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Light Piercing Water I

Guest Boy

By *Djelloul Marbrook*

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Light Piercing Water (Trilogy) is a literary project echoing *The Odyssey*. It reflects years of research into Arab seafaring, mathematics, marine archaeology, alchemy, the Pearl Route, the Mughal Court, the Persian Gulf, and the Omani-Portuguese sea wars for control of the Indian Ocean. Its memorable characters follow their natures rather than the rules of society. Their nobility of soul emerges through trial and fire in improbable circumstances.

I. **Guest Boy**: Bo Cavalieri, a merchant seaman with a DaVinci-like gift for drawing, witnesses a tragedy in Hamburg involving Bo's friend and chief mate Gunderson and the pair he sketches every night, a barmaid and her Moroccan "guest boy" lover. A misunderstanding triggers the boy's suicide. Bo quits his ship and takes the boy's body back to his Moroccan village. Then he signs on as master of a British ship heading for the Omani coast to search for alchemical artifacts.

The book ends in Manhattan, where Bo's world turns strange and he becomes the guest boy.

Djelloul Marbrook is a prize-winning poet. He was born in 1934 in Algiers to a Bedouin father and an American painter. He grew up in Brooklyn, West Islip and Manhattan, New York, where he graduated from Dwight School and attended Columbia. He then served in the U.S. Navy and went on to a career as a newspaper reporter and editor.

His first poetry collection, *Far From Algiers* (2008, Kent State University Press), won the 2007 Stan and Tom Wick Prize and the 2010 International Book Award in poetry. His second poetry book, *Brushstrokes and Glances* (2011, Deerbrook Editions, 2011) also won critical acclaim. His books of fiction include *Saraceno* (2012, Bliss Plot Press), *Artemisia's Wolf* (2011, Prakash Books Ltd.), and *Alice Miller's Room* (1999, Online Originals).

