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## Miracles

Lisa A. Nielsen

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# Miracles



Lisa A. Nielsen

Lazarus did not have a wife,  
but he came back. Ten days  
you've been gone  
and the kitchen is still the same.  
Your butter knife crusted  
with toast crumbs. Your cereal bowl  
on the counter. I am afraid  
to throw you away,  
put the bowl in the cupboard,  
pour your last carton of milk  
down the sink.

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Husband, I have finished the wash.  
Only one pair of pants from you.  
The blue ones you wore  
two days before this started.  
I picked through your pockets  
looking for some change  
to spell your return—  
there was only one receipt:  
your last lunch from Thomas's.  
March 12. 12:06. The chicken  
sandwich. I washed you away.  
The pants are folded  
in your second dresser drawer.  
The rest of the laundry came up lintless.

Inside the house—quiet,  
the books all read. Outside,  
the sky swollen so tight  
the moon cannot move.

The stars, one solid flash.  
There is nowhere to go—  
the heavens are closed.  
We spoke once of miracles.  
Remember them. Think of Lazarus:  
moving his fingers, his toes,  
his chest heaving upwards.  
If you will your body back  
I can do the rest. Your shirts  
are already ironed. The sleeves  
starched strong as wings.  
They could fly from your closet.

Before bed, I brush my teeth  
with your toothbrush  
and find one red strand of your hair  
by the sink. It is a sign—  
this too shall pass. I curl myself  
in your pajamas, and breathe  
you in. I will pray you back.  
Eyes. Wrist. Shoulder.

It is possible you have come  
as something else. The goldfish  
has been swimming your name  
for days. Some things  
are missing. The cap from the toothpaste.  
Your favorite shoes. If you  
are hiding, do not be afraid.  
Remember, miracles.  
They are warmer than they appear.