

ANGEL IN THE CUPBOARD

For Angela

At the back of the cupboard
is a bottle of sweet kosher wine
burgundy red.

Its been there five years
five years since Ayella came,
bringing her candles

and pale lemon roses,
twisted ropes
of Sabbath bread,

battered Hebrew bible,
inscribed Kiddush cup
and her small white tablecloth.

Occasionally I take the bottle
from the back of the cupboard
clean back the dust,

the gold Hebrew letters smeared red,
wine dribbled down the sides
like blood.

The memory of her voice,
tickles my skin with heat,
my throat with dust,

my nostrils
with the smells of lemons
avocados, falafel, olives.

The wine is too old
and too sweet
to drink

but I'll keep this angel in the cupboard,
as my longing is deep
for Jerusalem stone,

the high white hills
on top of the world;
the tangible taste of God.