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## The Book of Miracles

Todd Davis

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## The Book of Miracles

Despite Ursus's approach  
the fawn remains curled, delicate  
calligraphy attempting to mimic  
crinkleroot and leafduff.

Like a held breath, the disguise  
falters, and the stream's clapping  
masks the bear's shuffled gait.

With three nails, Ursus opens  
the book of miracles and reads  
the fawn's newly written muscle:  
ink the color of ginseng berries,  
taste like copper wounded with salt.

The book of miracles, when recited,  
sounds like cracked tendon and  
cartilage,  
snap of shoulder moving  
out of joint, slurp of marrow.

Before any of this, the heart,  
sweetest and most joyous of meat,  
is purchased by the mouth  
with singing groans.

Such holy books aren't new.  
Ursus himself was resurrected  
by the light that grows each day,  
that causes everything to climb  
upon the back of another  
and eat until full.

What's left of the fawn  
doesn't squirm in his belly,  
but as he sleeps, the doe-mother  
forages where she left her child:  
nipples aching, rivulets of milk  
running down her legs.

*Todd Davis*

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TODD DAVIS is the author of six collections of poetry, most recently *Native Species* and *Winterkill*, both published by Michigan State University Press. He has won the Foreword INDIES Book of the Year Bronze and Silver Awards, the Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Prize, and the Chautauqua Editors Prize. He teaches environmental studies at Pennsylvania State University's Altoona College.

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