

This is not hell, but the street.

Federico García Lorca,
"Poeta en Nueva York"

**aquí, en las calles de esta ciudad,
they pray their tropical dreams
will come true again.**

Barbara Jane Reyes,
"Poeta en San Francisco"

Poeta en San Juan

by: Susana Praver-Pérez

Aquí, on San Juan's tangled streets, clouds of bees reclaim honey
sipped from tasseled cane bent like stolen souls in broken *cañaverales*.

Amid mounds of debris, billows of bees search for sugar
in cast-off cans of *Coco Rico* and *BoriCola*.

"Don't kill the bees!" they said, spread the word from mouth to ear,
hand to skin, pulse of *Plena*. Hand to mouth, mouth to ear—

"Don't kill the bees!"

Bees' breath on broken flowers will sprout mango on storm-stripped slopes,
pollinate recovery, plant a future.

Mosquitos feast on human blood as people sleep on rooftops
escaping hot molasses nights.

But bees live on nectar, sweet as *boleros* sung in the light of a blue moon,
hum love songs to the earth, drink *almíbar* at noon.

In blossoms' stark absence, someone set out sugar water for bees circling in an arc.

"Save the bees!" they said, spread the word from mouth to ear,
hand to skin, pulse of *Plena*. Hand to mouth, mouth to ear—

¡Bendito! The bees will save us.

