

The New Criterion

Poems

November 2000

The music of farewell

by [Morri Creech](#)

*Descending for the last time to the underworld,
the soul of Orpheus addresses his audience.*

It's true, of course, that the dusk-umbered leaves
Deepening on the hawthorn are a mere sleight
Of sun and shadow, true the olive groves
And tamarisks beside the river sway
To an off-key breeze, not to their own delight—
And the blue teal, arrowing through the stray
October clouds, keep to their appointments
According to schedule but not with us in mind,
Though you would have it otherwise. What sense
Is there in listening to the sun-shot wind
Croon through the autumn branches, once the song
Behind the song is finished? Always you listened
With your heads tilted towards the absolute
As if the gods would sing to you, while the long
Phrase of my sorrow held your world together,
Your world of strippe ...

Morri Creech's second book, *Field Knowledge* (Waywiser), won the first annual Anthony Hecht prize.

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This article originally appeared in The New Criterion, Volume 19 November 2000, on page 39

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