

The next morning, it's calm atop Mount Nebo and the view west is much as Moses had: the River Jordan, Jericho, and Jerusalem. The African visitor softly reveals that as a young Christian from a tiny Zambian village, he never imagined seeing the holy land. His smooth skin is so dark it's almost blue, the color of the mythic rhino charging down the mountain that would inhabit the poem he's already composing in his head.

Afternoon in Amman, April 2004, and the normally active and friendly streets soon empty of most civilians as soldiers wearing sunglasses, machine guns and the dark blue camouflage uniforms of the security forces move quickly into place, lurking at what seems to be every intersection and rooftop. A Palestinian leader has been assassinated in the West Bank, and a few hundred kilometers east, Iraq has gone to hell in a date-palm hand-basket with new waves of extreme violence.

BLUE RHINO

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Every Origami Micro-chapbook may be printed, *for free*, from the website.

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Cover: **Eurasian Hoopoe**, UAE, Dubai

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Origami Poetry Project™

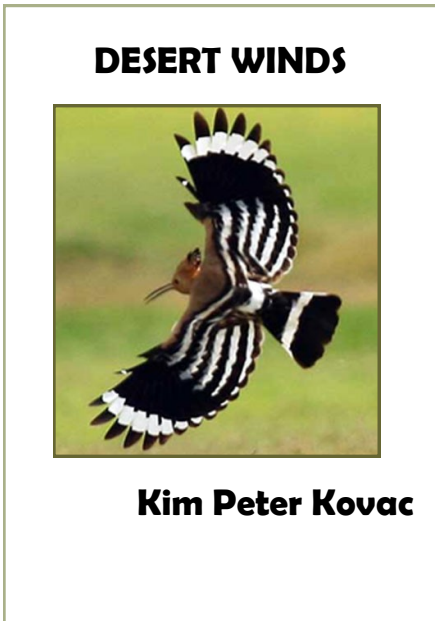
DESERT WINDS

Kim Peter Kovac © 2015

Grateful acknowledgement is made to editors of the publications in which some of these poems first appeared, sometimes in earlier versions: *Sukoon* ("Blue Rhino"); *Red Paint Hill Poetry Journal* ("The Name of the Rain"); 1947 ("Birdman on the Moon"); and *Vine Leaves Literary Journal* (the first of the Hoopoe poems).

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THE NAME OF THE RAIN

Tell me your name, says the clear deep water at the top of the Red Sea, the warm, oily, and brackish water of the Dead Sea, the dark blue water of the Mediterranean Sea.

Tell me your name, says the rain to the red-ochre cliffs of Wadi Rum, the wind to the high plateau of the Negev desert, the olive tree to the rocky soil of the orchard.

Tell me your name, says the girl to the gazelle, the boy to the honeybee, the man to the hoopoe.

As the rain splashes on her olive skin, the lithe young woman lifts her emerald-green eyes to the sky and whispers, *tell me your name*.

TWO WINDSWAPT HAIKU
 hot, rocky, windswept -
 aching with ancient beauty -
 the desert landscape
 stories gliding
 from the rocky cliff-tops -
 kites on the wind

the Hoopoe circles
 over desert cliffs
 like a soaring
 Farsi poem
 The Hoopoe stretches
 his crest to his back
 and spreads his wings.
 Is he taking a sun-bath
 or a sand-bath? Perhaps
 the desert wind knows.

HOPOE TIMES TWO

In the year 875, Abbas Ibn Firnas climbed the Cordoba Tower, donned wings made of wood and vulture feathers, and flew. A crater on the far side of the moon is named after him.

BIRDMAN ON THE MOON