

I am the magician's girl who does not flinch
-The Bee Meeting, Sylvia Plath

When my mother buys my father a beekeeper suit
for his birthday, he grins and puts on the veil to blow out candles
I trample through wilted blue cornflowers
to find him pumping billows of smoke,
lullabies meant to soothe
I don't like to tax them, so I harvest only once a year
his love is a sun wedge in an East facing window
& I can't stop chasing the morning light

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The first winter I'm gone, he spoons the thick liqueur
into the open maws of strangers,
who is this man
dispensing from the container
that held lemonade in summer?
the honey is so thick it could be anything
it wanted it wears the color maple
to drip down in spools,
leaves tongues of dewy sugar
lapping the spigot
when I leave,
he gives me a jar
so heavy my suitcase
reads oversized
at check-in
I explain to the agent
what it is about a universal metonym for love
that can't be weighed or charged extra