

Golden Hour

to my best friends

It has been observed that honeybees
often hold each other's feet while sleeping,
staying in place and keeping each other warm.

Huddled in clusters,
their cuddling creates a safe space for
dreaming—to drop their guard and gather
with the ones they trust the most,
cozy for the few hours un-tasked
& unbothered by production.

Have you heard the one
about the honey bee un-held?
Her wayward bumbling, lost without
the nuzzled softness, afraid of her own sting.
How sometimes, we feel so buried
beneath the horrors of the dark,
we forget our own wings.
How easy it is to spend our nights falling,
whether out or apart,
and all that can catch us is a familiar hand.

Once, I was so humbled by the weight
of this city, I forgot I was a floating thing.
Fell so far from everything I loved—
wanted nothing to do with the makings
of my hands, held what little I could give
so tight, I could feel myself cracking
from the clutch of my grasp.

Have you heard it? How the whole hive
hummed itself ablaze until she came
wandering back, loose-gripped
and open armed.

Oh, dawn-kissed darling,
honey-wrung homesake,
the sweetest thing about my living
are the hours alongside you
I am blessed to be—the waking
beneath your beating heart, the daisies
at daybreak, my chin at your chest.
I am at my best and worst with you,
and by some golden grace,
you hold me closer anyway.

Every day, I am granted the good gifts
of my best friends' laughter,
my homies' cooked meals, my loved ones'
sharp tongues. I'm buzzing from the brilliance
of women I get to know well and hold dear,
those who keep me upright when the day
does nothing but drain me honeysuckle dry.

I'm reminded that my hive is not honeycomb
alone; that all this goodness can't be found
in another man's mouth; it is not taken
or tasted, but taught in the darkest hours
made for dreaming, where I can let go
and still know, I'm never too far from another
running mind. This hive, dreaming with our
eyes open, held together by hand and
heartbeat, belief and bravery, kind errand and
necessary task, quick check-in, long walk; we
will hold you, too. Yes, even you.

No, I cannot promise safety, but know this:
if we fall, we fall together, and remember:
these bodies were still built for flight,
even when the sky feels so far beyond
these walls we've carved a home into.

I know this hour, when the fading light
feels like a bad omen, a written curse,
but believe me, I've heard sunsets envy
the warmth of our grip—mornings covet
the ease of our touch, how wanted
a friendship that laughs back at gravity,
teasing the ground with how lofty we dream.

Have you heard the one
about the honeybee held well?
Pollen-spotted, nectardrunk,
she's learned who to snuggle
and exactly who to sting.

— *Aris Kian*

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