

So fickle are my promises
Writhing in the sleepless nights
That right leg
That disc herniation
-The mere knowledge of the MRI does not help-
The disc is stuck in the right L4 neural foramen
'Oh so this is how my patients writhe at night!'

So fickle...
Sensing His presence
In the darkness...
I promise
Like a scared adolescent
If only...
He
Could remove this 4 week old nightmare
Of disability
And pain.

So mythic, as it started Rosh Chodesh Tammuz
That ancient Sumerian- borrowed and demythologized- pagan!
Now haunts me at- nights worst.
Must I have to survive the "Nine Days" as well?
"Please take it away!" I pray.
I won't sin again!
And I mean it!
Back then.
Nailed to the pain
The cross of aching hip and numbness
The inability to find a comfortable position
The tossing and turning for hours
And the morning's arrival of dawn without sleep.

Yet miraculously the day after Tisha Ba'v it eases
Just when I go to the surgeon!
Having refused to see him before this sacred time
of darkness and national mourning is over.
I would have done whatever he had said, prior
Just to be rid of the pain
Surgery and all.
But now it eases

Although the nights continue,
That nagging discomfort
That just prevents you from slipping into sleep.

And that hated vicodin
That loopy feeling followed by a soul disconnection
And days of constipation.
Never again!
Rather hold onto the pain
Watch it move
And rise in crescendo like the Halverson Passacaglia
Or the Pugnani -Kreisler-Preludium and Allegro
Which I listened to over and over in tears
Then calm slowly diminuendo
Into a mere ache.

The slow agonizing improvement measured in weeks
Stripped me of personal dignity
Work, and above all the concentration to study my sacred texts.
Obsessed as I was to meeting goals and finishing set goals and tractates
The pain refused my concentration
And disconnected me from the world.

But slowly it dawned on me
That my feelings about *incarnation of the divine*
"Hitlabshut" in the chassidic parlance
And my insistence that this was in fact,
An originally Hebrew idea...
Was now playing out in my body.
That not only the bright light side of the divine (chesed) is incarnate
But also the darker strict justice the "Din"
Is one I had to learn endure and "carry" in my flesh
As a Merkava a vehicle
And suffer though this period of "Din" strict justice
Not only in time
But in the flesh
In this body of pain
I was mirroring some divine trauma
And in suffering it I was somehow "sweetening"
The strict judgement.

Now, however
Weeks later
The promises
And the resolutions of the midnight darkness
Pleading with God
And the confessions
Sound hollow.

But this fickle nature
I must surrender too.
For it is only by drowning in the divine grace
That I even have a chance of sanity.
Ramanuja and my Masters tell me as much
Yet the inner Kritik
Never slumbers
Even now.

So I pray once again
In my infidelity to You Lord
In my brokenness
In my surrender now
To the One who is willing
And desires only me.

The very word Teshuva
In the mystical texts means returning the "heh"
As in "tashuv Heh"
תשוב – ה'ה
Returning the Lost Princess
The Schechina, the Divine incarnate

But for me it means returning the Heh
That soul I lost
In my pain
In those horrific nights
Back to me...
So I ask for it back
And in doing so
Ask to restore Her as well.