

Working Order

I stop midstride and cannot look away
from the ordinary

ticking of the multiverse,
senses

and simple machines that glow suspended
in September's light. I cannot attend

to my errands, errant, to think
I think of you and think

of you as I watch the sun slip
into something more and lick the horizon's lip

and bend in close
to burnish a bee going down on a hosta flower. Most

of my memory's relevant flash cards have fallen to flickers of trivia,
orphaned referents rendered arcana—

swarm cell, propolis, honey stomach, supersedure—
but still I remember

this creature to be innervated and that
in death it can still sting. I forget to what

end its venom lasts.
It and I lost in its act,

small gravity of its attention, patience stirring nectar,
I cannot say it gives the flower pleasure,

but I do believe there are no simple questions, senses, nor
machines. The afternoon's true task is elsewhere.