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## Bees

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## BEES

When she undressed, she revealed that her body was composed of hundreds of swarming bees. He should have seen this coming—the way her gloved hand purred into his, the way she called him honey. But, he went with it, unwrapping her shawl and letting her dress hum to the floor. She scattered over his body, rubbing her stingers against his. He wasn't sure if this is how it worked. It was painful, confusing, loud. The next day, he brought her flowers. He began to love her body, teasing her by pulling handfuls of her and giving them back. But, over the years, parts of her kept dying. When he locked their fingers, parts of her would lose grip and drop to the floor. When he kissed her in the bathtub, he could feel small wings between his teeth and bodies against his tongue. He would sweep them up or spit them into a container, giving them small burials in the garden. This went on. Soon, she felt only like a small handful of electrons. Even that died down. When she dwindled to the last five, he took them to see the flora in the garden. When they slept, he went to the shed, took the smoker can out, and fumigated. He pulled out each of their stingers and dug a hole in the garden the size of a softball. He knelt, cupping them in his hands and parting his thumbs. He blew into it, his hands, enough to feel them rise against his fingers, and then he buried them too.