

GOD IN THE SEASON OF BEES

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“No trick dispels. Religion used to try,
That vast moth-eaten musical brocade”

–“Aubade,” Philip Larkin

My friend, who would later die
from booze or stomach cancer, told stories.
He had this trick
he'd do, once we were
half-drunk and good,
where he'd go to the freezer
and take out a cold-stunned bee.
He never explained how he trapped
them in the first place,
but he'd freeze the things
until they were unmoving and tie
some dental floss or fishing line,
anything invisible really,
around their abdomens and grin
as they'd resurrect from the cold
and try to buzz around the room,
caught in his make-shift harness,

just as helpless as before.
The rot-gut had already started in Phil.
But this trick never stopped
being good. Each time he'd head
for the freezer, we'd come close
to the flame in his cheeks,
waiting for the wings to flap,
waiting for the small rebirth
to unfold its natural light
right in front of our eyes.