

# SQUAW VALLEY REVIEW



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## Praise

*Hari Bhajan Khalsa*

Rolled out  
assembly line  
packed  
in tins  
date stamped  
shipped  
pantry stacked  
until  
hunger  
drives me  
to the shelf  
to plunge  
the blade  
release  
the aroma  
scoop  
the insides  
fill my belly  
sate  
doubt.

## Danger Signs and Their Red Ribbons

*Melissa Cahnmann*

I drink tamarind juice at the Salt Sea,  
and have a mud bath at Ein Gedi.  
*A health to your little head*, an old woman says  
in a not-quite-dead language. Her eyes are heavy  
with tapestries, and it's like seeing a card table  
I recognize, as if it's me at the handwashing station  
where Israeli tourists place napkins on their heads, respect  
for the swaying patriarch. His daughter's midriff  
shows as she carries cold cereal to breakfast, her  
oversized Star of David making a shadow  
in *shabbos* milk. Even rap she listens to  
at the pool is Jewish. I imagine her pretty orange T-shirt  
after the bus explodes and I'm sick  
with love for this place, and its outrageous  
mistakes from territories to twist-off  
red wine and rough toilet paper.  
The beach in Tel Aviv is cordoned off with danger signs  
but when I make a wrong turn passing "Nablus"  
where are the red ribbons? I take pictures  
of a grown man with sideburns swinging like a girl's braids  
and the narrow vein where the sage hid from the Romans.  
Only there's no sage. Just a spigot  
and a rock covered with candle wax and orange peels.  
As men in fatigues grow smaller  
in my rear view mirror, remember:  
these are my haystacks, my checkpoints.  
This one is me, on my knees in a soaked dress,  
trying to mop up the ocean from the bathroom floor.