

MY COLLECTION OF WINGS

Twelve Poems

by

Terry Mulert



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13



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SHADOW

PAULA CASTILLO

OTHER WORKS BY TERRY MULERT

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Mateship (broadside)

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Facing Chalk

To Disappear (broadside)

I

HIS GARDEN OF PEACE

There goes a man
walking like a branch
blown free from the forest
getting lost until the breeze
eats the sound of his feet

he carries many good memories
and disappointments
into the future
where all will be divided
among those who sleep in the day

faces and voices of loved ones
float by and rest
in the perfect stillness
of rocks and sand
and the falling leaves

he walks until his heart turns to gold
and there he buries it with seeds
under the spring rains
and soft green buds
quietly stroking the air.

TERRY MULERT
2025

II

IF I HAD WINGS

I carry the ladder
with a handful of corn
in the pale light
squinting to the west

voices from within
birds who hide somewhere
carry tunes of a slow
and beautiful death
for a sun that disappears
yet we believe

bird feeders hang
from limbs
of the cottonwood tree
spinning ever slightly
in the breeze

their emptying
reminds me to breath
and there I rise for them
again and again.

TERRY MULERT
2025

III

EVENING

The mountain seems
to move
the clouds with desire

softness, love and silver skies
prevail in their borrowing
of time

young tongues are for silence
where rusted cans rest
in the magnitude we're given

earth peels open
the rain
cools each desert stone.

TERRY MULERT
2025

IV

MEMORIAL SONG

In a lost corner of darkness
the cricket blooms
with singular despair

cut wings are
masts of dead boats
sleeping on the oak table

I am here
says the cricket
to the birds that were

and his song pours
the last sip of daylight
from the moon.

TERRY MULERT
2025

AN AUDIENCE FOR LOVE

Yesterday sitting in the dark
I saw a fat ditch rat jump from the top
of the bookshelf into a hole in the ceiling
thick leathery tail pausing for a moment
to dangle in the candle light

the incense mingled with the empty air
and the sound of his feet disappeared

then Sunday and the sun
is falling for a pink glaze of light
I lose a poem to the crush
on the tip of my tongue
and we drink as if
it will never return

we hear the stars
above our heads
and I will think of jiffy pop
I won't ask you what's on your mind
my Genie in a bottle
of steam

I will tell you I read
there is a whale in the sea
whose song is a higher pitch
than other whales
so no whale will answer him
and he is the loneliest thing
in the world.

TERRY MULERT
2025

VI

AUTUMNAL EQUINOX 2023

Imagine the wind
is a child's cheek of ripening ice
and your walls are drunk
on summer

now dream of cedar waxwings
and oatmeal and turn into jazz

never mind tomorrow

let's meet the mountain
at the top of its darkness lost
in a fragrance of snow

you can wear your favorite new shoes
your innocence your friendship
your promise to be

we'll find out if the moon is a mushroom
and where the hawk keeps
the night to herself.

TERRY MULERT
2025

VII

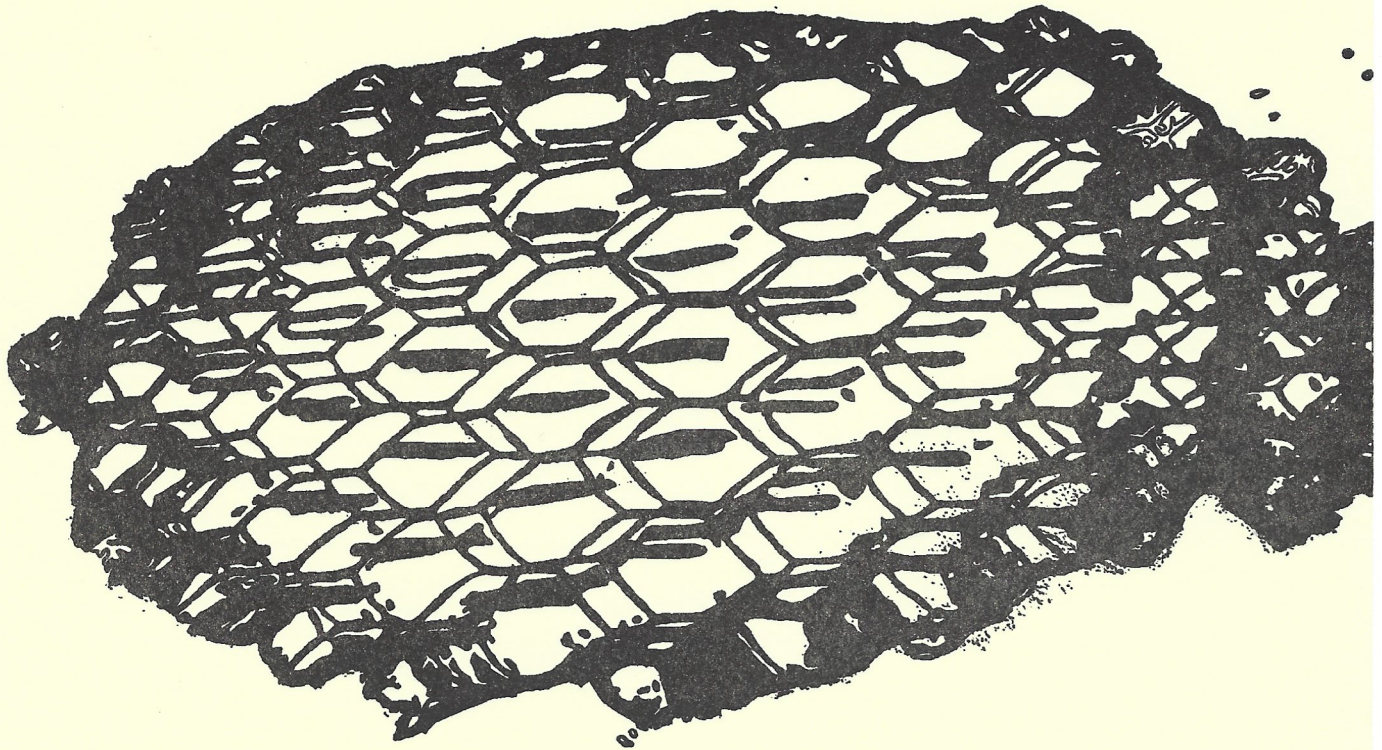
MOMENTARY DUST

Before we go to bed
I take the mirrors off the walls
their nails exposed
so they may speak
from fields of glass
and gather us on the far side
of our shadows
when a bugle plays a winter fire
beneath the sky

then a morning presses
against our windows naked
ready or not these colors arrive
purple satisfaction
azure failures
ochre with a tendency of pink confusion
the confidence of cornflower
hiding the pleasures of green

I listen for the stillness
your bare feet
reach out in the darkness
touch you touch me.

TERRY MULERT
2025



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VIII

DREAM FOR A DYING STAR

We learn to kiss
under frost of violins
and my heart
is a drunken heirloom

far off butter cools
in porcelain tombs
burned into mountain sides

I crave cigarettes and licorice
the salt that's dried on your skin

naked we sit on maple branches
to watch children tie their shoes
as the garden spins beneath them.

TERRY MULERT
2025

IX

SLEEP

The seductress
of skin, breath, heart

warms the sound
of a peacock breeze

and melts down padlocks
into bells

eyes closed moths look
for tongues to land on

time smiles and gives about an inch
of skin, breath, heart

while charcoal burns to white ash
the morning is ours to lose.

TERRY MULERT
2025

X

RAIN GOLGOTHA

for Richard Brautigan

Mountains walk
across my face a sweet pink

adieu as if I'm one to easily
forget your songs and how they make

stooges for love and hate
rolling in with the tide like trash

who will answer to those who whisper
breath of clouds

what did your eyes take with them
divided by silence

a charm of finches perhaps
the gentle smile in that tree

a promise to touch the earth
that left a scar in the middle of your name.

TERRY MULERT
2025

XI

MILWAUKEE

When I returned to the sea
I wore eyes of sand
and set them adrift
from the breakwater's end
where Asian freighters
crouch long black bodies
against the shimmering
likeness of thirst.

TERRY MULERT
2025

XII

CHANGE OF SEASON

The frogs of rain
have disappeared
and the cat's bare
feet step lightly
on their death.

TERRY MULERT
2025

TERRY MULERT is a poet living in Belén, New Mexico and near the Sangre de Cristo's Pecos Wilderness on the Rio Quemado in Córdova, NM. His book-length manuscript was a top three finalist for the Four Way Books Levis Prize in Poetry and a top five finalist for the Codhill Poetry Award and the Bright Hill Press Award. He has published in the anthology *Eating the Pure Light: Homage to Thomas McGrath*, and the journals *Punt Volat*, *San Pedro River Review*, *California Quarterly*, *The Madison Review*, *Puerto del Sol*, *The Mid-America Poetry Review*, *Plainsongs (Award Poem)*, *Texas Poetry Review*, *The Baltimore Review*, *The Hawai'i Review*, *Big Scream*, *The Chiron Review* and many others.

PAULA CASTILLO is an artist from rural New Mexico who creates intimate and large-scale sculptural and performative installations. The complex and malleable intersections between the physical and cultural landscape are the primary source of her inventiveness. She utilizes the literal and symbolic aspects of home places to experiment with ideas related to the broader American Southwest to create allegorical narratives that imagine the immense complexity involved for any entity. The all-encompassing goal of her work is to reveal our deep connections to each other and our environment.

This folio was conceived in Belén and Córdova, New Mexico during our 7th decade on the planet. It represents one of many collaborations between Paula and Terry.

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