

# This Very Moment, the Bees

*by* Deborah Jiang-Stein

Because three times bees spun a hive outside my front door in the fall, and because three times I've discovered this when I poked the leaves with a stick, and because three times they've chased me around while I try to out race them but I never do and each lap around my house, the worst of stings prick into my knee caps and if only I'd been wearing a hoodie but I wasn't, and two bees floundered in my thick as troll doll hair, trapped as if stuck in black cotton candy.

Because I'm allergic to honey but am not allergic to the sting, thank all things sacred I only get puffy at the sting spots, and not just because my name *Deborah* means *bee*.

I'm sure they're at it again right now, under construction this very moment, the Fall 2011 Bee Hive at my front door.

I read in National Geographic there're about 20,000 different species of bees in the world but the article forgot to mention they all, each and every one, use my front door as their launch pad.

They're waiting for me underground, I'm sure of it, thousands of bees in their muffled buzz below the coat of gold, the leaves layered at the base of my front step.

I could always send my girls out to poke around. But I won't. They have school tomorrow. And besides, they already helped with the baby mouse in the house last spring when we found it shivering in a heart attack in the hall outside their bedrooms. I'm brave, yes I am, but not about bees and mice.

I'll get close and stare, or prod a little, but then what?

It's like this with courage. Easier to poke around than to dive right in.

