



**Seyhan Erozçelik**, (1962-2011) was born in Bartın on the Black Sea, studied psychology at Boğaziçi University and oriental languages at Istanbul University. In 1986 he co-founded the Siir Atı (Horse of Poetry) publishing house with his friends and helped manage *Şiir Atı* magazine. Seyhan Erozçelik was a member of the Writers' Union of Turkey and the PEN Writers' Association. His maiden book of poetry, "Düşstanbul", was published in 1982. This was followed up by *Yeis ile Tabanca* (Despair and Pistol, 1986) and eight subsequent collections, including *Kir Ağı* (Hoarfrost, 1991), *Gül ve Telve* (ROSESTRIKES AND COFFEE GRINDS, 1997) and *Şehir'de Sansar Var!* (There Is a Marten in Town!, 1999). His collected poems were published in 2003 and his last book is *Varidik, Yoğidik* (Once We Were, We Weren't, 2006). Erozçelik's poems and articles have appeared in magazines such as *Şiir Atı*, *Gösteri*, *Gergedan*, *Argos*, *Defter*, *Sombahar*, *Adam Sanat* and *Kitap-lık*. He has also written poems in the Bartın dialect and in other Turkic languages, and has brought a modern approach to the classical Ottoman verse style, *aruz*, in his book *Kara Yazılı Meşkler* (Tunes Written on the Snow, 2003). Erozçelik wrote a notable essay on the poetry of Asaf Hâlet Çelebi and translated into Turkish the poetry of Osip Mandelstam and C. P. Cavafy.

Translated from Turkish by Murat Nemet-Nejat

the crumbs of the clock spilled from  
tulle  
curtains, as the night  
ended, light in smithereens  
slowly in the eyelashes of my cat dispersing  
over the rug.  
Who'll pick them up  
now, the leftovers  
from the shuttle worriless humming on.  
Morning streamed from the hair  
of the widow,  
sprinkles of the clock and light.  
I  
opened my hands, but as I opened them  
they still kept streaming streaming streaming<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> this poem appears in *Animals of Dawn* (pa. 30) as a fragment of a 3-part poem on a single page.



while we were on the island

there were

angel breaths  
between us

*there!*

**I:** cats also can fly, why not?  
haven't you heard of the tail of the flying cat?

we fed cats and sea gulls on the island.

**You:** cats, and that sea gull became mates.

and the baby sea gull was eating the flowers

*just here!*

the Carrot Head<sup>2</sup> from the black sea  
wrapped in white

**I:** we watched them  
what does it mean?

*good luck!*

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<sup>2</sup> The Carrot Head is the baby sea gull, which has an orange head.



the states of the letter **R**

to the tigris river and the letter **R**

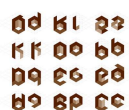
you we**Re** a letter**R**  
saunte**R**ing within my handw**R**iting  
settling in my i**R**is  
you we**Re** like water**R**  
Remained like water**R**

we left you, and got bu**R**nt  
like water**R** you fed us, you slaked ou**R** thi**R**st  
now you'**Re** me**R**ely a letter**R**.  
you d**R**opped  
a**RR**ived at my fo**R**tune  
then my fo**R**tune escaped  
to somewhe**R** else  
a t**R**ain, this way  
hand to hand.

you we**Re** a letter**R**  
the state of **R** of letter**Rs**  
*we all became **R**, dea**R** teache**R**...*  
**R** in caps...

who died,  
who stayed back?  
the one who died,  
o**R** the kille**R**

o**R** the kille**R**  
who  
got killed



a bird's soul

**I:** where do birds go when it rains  
when it rains?

**I:** where do birds go when it snows  
when it snows?

**It:** to the house,  
to the house

**It:** home,  
home!

**I:** where's home,  
home?

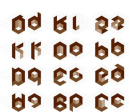
**It:** here,  
here!

**I:** where do birds go when it snows,  
snows?

**Bird:** to the house

mom, where birds go when they die,  
when they die?

where do they fall,  
fall?



reading a poem by yeats i got lost in your crevices

wine grows beautiful in the mouth,  
love in the eyes.  
wine in our mouths  
comes and goes  
love goes  
and comes  
from your eyes  
to mine.

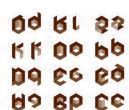
life stands  
in the mirror. the mirror  
that you fell on  
and dreamt  
breaks and is left  
without vapor

and i'm left  
breathless.

the wine glass on your lips  
you... in the mirror  
the only truth that we can see and  
understand  
in this world

i can't look't you  
i bit into the mirror  
i gnawed  
at your mystery.  
my lip is bleeding.

as for you, you're  
looking at me  
my eyes in your eyes  
your pupils at



the tip of my tongue,

your eyes are in my mouth.

'the deaf one doesn't remember," you are telling me.

i know, the blind one remembers.

i am taking the wine glass to my mouth

i am looking at you and crying

because i'm blind, i am remembering you.

the last thing i see is you, how can i not remember...

look, as i lick your eyes

i'm growing blind, i stagger.

i stagger and fall on the mirror.

i'm reuniting with the mechanism of your heart

we are joining tick tock tick tock

i'm growing thin and long in your blue capillaries

'sppose that heart stops!

'sppose this heart stops!

i'm taking the wine glass to my mouth

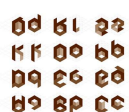
i'm looking at you, and bleedin'

suddenly my eyes 'ave opened.

my love, i see you now, and i'm crying.

because i can't remember you.

i remember you



i remember what i remembered.

your sludge has remained in my heart.  
it grows more beautiful as i remember.

we don't have time to blanket all the beauties.  
even the blinds' eyes open  
i am looking at you, i am seeing you now.

as i look you're growing more beautiful, i can not reach you.

i'm imprisoned  
between the sludge in my heart  
and reality...  
i carry the wine glass to my heart  
you release yourself from my eyes  
you join my lips.

i touch your salt with my tongue.

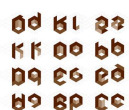
who's crying?

your love grows more beautiful in my mouth.

maybe loving you was an error.  
but who's without errors?

i was reading a poem by yeats to you.  
i was naive.

suddenly  
i got lost in your crevices.

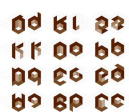




we're catching fish  
in this lake

that's how we make a living  
we've tackles, we have boats  
our boats have oars, we have arms  
to pull those oars  
as the day breaks down  
on the lake  
we smoke pipes, we schmooze -- as i'm doing with you  
now. -- in a word  
we rest our tired body. come, go, come. yond...  
those hollows embraced  
by moss, those small caves  
're our homes, yess, true! true... that we have no lungs  
we receive our air from water

(it got startled, and left!)



*Balcony!* serenade and moon

(balcony, convenient for serenades... i leave the mis-en-scene, the light,  
the play of sounds to you.

when i say,

*balcony!*... is it my naivete

to expect more or less on your part to think

of the garden and its wall?

*oop!* the ivies on the wall

when you scale

the wall

*romeoooooooooooooooooooo!*

one might scream, only under breath,

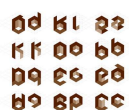
ah! before i forget: the moon!

as you may also know,

serenade is sung under moonlight.... only please... when our hero ends his serenade

and ascends to the balcony,

the spectators, please shut your eyes!



the spiritual state of a candle

from a candle pouring

gold and a smile

the shimmering anchor

that a heavy block of wood

emits

the fate of the past

carboniozing

