

# Reclamation



The bees are not twelve hours gone and  
already

Admirals have claimed their stands to worship the sun.  
Willowherb fluff drifts across where their hives once stood,  
their Buddleia bush – where they loved to swarm,  
swarms with butterflies who suck nectar uncontested.  
The laurel is silent, yet birds still sing  
while bumble-bums ring from the violet bells of fuchsia.  
The neighbour's leaf blower roars to remove the unwanted.  
Across the lake, another ambulance wails into the hospital.  
I head into the trees. Shafts of sun slice the glade  
as I watch the remains of my last Nuc of bees  
crowd the ratchet-strap clasp. They cling  
to the fading scent of their queen  
on the strap that once held their hive together.  
Their house is gone and the dying are spread  
on the cable-reel stand where it once stood.  
Though there's nothing to fight for now, the stranded  
want to end their days with the smell of home.  
Their lease will soon be up as wasps close in  
to finish them off and ants march to collect the dead.  
It's as if all of nature lies in wait  
to reclaim the space of their bodies.

**Trish Bennett**