

**Bridget Luisa Lee**

*SUN* (excerpt)

When you open the bee hive, you see not only the moving fractions of the  
hive-body, but a progression of time in the hive-life; you see the ellipses  
of life-that-is-chasing-death around like a wolf-chariot after the sun.

You see some bees hauling out the corpses of their sisters to the grass. You see every stage of fattening womb, as if you had ripped the pages of a flip book out and lined them up. You see all moments of becoming animal from blip, to seed, to swell, to pea, to worm, to little bee. A new bee's thorax and back are covered in pale yellow hair, like a duckling's. The worker-bees feed the larvae white milk we call "royal jelly." In between the comb, nurse bees move, some with their bellies full with sugar, others, with water, fanning to keep the heat straight. Some bees rush in, the flower-hunters; others dance directions. All this, in the dark. It is only our opening of the hive that reveals them to the day.

I practice imagining bees into apertures--bees in mailboxes, in wash buckets. I hive them in the ribcages of the dead. Into trenches and bowls, thought-bubbles, sink holes, foreclosed homes. Fill a quarry with honeycomb & bees, or even a babushka doll's small sister; a ring box, a coat pocket, an empty seed packet. When you look at corn fields, I enter bees into your eyes.

The Egyptians, perhaps the first beekeepers, called bees the tears of Ra. Ra was their sun-god. Don't you think it's strange that bees are considered sun-creatures, but live in a warm, blind darkness?

A plant can speak through the geometry of flowering a bee digs it a bee wings close to take the offering. The offering it takes becomes its task: to perpetuate the expression of the plant species.

Today, the bee is dying and so I'm scrambling to illuminate the ways we depend on her--to trace the thread between our lives and the lives of insects. Because the relevance of her gifts might tip us towards reverence.

Here, I'm looking into the rose of each question.

And hear the world whisper in bees' perennial noise. It is breath the earth pours out makes honey of.

Bridget Luisa Lee holds an MFA from the University of Minnesota. Her work has appeared in *Noo Magazine* and *The Beekeepers' Quarterly Magazine*. She lives in Minneapolis where she makes her living as a beekeeper and freelance writer.