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June 2014

# "Mechanical Horse with Girl and Bees"

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## Recommended Citation

Bohince, Paula (2014) ""Mechanical Horse with Girl and Bees"," *Ontario Review*: Vol. 68, Article 26.

Available at: <http://repository.usfca.edu/ontarioreview/vol68/iss1/26>

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# *Mechanical Horse with Girl and Bees*

PAULA BOHINCE

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Something sweet on the bridle.  
So the bees have no choice,  
drawn from industrial hives, culled into day, to this store  
called Gabriel's. I saw them  
from my bench by the automatic doors,

liked the look of that horse and its wide painted eyes,  
picket teeth and chipped body.  
Liked imagining it born in some long-closed factory, its mold  
cracked open, the toy unadorned  
as an Easter chocolate,

then taken and painted by women  
with gray ponytails and glasses, horsehair brushes,  
gullied tail and mane  
made white, uplifted hooves  
blackened and lacquered,

delivered and bolted  
here, so the kid can come in her spring coat  
and climb on, kicking its sides,  
feeding it quarters.  
So it rocks, and so she can sing an invented song to her  
horse, for these minutes,  
*her horse.*

The bees, somehow sensing  
a temporary queen, idling, then levitating, crowning  
the two heads, and me wanting nothing  
but my fingers in the cavities  
of the horse's ears,  
tented as they were, and feel the dust there, and in  
its nostrils, painted red,  
violently so,

wanting the bees,  
unlike batteries, never to stop,  
golden mobile over the flickering —

a girl and her horse,  
their rocking and my watching, scrim of garbage  
skidding against the electric doors  
whizzing apart —

the minute like bees, dying off, dull buzz  
of the motor beneath, secret  
song gummy and breathless, and the horse, going broke,  
slowing it *to and fro*,  
*to and fro* . . .