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## Daughter of the Irishman and the Honeybee

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MOLLIE MCMULLAN

# Daughter of the Irishman and the Honeybee

There are tales of voracious men  
Fathers with sharp teeth,  
husbands with claws  
My mother knew one

He drank her milk from her baby's mouth,  
stole honey from a hive  
He saw my hunger and scolded it,  
watching as I wept for the sustenance my mother knew how to provide  
My father was a fire, all-consuming and vicious  
His flames could never be suffocated, only discouraged

He taught me the duality of man,  
consuming my flesh while wishing I was whole,  
cradling my head while pouring salt into my wounds  
He forced me to eat against the edge of a silver blade,  
offering bread to soak up the blood on my tongue  
Hunger was intimate and shameful

My mother was too busy trying to survive to remember my first word

She said maybe it was *momma*  
like a plea of some sort  
*Don't you dare leave me with this man*  
*Tell me I do not share his blood*  
Does she know I have his nose?