

Auckland, my Ithaca

Rachel Hawkins-Crockford

Auckland, my Ithaca,
In my dreams I cry out for you:
But your peaceful, green land wavers now like a mirage,
The cruel khamasins sweep you away.
My memories are lost here in the threat of the sand
As I push on against the Ottoman Turk,
An exotic enemy in this relentless land,
So far away from all I loved before.

Auckland, my Ithaca,
Am I not destined to journey back to you?
Will I die here where there is nothing to sustain me,
My days an un-ending quest for water
In this place of searing days and freezing nights?
Will my bones break and crumble to dust here,
To be blown away by the desert wind?
Nothing left behind of the boy from Aotearoa.

Auckland, my Ithaca,
In the eerie silence that falls in the Sinai night,
I hear the voice of your blue sea,
I see again the kereru as it eats berries in my mother's tree,
And, in the morning of each new day
I search the horizon for your long white cloud.
But all that lies in front of me is unforgiving sand
That cares nothing for me.