

POEM ON ATMOSPHERIC PHENOMENA

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ATMOSPHERIC PHENOMENA

Here and there, haboobs—intense
dust storms: in the Sahara desert,
across the Arabian Peninsula, throughout
Kuwait, and in deserts
of Central Australia, the hot arid
and semiarid regions of North America

and in the heart, especially

deserts in Arizona. Strong winds move in
from all directions, supporting
thunderstorm formation,
and when such storms collapse

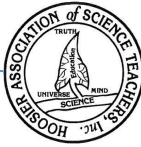
in despair winds rush out

in all directions, particularly

in the direction of the storm's
forward motion and these winds,
in gushing, pick up

silt, dust, and dusty memories:
they approach
with little warning.

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And virga, an observable
shaft of precipitation falling but which
evaporates or sublimates
before reaching the ground. The evaporation
cools the rushing air and accelerates it
well beyond the self.

Not the same
as a dust devil whirled up: a
localized vertically oriented ro-
tating column of wind
driven by extreme

differences in temperature between
near-surface air and
the higher atmosphere. And of course

St. Elmo's fire:

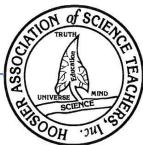
ionization of air molecules, a plasma,
a thousand volts or more
per centimeter with discharge being
especially intense at the ends
of sharp objects, the tips
of cattle horns,

dilemmas.

Unsteady
weather, un-
steady emotions,
a ship
with storm-ragged sails, masts

pointed with a blue flame—

Corpus sancti, oh holy body appearing
when the worst is past.



Resources Related to Topic

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