is even more beautiful than the mirror of the wind.

*

Do not hurry.

The mirror has been broken

And time has shed tears and blood.

*

I was happy

I had spent my life alone

Carrying a mirror's fragment

And made everybody around me fancy

That I was full of the mirrors of the universe.

*

I was happy to hear the words of a mirror's fragment

Because the fragment of a mirror never lies

And does not know the art of confusion

Or the art of the clown.

*

Was my mirror the dervish's mirror?

*

The mirror's fragment painted for me the pictures of

The dead kings

And the dictators that did not stop one day

From burning all the beautiful things on the earth.

And painted for me the rivers of the poor's blood,

The stolen people's gold,

The destitute people's tears,

The sunken people's cries at night

And the orphans' weep at dawn.

*

A mirror's fragment painted for me the pictures

Of the fools who threw me with the stone of the baked clay

Just because I have a mirror's fragment.

By what will they throw me if I have a complete mirror?

A poem without a title

1.

When I scattered my letters on the paper
I saw them in a strange scene,
I saw a letter setting fire everywhere.
I saw the next suffocating the past
And scattering the future's ash.
I saw the third whipping himself
And the fourth dreaming of a love cloud
Taking him far away, far away
Where the bodies are soft like the butter
And beautiful like the kiss of love.
I saw the fifth practicing cheating
And enjoying lies and tricks.
I saw the sixth weeping on his childhood,
The seventh dumbstruck by his dot,
The eighth diving in the Quran's heart,
And the ninth is lost in his cup and alcohol.

2.

The scene was gray.
Because the poem,
I mean the sentence,
I mean the word,
By its nine letters
Cannot be born

As long as they can't reach each other

In the end!

Everything except love is death

Because I dreamed of meeting you
Night and day,
Two wings of desire's feathers
And the letters' dots
Grew for me.

*

Because I thought about you a lot,
The letter became jealous of you
And accused me of forgetting him
And forgetting his only dot.

*

I did not leave anything about you
Without writing a poem, a song, or a cry.
I wrote about your black and white bed,
Your naive songs,
Your tears which are mixed with kohl,
Your dates and the dream that had been learned
The art of being kissed by them every night,
And your times that melted in the past and the future
As the river melted into the sea,
And lit the fire at the beginning of the poem
Until it turned it into ashes.

*

I imagine you once a cloud that was lost

Crossing the sea with me,
But it faded in my magical memory.
Or maybe I imagine you a curse
Which was the only gift of poetry.

*

Because I wrote about you a lot
With the snowy white,
The fiery red,
The light or mad blue,
The crow black,
The yellow that is filled with the groans and the kisses,
And the gray that does not stop chasing my letter
And besieging the titles of my poems
So the readers were confused
And began to read my poem right and left.

*

The matter of this poem is strange;
It talks about a love story had evaporated,
Burned or melted half a century ago.
How will this poem knock on the door?
How will it look through the window?
How will it say what half a century failed to say
Without evaporating, burning, or melting again?
Will it draw its letter like a cloud
Or a plane falling in the triangle of horror
Or a snow mountain melting without warning?

*

The Crow of Noah's Flood said:

Love is a window

You cannot see anything behind its dark glass.

But the Dove said:

Love is an olive branch

And a tear of hope for the survivors from horror.

*

Love is a pulse of the heart.

The soul does not dance

And dawn will not shine without it.

This is what the Sufi man said.

*

The Man of letters said: Love is an alphabet

There is no north or south without it,

No east or west,

No days or years,

No rain, no earthquake and no flood.

*

But the poet said: Love is water

Whoever does not taste it knows not the kiss.

Whoever does not know the kiss knows not the woman.

Whoever does not know the woman knows not the mirror.

Whoever does not know the mirror knows not poetry.

Whoever does not know poetry knows not longing.

Whoever does not know longing knows not water.

Then the poet wept and said:

Everything except love is death.

The dead dance at the door

1.

The dead knocked on my door at dawn.

They were naked.

They seemed as if they were alive.

2.

One of them raised his right hand to the top,

To the top.

(I did not know why).

Then he raised his left hand to the top,

To the top.

(I did not know why).

He was completely naked.

His face was covered with dust.

3.

He made a cross with his arms once,

Twice,

Three times.

He raised his feet one by one harmoniously.

Then extended his arms to the sides

As if he wanted to fly.

4.

I controlled a horrible laugh inside me.

5.

The dancers became three,

But the first dancer drew a circle on the ground

Preventing other dancers from entering.

So they imitate his movements from afar.

6.

The dancers became five.

They were men.

There was not a woman with them,

So I breathed a sigh of relief.

7.

I breathed a sigh of relief.

Because I was afraid of the women's dance at dawn,

The coming women from the grave at dawn.

8.

I will call the first dancer: the king of the dead.

9.

The king of the dead was still dancing his great dance.

His naked hands were moving up and down,

And his feet were rising and falling,

But he was replacing a mask every minute:

Once wearing the mask of Hamlet,

Once the mask of Macbeth,

Once the mask of the Lost King*

And once the mask of Dick Aljinn**.

10.

I asked myself:

Were they human beings or jinns?

11.

Suddenly.

A dead man appeared holding a drum

Knocking on it hard.

The drum was very big

So the dance became more horrible.

12.

The dance became more horrible and roaring.

13.

The dancing king's circle got red

And the blood flowed from it

To make a red stream.

14.

The naked dancers wept.

The king of the dead sighed with force

And wept with them.

15.

Suddenly,

Everyone stopped weeping

And clapped to the dancing king.

16.

Were they impressed by his dance,

His youth or his beauty?

17.

The dancing king bowed to them solemnly

Clapping a moment with them.

18.

The blood reached my door

So I closed the door tightly.

19.

But the blood passed to me under the door

And the loud drum stayed in my ears knocking

Night and day.

** The Lost King (Imra' ul-Qais) is a very old, famous Arabic poet who spent his life drinking and chasing women. He tried to recover his father's throne, but he did not succeed.*

*** Deek Aljinn is a noted Arabic poet who loved his sweetheart deeply. After killing her in a moment of doubtfulness, he spent his final years writing great laments about her.*

A deleted letter

In the black night,
The moon was walking quietly
Turning to me in a black silence
And lighting my heart with a lot of tears.

*

My beloved said: Is there a mirror in your heart?
I said: Yes, and I have seen your name written on it
So I have wiped it with a little salt
And a lot of ash.

*

The poet who wrote a lot about the letter and the dot died
And left nothing to me
Except the book of his poems,
From which I cut off a piece of paper every day
And stuck it on my heart
To stop the ravings.

*

In the forest of my wildlife,
Every time I cut a tree to set a fire
I found it full of the crows' eggs,
The jinns' feathers
And the exile's roars.

*

I got tired of imprisoning my letter forever.

So I released him at night
To play in my memory's garden.

*

I saw you naked at the beginning of the song.
In order to compose you
I needed only one kiss.

*

Like Gilgamesh losing his friend Enkidu
While he searches for the herb of immortality,
I have lost my letter
While I am searching for my dot,
I mean my life.

*

As my heart is a broken tendon oud
So I will stop playing forever.
Because the heart surgeon
Does not know how to fix a heart that has become an oud,
And the reformer of the oud
Does not know how to fix an oud that has become a heart.

*

I no longer have the joys of the song
Only the illusion of hearing it in a dream.

*

I had to be very bold
To ask a nest for my bird in your tough tree
At the time you stole its dream in front of me
And threw it into the deep past.

*

I was forced to share into seventy wars
And I lost them, with legendary success,
One by one by one.

But I won one war:

The war of the dot that crowned me as
A king on the alphabet of illusion.

*

When my poem dropped and burned,
I opened its black box after a lot of hard work
To find only one letter;
A deleted letter.

Triangles

On the table of horror

I have seen the triangle of the law;

Its head is at the top.

The triangle of desire;

Its head is down.

The triangle of power;

Its head is to the right.

The triangle of weariness and boredom;

Its head is to the left.

*

When I have put my hand

To see the triangle of the secret,

I mean the triangle of the letter.

The triangle has turned around itself

Like a madman,

Turned, turned, turned

Showing me, at the top, my barefoot childhood,

At the bottom, my boyhood that has drowned in the river,

At the right, my youth that is surrounded

By shrapnel and smoke,

At the left, my old age like a happy passenger

Sitting in the train of paradise that is going to hell,

In the long, fast train that does not stop

At any stations at all.

In spite of the protests of the passengers

And their tears and cries.

A medical review

I took the sea and went to the doctor.

I said to him:

Behold, the sea is with me hearing my voice.

The sea that gets tired of my complaint every day

And my moan that has exceeded the waves in length and breadth.

The doctor laughed and said:

I love the sea.

I have a great palace opposite to it.

I have a yacht I can travel by anytime I want.

So I knew that my doctor

Did not know anything about the sea,

Did not understand anything about the heart.

So I stood

And the sea stood behind me laughing

Like a small child.

Sign of the thread

My God,

I sit in the street alone

Opening my hand like a beggar

For the wind and the rain,

For the years and the trees,

For the people and the ghosts.

No one can see me

Or hear my cries

Or smell the smell of my nostalgia flowing

In the centre of the street.

No one can see the red thread:

My bloodline that extends from my heart

Down to the navel of my soul.

I could not know your love scale

To sleep,

I tore the poem that I wrote about your memory,

And threw it into my secret well,

I mean my memory.

*

Your tears dropped and the wind carried them

To my memory.

My memory flew to bare your memory to me.

On that day, I met something called the black letter,

I mean black magic.

*

I wish I did not shift the cloud from its place

And I did not go out to see you flooding and dying.

*

Because of your surprising love,

Because of your earthquake love,

The sun became absent in my memory at midday,

But he shines all through the night!

*

Your language is a spring of peace.

Yes,

But it is a war against reassurance.

*

Do not be surprised by my letter that loves you forever

And by my dot that forgets you forever.

In this 'forever'

The spirit of poetry lies

And its rain that falls on me ... forever.

*

In order not to forget you

I will make an annual memorial ceremony.

Access will be free for the letters of love

And the dots of the beloved of course.

*

I was hearing the earthquake news on the television

And writing a love poem about you.

I did not find much difference

Because your kind of love was an earthquake in my memory.

*

I could not know your love scale

On the Richter scale,

But I know exactly the scale of your love

On the scale of the letter consisting of seventy points.

*

Life is a myth.

The merchant found a solution for it in dollars,

The general in coups,

And the painter in the delirium of colours,

But I found a solution for it

By glorifying your letter day and night!

A flap of the bird's wing

My friend asked me: How can I write poetry?

I said: It is simple.

Do not write about the tree

Or about the fruit,

Write only about the root.

He said: This is very difficult!

I said: Write about the bird's nest above the tree.

It is your guide to the fruit

And your companion in uncovering the spirit of the tree.

My friend laughed and said:

I do not like the nest and the bird.

I said: So you are not suitable for poetry

Because poetry is the bird.

In more details;

It is a flap of the bird's wing.

Who saves me from myself?

The greatest glory of poetry
Is to create for you imaginary friends,
Loyal enemies,
And half-enemy-friends who are more imaginary and loyal,
Of course.

*

In the great tempest
People appeared naked in the clothes of ghosts.

*

The dictator had died so the people rejoiced.
They did not know that joy was forbidden,
And the public dance was forbidden.
So the dictator returned to them at dawn
By the sword covered by dust,
By the face covered by dust
And the clothes of the dust.

*

The market was beautiful
The goods, the fruits and the sweets were neat and elegant.
Everyone was happy in the market
Except the bird that was full of rain
And was tired like me
From looking at the goods behind the elegant glass.

*

Those people who express well the language of hate,
They read the book of Love in a poor translation.

*

Your heart is open.
If a visitor comes to you
Remember to close your letter with the key.

*

Your heart was a song
Dropped secretly and openly into the river.
You had to use fishing tools
To save it from drowning,
From the river,
And from the fish.

*

Your heart is a song that has not drowned in the flood,
But has drowned by the fear of the flood.

*

What if time was merciful
And did not leave you alone
As a letter falling from a drunkard's mouth?

*

I tried to fly a lot,
But the sky of my time was filled
With the maps of a letter inhabited by the clouds
Not by the sun.

*

The kiss is a dream and the rose is an ah.

The speaker said,
And sang a dream of an ah.
Was a rose in his hand?
Yes,
But the rose fell
When it entered into the depths of ah.

*

The shouter shouted: Who saves me from myself?
The people laughed and turned to the shouter.
The shouter turned to himself,
But he did not find himself.
He got confused and stuttered,
Then he laughed with the people.

Repetition

I wanted to hide in your black cave,
But I discovered that it was a silly rag
Flying in the wind.

*

I wanted to sing your song:
The first innocence song,
But I discovered that the song was very short
And was not fit for any musical tunes.

*

I wanted to talk to you about the Eid swing,
But seven dirhams of Eid dropped from my hand,
So I stayed in the Gilgamesh's capital
Like a lost and confused child forever.

*

I wanted to play with you the water game,
But I discovered that your body could drown
At the first mistake.

*

I wanted to lead your two wonderful clouds,
But I discovered that the rain was imprisoned between them
And its prayer was the tears and not the poetry.

*

I wanted to congratulate you
On your naked drawings that filled my memory,

But I discovered your spiritual weakness
And your greatest futility.

*

I wanted to kiss your lips in a dream,
But you released for me your foxes, wolves and dogs
To bite my letters and dots without mercy.

*

I wanted to greet the orchard of your body
That filled with the apples, the grapes and the pomegranates,
But you told me that the fruit was poisoned
And your land was about to quake.

*

I wanted to discover you on the hill,
But I discovered that you only loved
The valley and its snakes.

*

I wanted to walk with you on the beach,
But you threw a pebble into the sea.
So the sea answered me with a great wave of hatred.

*

I wanted to greet you at first dawn,
But you did not answer my greeting,
And the window of the whole day
Almost dropped on my head.

*

I wanted to kiss you,
But you turned your face indifferently

To the wall of the dead.

*

I wanted to invite you to the table,
But you proudly pointed to your empty chair,
Your empty cup
And your empty emptiness.

*

I wanted to criticize your surprising unkindness,
But you opened the door of the prison
Calling the jailer.

*

I wanted to touch your sexy locks of hair,
But you pointed to the torment of your nine verses.

*

I wanted to drink from your wonderful cup,
But you pointed to the desert and behind the desert
You pointed to the fire.

*

I wanted to dance under your huge sun
As a last wish for me before dying,
But you said:
Dancing is forbidden even for the Sufi man.

*

I wanted to speak with you about Noah's Ark,
But I discovered that you had flown with the crow
And never came back ever.

A mythical surgery

I had two hearts.

One of them had died

Because the time's dog bit it early

Or because it fell from the innocent stairs of childhood

Or because the train of deprivation crushed it

Without mercy.

The second heart was swollen

With the black sadness,

The blue anxiety

And the yellow vainness.

2.

In the operating theatre

The doctors succeeded in removing the swelling

While they were laughing at the strange colours:

Black, blue, yellow.

When they finished their white laughter,

I became happy

Because it was the first time

I could put my hand on my chest,

I could put my hand

On the position of the heart in my chest

Without weeping.

The Titanic

Our love story was like the story of the Titanic
That sank before knowing the sea
A little.

*

Our love was like the last survivor of the Titanic.
He was just around the corner from death.
He sat standing like a frightened mouse
In the last place,
In the last lifeboat.

*

Our love story was like the Titanic
Which was startled that the sea knew only brutal rape.
She came to the sea like a bride with her legendary beauty
And her two lips were full of life
And her breasts which afflicted everyone who saw them
With the shock of deep love.

Hotels

In Bab Almuadham's* hotel
And another hotel in Amman,
A third in Sydney,
A fourth in Adelaide,
A fifth in Milan,
A sixth in Amsterdam,
And a seventh in Bangkok,
I sit with the letter in a fascinating harmony
Forgetfully or pretending to be forgetful
The noise of the market in Bab Almuadham,
The noise of the cars in Amman,
The noise of the dollar slaves in Sydney,
The noise of the addicts in Adelaide,
The noise of the thieves in Milan,
The noise of the lost in Amsterdam,
And the noise of women in Bangkok.
I sat with the letter in a holy peace
To exchange our pains, losses
And some of Noah's dove's feathers
We found at dawn, at dawn prayer.
But when the letter sees me confused
And the tears surrounding me on all sides,
He will rise like a magician of illusion
To begin dancing and dancing

Until the morning's coming.

Bab Almuadham is a suburb in Baghdad.

.

Professionalism is not fit for poets

In this alphabet that has neither the beginning nor the ending,

I am just a hobbyist letter.

Yes, professionalism is not fit for my dot.

*

I am a letter that lost his dot

In this night that has neither the beginning nor the ending,

So he protested against himself and his dot.

Then he protested against the night.

Then he protested against the protest.

*

There is a thin line of tears

Between hallucinations and poetry.

*

In the graveyard,

I saw the dead sleep quietly and beautifully

As the mad who have lost their memory and addresses.

*

On the beach,

As much as women get naked

As much as the beard of the sea gets longer.

*

The mad king sat on the beach

Putting his feet in the water.

So he felt cool and refreshing.

He turned to his minister
And ordered him to honor the sea!

*

My sorrow expanded to the level of pain.
So I have been forced to shorten my huge desert
To become one grain of sand.

*

Thus, I am just a hobbyist in this strange life.
Yes, professionalism is not fit for poets.

Nests

One flew over the death's nest,
Another flew over the dawn's nest.
The third flew over the laughter's nest.
The fourth flew over the tears' nest,
The fifth flew over taboo's nest,
The sixth flew over the fish's nest.
The seventh flew over the women's nest.
The eighth flew over the devil's nest
And the ninth flew over the rain's nest,
But the tenth never ever flew.
He decided to die in a legendary quiet
On his narrow bed
Writing every day
A poem filled with wings
Of those nests hanging in the sky!

Gilgamesh's tears

I am a lucky poet
Because I do not stop writing at all.
The reason is very simple;
I have wiped with my confused hands
Gilgamesh' tears that have been flowing
Day and night
When he weeps;
Once on Enkidu who is assassinated by death
And when he weeps again and again
On the herb of immortality that has been stolen
By the snake from his heart
In a meaningless life.

The paper of the poem

O love,
Give me just a letter
Or give me just a dot
And I will give you a full alphabet of love
In a legendary generosity.

*

You can not be a true lover
Unless you dance like a child
On Eid's night
In front of his new red shoes.

*

So as not to be depressed,
I write my legend with children's letters
And birds' memory flying high in the sky.

*

To tame my great illusion
I buy a new illusion from the day's market every day.
If I cannot find a new illusion
I cut one piece of paper or two
From the huge illusion tree,
The tree I have planted secretly
In the backyard garden.

*

To tame the Legend of Death

I write a new legend every day
With the letters of water.
Then I exposed it to the sun to disappear
And write another legend in the next day.

*

The paper of the poem was very small.
The letters were written from right to left,
From left to right,
From top to bottom
And from bottom up.
I was confused about how to read it to the people.
Then I decided at the magic moment of poetry
To read it from the navel to the neck.

*

The piece of paper given to me is very small.
It can only get one or two words.
How can I shorten seventy years of exile
And the escape in vain of exile
In one word or two?
What a problem it is!

That is my soul

A questioner has asked me:

When does the poem turn its face right and left?

I said: When the poem searches for a letter

That can save from its difficult situation.

*

He said: When should the kings commit suicide?

I said: If they become poets.

He laughed and asked me again:

Is the poem a killed queen?

I said: Yes and the killer is unknown.

*

He said: From which door did you enter into poetry?

I said: From the door of compulsion.

He said: This is a huge door. Please describe it to me.

I said: Because it is very horribl

So it cannot be described at all.

*

He said: Yesterday I read your elegy of a soul

That has not died yet.

I said: Yes, that is my soul.

*

He said: With which spoon should poetry be measured?

I said: With a spoon of pain.

*

He said: Who taught you to write poetry?

I said: Death.

He said: But you are alive!

I said: Yes, I am a living dead.

*

He said: Can a woman write poetry?

I said: Yes, if she cannot perform the art of kissing properly.

*

He said: Is the sea a poet?

I said: Yes, every sea is a poet.

He said: And the rivers?

I said: No, except the Euphrates. It is a great poet.

He said: The Tigris?

I said: That is a singer and actress of a unique style.

*

He said: Have you heard of the poetry's market?

I said: It is the worst market.

*

He said: Who steals the poems?

I said: The fools and the clowns.

He said: And the thieves?

I said: The thieves do not steal poetry

Because they hate the alphabet.

*

He said: When can the poem fly?

I said: When it obtains wings of tears.

The ghost of your last poem

The inhalation of the sea is a naked woman
And its exhalation is a drowning man.

*

Every day I wash the shirt of my life
And spread it over the rope of my apartment
Overlooking the noisy sea.
Perhaps the wind will make it fly
So I go down into the sea naked.

*

There are an angel and a devil inside me.
Which one of them does love you?
Is it the angel of the dream made of ash?
Or is it the devil of poetry shining with fire?

*

He said to me: I try to write a poem without meaning,
Without meaning at all.
I said: If you did that you would become
A poet with two wings.

*

My beloved,
Because people have loved your beautiful lies deeply,
So your lies turn into a reality that the clock
Moves around night and day.

*

My letter struggles against blindness to see you
Or to see the ashes of your memory.

*

Yesterday I wrote a poem about you.
Then I slept a deep sleep like the depth of the sea.
The next day, I could not get out of bed
So I asked for help from the ghost of your last poem.

Drowning my memory in the water

When the war had ended
I sent my memory for repairing
To get rid of shrapnel and smoke.
The result was really amazing:
Neither my memory returned back to me
Nor the end of the war statement was true.

*

Exile is an additional trick
Of the endless tricks of the homeland.

*

After getting tired of throwing stones
On the door of the letters,
My dumb dot disappeared.

*

On the sheet of my life
I wrote a letter and dreamed of you.
The letter became green,
Then yellow,
Then blue,
Then black,
Then disappeared.

*

The most beautiful love stories
Begin with the kisses and end with the nightmares.

*

In the exile, there is no mirror to see yourself.

So the poet looks in his letter as a mirror

Day and night.

*

When the mirror breaks

The woman - not the mirror - becomes useless fragments.

*

Whenever I remembered you,

My letter rose to the cloud

And threw himself into the sea.

*

In prison

The policeman was drowning the prisoner's head

In the water

To make him admitting,

But in every poem I wrote,

I was drowning my memory in the water

To make it stop admitting.

Searching for the knob of the door

Your love is a great desert.

It was written for me to pass through its foxes,

Machinations, storms and earthquakes

With the prophet's quietness and the god's certainty.

*

In the desert of your doubtfulness,

There is no choice for the lover just to dream of dying of thirst.

That is lesser pain than the wolf of the memory

That will run after him forever.

*

Your name is repeated in the names of women and women,

In the rain of countless deserts and countless windows,

In the eyes of the clouds of wonderful futility,

In the memory of the dreams that forgot to close their bags,

So it flew like ash in the wind.

*

After the desert of love sold me to the mountain of tears

And the mountain of tears to the sea of exile,

I read my poetry every morning and evening

To the wave of the sea,

The ships of the sea

And the sun of the sea.

*

I have heard a roar of time noisily in your love.

The roar of time is your love.

*

Your love is a legend.

It was written for me to read its letters

One by one.

I am the blind man who gropes the walls of the house

Searching for the knob of the door.

A piece of gold

My letter sat in the middle of the night naked
In front of the mirror
And began to write my elegy through the hours,
The days and years.

*

Your love was a piece of gold that I found in clay.
I ran to the river to wash it,
But it fell from my hand
So I threw my body behind it.
Because the river was seven thousand years deep,
I drowned
And my drowning was necessary
As it seemed from the context of speech.

*

To write a wonderful nightmare,
The poet should commit suicide
More than once.

*

In my childhood, I got lost in the market
For a thousand years
Until Gilgamesh returned me to my dot and letter.
Perhaps Enkidu returned me to them,
But Enkidu died
And Gilgamesh died in grief over him.

So I got lost again,
And the loss was forever.
Alas.

The eternal drowned

Sometimes I turn to the sea
To write my poem about the sea.
Sometimes the sea turns to itself
To write my poem.

*

The sea cannot understand my letters
And I cannot understand its waves.
It pretends to understand everything
And I pretend to act the same lie.
Last time,
I suggested to the sea to write about me.
The sea did.
The result was a major disaster every way.
A disaster that could not be understood by anyone,
Even me;
I am the eternal drowned.

The sign of the tragedy

My God,

I do not look like anyone.

I do not look like, sometimes, even myself!

A white piece of paper

At night,

He wrote on the white piece of paper

A poem about the stork.

At dawn, he tore up the piece of paper

When he saw the stork was unable to fly.

On the second night,

He wrote on the white piece of paper

A poem about dawn.

At dawn, he tore up the piece of paper

When he knew that the dawn

Did not love the stork.

On the third night,

He wrote nothing.

He slept very happily, very quietly,

But at dawn, he tore up the piece of paper

Just because it was white

Like the stork's feather

And dawn's light.