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# TWO WINGS

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The following poem is one of mothers and sons, of grief, of loneliness.

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## Two Wings

*after Nicole Sealey, for Ma  
Jalon Young*

It is written somewhere  
that the population of Canadian geese nearly zeroed  
in the nineties. So when I pass the lake  
in front of the house with the wraparound porch,  
the lake where the Canadian geese congregate  
and peck at the Mississippi soil,  
I know I am admiring testimonies.

"Oh to be a goose," my mother says.

"Don't have a care in the world," which means  
her world is nothing but cares.

For 21 years I held the hand of a woman  
whose tongue spoke the language of giving  
but can now only muster phrases of emptiness,  
phrases of being stripped down and thinned.

*Oh to be a goose*

*which could mean, Oh to be able to take flight  
even if the body only reaches a few inches  
above the ground for just a few seconds.*

You see, my mother wishes  
for a house with a wraparound porch  
like the one fronted  
by a lake where the Canadian geese congregate.

And when she gets it

I hope she gets a lake with geese  
and see the geese take their few seconds of flight  
and learn that death desired her body  
but the wings  
she believed herself to be unpossessed of  
carried her over.

Mama, measure the breadth of your arms  
and see that you have many more lands to cover.

