



# The Cradle Place: Poems

*Thomas Lux*

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## **The Cradle Place: Poems** Thomas Lux

The Cradle Place is the new collection from Thomas Lux, a self-described "recovering surrealist" and winner of the Kingsley Tufts Award.

These fifty-two poems bring to full life the "refreshing iconoclasm" Rita Dove so admired in Lux's earlier work. His voice is plainspoken but moody, humorous and edgy, and ever surprising.

These are philosophical poems that ask questions about language and intention, about the sometimes untidy connections between the human and natural worlds. In the poem "Terminal Lake," Lux undermines notions of benign nature, finding dark currents beneath the surface: "it's a huge black coin, / it's as if the real lake is drained / and this lake is the drain: gaping, language- / less, suck- and sinkhole." In the ominous "Render, Render," the narrator asks us to consider a concentration of the essences of our lives: all that is physical, spiritual, remembered, and dreamed for, melded together to make the messy self we present to the world.

Lux's voice is intelligent without being bookish, urgent and unrelentingly evocative. He has long been a strong advocate for the relevance of poetry in American culture. The Los Angeles Times praises Lux for his "compelling rhythms, his biting irony, and his steady devotion to a craft that often seems thankless." As Sven Birkerts noted, "Lux may be one of the poets on whom the future of the genre depends."

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