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Falling Asleep in a Garden · David Wagoner

All day the bees have come to the garden.  
They hover, swivel in arcs and, whirling, light  
On stamens heavy with pollen, probe and revel  
Inside the yellow and red starbursts of dahlias  
Or cling to lobelia’s blue-white mouths  
Or climb the speckled trumpets of foxgloves.

My restless eyes follow their restlessness  
As they plunge bodily headfirst into treasure,  
Gold-fevered among these horns of plenty.  
They circle me, a flowerless patch  
With nothing to offer them in the way of sweetness  
Or light against the first omens of evening.

Some, even now, are dying at the end  
Of their few weeks, some being born in the dark,  
Some simply waiting for life, but some are dancing  
Deep in their hives, telling the hungry  
The sun will be that way, the garden this far:  
This is the way to the garden. They hum at my ear.

And I wake up, startled, seeing the early  
Stars beginning to bud in constellations.  
The bees have gathered somewhere like petals closing  
For the coming of the cold. The silhouette  
Of a sphinx moth swerves to drink at a flowerhead.  
The night-blooming moon opens its pale corolla.