

Event at Sinai

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The Lord God in my house
Is the lined space
Above the stick-limbed
Family.

My teacher says
That I always do
Things different.

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Moses carried the law
But Mohammad tasted it.
I understand those late
Nights with the archangel,
The whispered law flowering
In your mouth as if
Slipped beneath a pillow
In the night and
Gone to seed.
I can wrap my head
Around the sudden
And risen law,
But I can't imagine
An ordered world
Handed down
On a handshake.

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--Now draw God in the house with your family.
I try to steal a glimpse of
my neighbor's drawing,
but he covers his work with a
Trapper Keeper.

--I can't, I say, and

she misunderstands.

(The stick-limbed family is quiet, quiet.)

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Suppose Moses
Dropped the Law
And held his palms
Apologetic
To the masses.
I can imagine
The nervous tribes
Shuffling about, tripping on
Shards of idols,
Impatient to love their wild god
And hoping now that any word
Descends from any mountain--

* * * * *

And when it's my house in the hall
I am proud of my picture.
(I'll find it framed a decade later
and laugh. Blue-matted
notebook paper.)

Between the art room and the gym
for anyone to see:

Family and God. Her title, not mine.

In gym I work on the Law.
I've decided not to use the Word (G-D)
or fling my Middle Finger carelessly
(never know who's there).
I'm watching my language
("cool/darn/crap" best avoided)
and washing my hands
before each meal and after every handshake.

When I go home, I can't speak
for all the flowers in my mouth.