

## Obituary

Late Summer, when the bumblebees begin to die,  
You'll see them clinging to the petals of a flower  
For dear life—or at least it seems so to an eye  
Untrained in entomology. They've had their hour,

Have likely reproduced authentic replicas,  
And now are caught in the inanimate repose  
They've earned by simply doing everything that was  
Expected of them. No one living really knows

What colors stain the Umwelt of a bumblebee,  
Or what compelling fragrance draws it to the nectar  
Of which it drinks. The more complex reality  
That human beings navigate—a private sector

Bound up with social threads—is plagued by states of mind  
Which naturally arise inside a primate brain:  
Perfunctory regret, and motive ill-defined;  
The fear of losing hope, and existential pain.

Although at last you recognize how far you've fallen,  
Belated clarity does nothing to forestall  
What's bound to come. Too late it is to gather pollen,  
But much too soon to die with flowers in the fall,  
                                to hang your laurels on a wall,  
                                to say you never lived at all.

C. B. Anderson