



The Poet's Secret

Kenneth Zak

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BEST FIRST BOOK SILVER MEDAL (FICTION) 2016 IBPA BENJAMIN FRANKLIN AWARDS / BOOK OF THE YEAR FINALIST (ROMANCE) 2015 FOREWORD REVIEWS INDIEFAB AWARDS

In *The Poet's Secret*, Elia Aloundra, a young lit student, sees the reclusive poet Cameron Beck recite a poem at a campus pub before he vanishes - for a second time. Ten years earlier, Beck had dropped from the public eye leaving only an acclaimed collection of odes to an anonymous muse and a decade of speculation over his disappearance.

Elia sets off in search of Beck, longing to know the man whose words have moved her so, hoping perhaps the ghost poet will unveil the secret to eternal love. What she doesn't know is that as her quest begins, Beck is perched atop a cliff on a remote Caribbean island and about to attempt suicide. As Elia faces off with Beck's protective circle on the exotic island hideaway, the same island where decades earlier a Spanish shipwreck entombing mystical Aztec relics was found, she finds herself swept up in the mystery of the muse. What Elia cannot fathom is that Beck's secret will change both their lives forever.

Declared "a lyrical tour de force" by *Foreword Reviews*, *The Poet's Secret* was a Golden Heart Finalist selection by the Romance Writers of America, and is filled with aquatic imagery and subtle conservation and slow movement themes. Drawing influence from Pablo Neruda, Rumi, Wallace Stevens, Paulo Coelho, Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Haruki Murakami, the author begins each chapter with brief excerpts of poetry from the reclusive poet before moving into the narrative prose.

Kenneth Zak conceived *The Poet's Secret* in a hovel perched atop a one-table taverna in the hillside village of Avdou, just a scooter ride from the blue waters of the Aegean Sea on the island of Crete. At the time, he was on a three-year personal pilgrimage. For months he wrote, read, surfed and swam with sea turtles, dedicating himself to slowing down his existence.

Penju Publishing is a member of 1% For the Planet, dedicating 1% of sale proceeds from *The Poet's Secret* to conservation causes. In addition, the author, an avid surfer, will donate \$1 for every book sold to Surfrider Foundation, an organization dedicated to preserving the world's oceans, waves and beaches.

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