

Jesus climbing trees

by [Anya Silver](#) in the [November 17, 2009](#) issue

Let this, too, be a source of praise,
that trees meet in the park like six-
winged seraphim, stooping low enough
for a boy to find foothold
and swing himself to a crooked seat.

This act of grasping something greater,
knowing that one's weight won't break
the boughs, that weakness allows mastery.
The sudden slip that bloodies the thigh,
the husky bark rasping one's shin,
then the elation of hanging by the knees,
trembling, maybe, but trusting the limb.

Surely Jesus, too, climbed trees in Galilee,
frightening Mary by exceeding her grasp,
then flinging his body from the upper branches
and returning to earth, triumphant and flushed.

He must have enjoyed as a boy the enabling flaw,
must have loved the flesh He knew would fail,
trailing for hours the ascents of his nimble creatures:
the ring-tailed raccoon, the unseen lizard,
the silent beetle, armored and green.