

The farm wife muses upon her Miracle Tree

by [Shari Wagner](#) in the [January 7, 2015](#) issue

Everyone laughed  
when it arrived in a legal-sized  
envelope and I showed them

the ad: "For 19.99, watch it  
reach your roofline in a year."  
Just as that stick, plain

as a toothpick, unfurled a leaf  
Pete clipped it  
with the mower. *That's it,*

I thought, but it grew back  
above the red petunias  
I added 'round its base.

We could use a miracle here,  
with the cows gone  
and the house in reverse

mortgage. But when it  
spouted slender branches  
with narrow leaves

even the Schwan Man  
who measured each week  
lost interest. I ponder

the name *Salix babylonica*  
and how merchants  
traded sprigs of those trees

along the Silk Road. *Already*  
*it weeps like a woman,*  
I write in my diary. *Already*

*my neighbors dismiss it*  
*as a dirty tree.*