



The Answering Machine

Lisa Huffaker

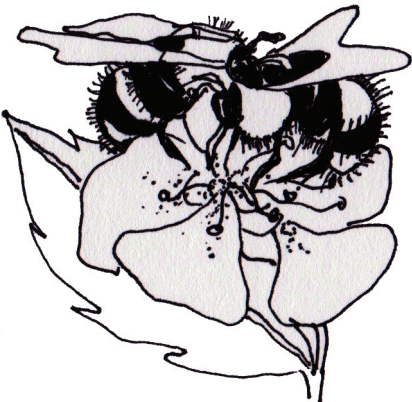
Psalms 46:6 He uttered his voice, the earth melted.

They blurred their wings
over the waxen cells.
That was how nectar thickened
into something denser, a message
from deep in the earth: how rains
and sun had stirred the soil,
and how, for a long time, summer
was gentle with us.

Certain machines grow obsolete.
The hive's bright hum
sounds quaint now: a foolish spooling
of magnetic speech: yesterday's voice,
talking through crackle and buzz.

Gaze, though, into the amber fossil:
what hangs, suspended in the jewel?
Dance us a message,
tell us where the flowers
used to grow.

as first seen in One by Jacar Press



Since winning *Southwest Review's* Morton Marr Poetry Prize in 2008, **Lisa Huffaker's** poems have been published in *Southwest Review*, *Poet Lore*, *Measure*, *Southern Poetry Review*, *Mezzo Cammin*, *The Texas Observer*, *Able Muse*, and *Southern Humanities Review*, which nominated her for the Pushcart Prize. She also has poems forthcoming in *One* as well as *All We Can Hold*, an anthology by Sage Hill Press. A classical singer by training, Lisa holds a Master of Music degree in Vocal Performance from the New England Conservatory, and sings with The Dallas Opera. She teaches creative writing at Yavneh Academy of Dallas.



This poem is one of ten poems selected to appear in The Pollinator Poetry Post, a public art project of Border Free Bees. Over 130 original poems were submitted from contributors throughout Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom. The Post will be installed in various locations in Kelowna and Richmond, British Columbia, Canada from 2016-2017. The poets whose work is published are as follows: Yvonne Blomer, Meri Culp, morgan downie, Tami Haaland, Lisa Huffaker, Guillaume Loslier-Pinard, Christine Lowther, Rhona McAdam, Wendy Morton, Phoebe Reeves.

Border Free Bees is a long-term public art initiative headed by Dr. Cameron Cartiere, Associate Professor in the Faculty of Culture + Community at Emily Carr University of Art + Design and Nancy Holmes, Associate Professor in the Faculty of Creative and Critical Studies at The University of British Columbia, Okanagan, in collaboration with numerous strategic partners. The initiative's mission is to raise awareness of the plight of wild pollinators, empower communities to actively engage in solutions for habitat loss, and transform under-utilized urban sites into aesthetically pleasing and scientifically viable pollinator pastures. Border Free Bees is supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Judges for the contest were poets Nancy Holmes and Fionncara MacEoin, pollinator scientist Dr. Elizabeth Elle, and public art theorist and artist Dr. Cameron Cartiere. Border Free Bees thanks Fionncara MacEoin, S. Megan Hunter and Kaila Burke for building the Poetry Post. The poetry pages were designed by Fionncara MacEoin with illustrations by Rhythm Hunter.

www.borderfreebees.com

