

**Come slowly—Eden! (after Emily Dickinson)**

Sure, suppose Eden emerges  
 slowly. And suppose the lucky bee  
 feigns bashfulness. He approaches  
 the Jessamine flower so very gold—golder  
 than her hovering suitor.  
 This beauty queen, this trumpet vine,  
 reclines across the banks and slopes,  
 horizontal and unsupervised. Then

Dickinson's bee refers to his tube-like mouth  
 as a pair of "unused lips" and purses them.  
 Black chamber of the bloom  
 is slightly ajar. He hums around it  
 and pretends to faint. The sun appears briefly  
 as a puddle of sugar. He enters, sips  
 and sinks to the bottom of her small pond.  
 But look.

Dickinson is asleep in her grave.  
 Do we honestly believe she and her genius  
 forgot the fact that almost every insect  
 is a woman insect?  
 Only a few drone bees are male. And  
 a drone leaves the hive only once in his life—  
 to lay down with his ruler and promptly perish,  
 his precious cargo parked indefinitely  
 in the abdomen of a queen. Point being—  
 a lady Jessamine would never meet a drone—only  
 another timid, winged, Jessamine.

Suppose there's no secrets between a bee and her flowers.  
 Suppose there is some benefit to the near-sightedness of a poet.  
 Suppose Dickinson was free to write a hundred poems  
 about honeybees masquerading as lovers, lovers  
 masquerading as bees masquerading as Dickinson and  
 humming in a world of hushed feelings. (If you ask me,  
 she was teetering on the edge of a petal, wanting  
 to get lost in the balms).