

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.