

The Wicked Child: A Poem

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The Wicked Child

I read the haggadah backwards this year
The sea opens,
the ancient Israelites slide back to Egypt
like Michael Jackson doing the moonwalk

Freedom to slavery
That's the real story
One minute you're dancing hallelujah,
shaking your hips to the j-j-jangle of the prophetesses' tambourines,
the next you're knee deep in brown muck
in the basement of some minor pyramid

The angel of death comes back to life
two zuzim are refunded.
When armies emerge from the sea like a returning scuba expedition
the Pharaoh calls out for the towel boy.
The bread has plenty of time to rise.

I read the hagaddah backwards this year,
left a future Jerusalem,
scrubbed off the bloody doorposts,
wandered back to Aram.