

THIRST

The last bar locks its door
and dims its neon star
and he is in the street
with nowhere, no other bar,
no other place to be,
with no one left to meet,

just a vagrant drunk
in the alley, and the punks
hustling on the corner.
He wants another drink,
to wake what sleeps in the center
of his body — the burdened runner

that must be made to run
as fast and far as it can,
that constant breathless hope
that pulls him toward the dawn.
Some place might be open.
Something still might happen.

KEEPERS

20,000 Bees Infest Okla. Family's Home
-THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

It wasn't at all like everybody thought —
We'd lie in bed on Saturday mornings, watching
Their improbable bodies floating through the light,
As slow and strange as dreams. They didn't sting;
They didn't seem to notice us at all,
As each year the house became more fully a hive:
We thought we smelled their honey; we felt the walls
Warmed by the constant pulse of wings deep
In the plaster. It wasn't difficult to live
In a house that at night would hum us all to sleep.

THE LOVERS IN THE DARK

The dog on its tether lopes around the pole,
tracing in the dirt a tightening circle.

Night falls; inside, a man and woman sit
at the kitchen table. He smokes a cigarette;

she sips a bit of merlot from a plastic cup.
He thinks that she would kill him if she could.

She thinks the same. In a while, they'll go upstairs,
have sex and fall asleep; but now, as the room

gets darker, she sees less and less of him,
and finally just the tip of his cigarette —

a clever orange spark, a little flare
inscribing in the air an unknown figure.