



Bees in Late Autumn

Tami Haaland

Nearly November, the sun beats on mums
alive with honey bees, rising and landing
as though no cold mornings can touch them,
as though they will never stiffen into frost
and hang on flower stems like little rock hearts.

A butterfly, too, its end delayed or
maybe a late appearance, the smallest larva
finally hatched and lovely in its brown
mottled coat. The scent rises, lavender
and fall daisies, blooms opened wide
like children come alive in cold weather.

How can I stop staring, sun on my face?
How can I move toward what comes next?
Rather wish for the perpetual—tomatoes still
on the vine, zucchini and eggplant flowering,
bees elated in this momentary dance.



Tami Haaland is the author of two books of poetry: *When We Wake in the Night*, and *Breath in Every Room*, winner of the Nicholas Roerich Prize. Her poems have appeared in *5 AM*, *Rattapallax*, *Calyx*, *The Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, *High Desert Journal* and more than a dozen anthologies. Haaland's poems have been featured on *The Writer's Almanac*, *Verse Daily*, and *American Life in Poetry*.



This poem is one of ten poems selected to appear in The Pollinator Poetry Post, a public art project of Border Free Bees. Over 130 original poems were submitted from contributors throughout Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom. The Post will be installed in various locations in Kelowna and Richmond, British Columbia, Canada from 2016-2017. The poets whose work is published are as follows: Yvonne Blomer, Meri Culp, morgan downie, Tami Haaland, Lisa Huffaker, Guillaume Loslier-Pinard, Christine Lowther, Rhona McAdam, Wendy Morton, Phoebe Reeves.

Border Free Bees is a long-term public art initiative headed by Dr. Cameron Cartiere, Associate Professor in the Faculty of Culture + Community at Emily Carr University of Art + Design and Nancy Holmes, Associate Professor in the Faculty of Creative and Critical Studies at The University of British Columbia, Okanagan, in collaboration with numerous strategic partners. The initiative's mission is to raise awareness of the plight of wild pollinators, empower communities to actively engage in solutions for habitat loss, and transform under-utilized urban sites into aesthetically pleasing and scientifically viable pollinator pastures. Border Free Bees is supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Judges for the contest were poets Nancy Holmes and Fionncara MacEoin, pollinator scientist Dr. Elizabeth Elle, and public art theorist and artist Dr. Cameron Cartiere. Border Free Bees thanks Fionncara MacEoin, S. Megan Hunter and Kaila Burke for building the Poetry Post. The poetry pages were designed by Fionncara MacEoin with illustrations by Rhythm Hunter.

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