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## Raphael D'Abdon

### Friuli Blues

Chestnut wood  
pale in the dusky fog  
jade waters rest  
where resins grey

before the rain  
there were shadows  
across the vines  
i wonder how many flowers  
fell today  
how many petals will travel  
with the clouds

the last moment near tears  
late light floods the hills  
of friuli  
crows rise to the sky  
to never return

their shade specks  
a road as empty  
as a dry river  
where my youth said goodbye  
where i planted a pine tree  
when i was six

oh corners of my heart where nows and thens touch borders  
and sometimes overlap  
making visions ravishing  
it is hard to ride through this day  
stirred by memories and emotions  
that hit me  
like storm waves hit a lighthouse

immersed  
in the daze of sensual anarchy  
i bathe  
in the warmth of a blues  
hidden in  
the mist  
of belonging

Pretoria, 15 November 2013

### Good Fathers

i drop my daughter at school  
kiss her good day  
and head back to the car

an old indian man is walking slowly behind it  
he carries a stick  
"can you give me a lift, son?" he asks  
"sure, sir"

he laboriously gets into the car  
as i crank up the engine

"you see that big house in front of the school, son?  
that's my daughter's house.  
she's director of human resources at shell  
and my son is c.e.o. at the water engineering department in durban"

pride oozing from his watery eyes

"you raised good kids, sir. what's the secret?"  
"i sat every night after work with them to help with the homework  
in the weekend i took them to sport  
or to the park to make them run and play.  
i played soccer for south africa in my youth,  
although my legs are weary now"

i stop by the robot to drop him off

he opens the door and says:  
"it was my birthday yesterday"  
"it was my father's birthday too"  
"thank you for the lift, son"  
"it was a pleasure, sir"

smiling  
he sheds a tear and greets me  
holding his stick with a trembling hand.

"what's your name, sir?" i ask  
"sam"  
"goodbye, mr sam"  
"goodbye, son"

i hit the road and i too shed a few tears  
thinking about good fathers,  
hoping to be one myself

thinking about mine  
so many rivers and mountains away from me,

i play a cd he gave me when i left home

his eyes in the rear view mirror

for a moment, i don't feel alon

Rietvlei, 4 september 2014

### **An Unfolding Miracle**

I have listened to the words of sages

and followed awkward truth-tellers

footprints where the snow  
has iced

traversing a river  
that never existed  
i can feel the hands of healers  
weaving upon  
our massacred earth

their eyes write pages  
of brighter days

the human world  
is breathless

a better humanity  
glistens inside  
what is felt by many  
as an unfolding miracle

Pretoria, 2 April 2015 (written after the massacre at the [Garissa University](#) in [Kenya](#))

### Beginnings

At home  
still  
thinking of home

hush  
where springs become rivers  
rivers become bays  
bays become oceans  
and oceans become  
dreams

moonlight  
a star dies  
a story rises

imaginary time  
memories  
images  
words  
tunes  
signs

beginnings  
of new journeys

**Raphael d'Abdon** is Lecturer at the English Studies Department of the University of South Africa. In 2013 he published the book *Marikana. A Moment in Time*, his debut poetry collection *Sunnyside Nightwalk*, and was featured at the "Poetry Africa" festival. He has published several articles on spoken word poetry and his most recent publication, "Reconceptualizing Poetry as a Multimodal Genre" (Newfield & d'Abdon), will appear in the *TESOL Quarterly*.

[dabdor@unisa.ac.za](mailto:dabdor@unisa.ac.za)