

Bee Sting in the Eye

by James Valvis



I've long said there is no such thing as a sad poem.
If you want sad, go find a disease or divorce. Go find

a dead child crushed under a car tire. Go find the bee sting
in the eye of your love. If you want sad, look at the soiled hands

of the soldier in Afghanistan, either side, or the hollow zero
of a starving child's toothless mouth. If you want depression,

go find your great-great-grandfather's grave under the grime
of a century. A poem walks into a room, says hello, and leaves

you to your prostate tumor. Go find the woman who knows
she should have married you when you proposed, and now

lives with the regret you never feel except when you think
of the woman you eventually married. Go stand in the rain

and watch how many stand at their windows and laugh at you.
There is darkness in this life, all right, but if you want to find it

you better shut the poetry book and stare out into deep space
where nothing presses in on everything to make more nothing.

All art wants to spare you from the bee sting in the eye by
telling you about others who have been bee stung in the eye.

Thus there is, I say, no such thing as a sad poem. For a poem
asks you to love the eye and love the bee and even love the sting.