

Hanukah: poetry of miracles and meditation
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Elana Bell: Miracle

What else to call the way the bare branches
I'd bought at the neighborhood bodega
came back to life that winter.
I'd carried them home—dry, wrapped
in paper—stuck them in the square vase,
and, as an afterthought, filled it with water.

I don't know when I noticed the pale
pink shoots sprouting from the submerged
ends: wild, reaching roots, like ginseng, or the hair
on an old woman's chin. Then tiny green
leaves began to appear at the tips,
curling over themselves with the sheer effort
of growing.

I thought they were dead.

And now I recall being in the grip
of a darkness I did not have a name for
and didn't think I'd survive. I could try
to describe it for you now: the nights
I woke with my pulse pounding through,
the heaviness of each breath,
how the effort of being inside my body
felt like burning—

What I really want to tell you is this:
how, in the parch of that long drought,
the people I loved kept bringing me water.

Water.

Though I turned my back, and did not answer
to my name, though I flung the cup away—

Let me say it plain: I wanted to die.

But something in me, some tiny bulb
still alive under all that rotted wood,
kept drinking, kept right on drinking.

Shira Erlichman: Ode to Lithium #1: The Watchman

How this, sparkler in the night's black field, lighting up my brain
with love How did they do it before you - survive Your elegance
of salt, rock, & sleep, who invented How can such a small watchman
keep safe all my hills & homes Why pink, your face - not cobalt,

green, or just white Who thought you deserved your delicate hue
What do my organs think of your soft arrival each day Who unlocks
the door to let you in, like a wet cat How did you lift the heaviest
season from my eyelids, sweeping away a whole cloud How do you

pollinate my blood so exactly with sanity Does my brain's infinite
heart burden you Why find my grandmother too late
Why not kiss everyone who needs your fix Why leave some
to their singed waves Who do you speak to in my body that listens

<u>Leah Goldberg: Slowly, like the Beating Heart</u>	<u>לאט כהולם הלב</u>
Perhaps my road ends here on the quiet threshold. Green stars drip down, slowly, like the beating heart.	אולי כאן נגמרת דרכי על הסף השליו. נוטפים כוכבים ירוקים לאט- כהולם הלב.
In the dry rustling of the branches a blessing of peace. The small trees in the grove have waited for me all this time.	באיושת ענפים יבשה בירכת שלומים: העצים הקטנים בחורשה חיכו לי כל הימים.
How strange that I searched for you on so many roads until I arrive at the threshold of your home and it is so very close.	מה מוזר שביקשתי אותך בדרכים לרוב, עד שבאתי אל סף ביתך והוא כה קרוב.