



## Altar for Broken Things: Poems

**Deborah A. Miranda**

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Acorns, crows, lightning, and sand dollars; crickets and physics and neon-red dyed turkey feather headdresses. Such things deserve attention, but in their plain familiarity, frighten the likes of lesser poets. Deborah A. Miranda sees the natural world anew, by sitting still as long as it takes. A member of the Ohlone-Costanoan Esselen Nation of California and the author of three other collections and a memoir, Miranda is a professor of English at Washington and Lee University.

### *Intention*

*A tulip poplar blossom  
falls into my open palm:  
cool cup, creamy  
center with a ragged  
ring of flame.*

*It has lived in the canopy  
where the bees came  
in their golden bodies,  
filled their saddlebags  
with pollen, carried it home  
to the hive. All winter,  
they'll consume this memory  
—the sable, smoky taste  
of a tree transformed  
into light.*

*I want to go like that: a flowery  
comet shooting slowly  
across the dawn sky,  
drenched in hungry kisses;  
drifting into an open hand,  
placed gently on the earth—  
one small offering*

*upon the altar.*

MATT SUTHERLAND (November / December 2020)

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