

Black Bombers

by Gary Hardaway

I dreamed again of black bombers.
Each night, they look a little different -
More sweep to the wings, perhaps,
A shorter tail or larger intakes —

But the same, in essence. Moonlight
Strokes their curves with satin sheen.
They're beautiful, as fast things are —
Ferraris at Monza, thoroughbreds

At Churchill Downs, a V-2, poised.
They're beautiful as purposeful things are —
Industrial beam cranes painted safety
Yellow, catenary bridges, Hoover Dam.

The missions never change:
To plant a bed of fast-blooming
Flowers of annihilation
Across an unspecific plain.

The missions never include knowing
The mission's larger purpose, just
The small, horticultural role
The bombers play. In dreams, I never

Find this odd, nor the fact
I'm both admirer looking on
And crew looking out to count
The blossoms bursting yellow, orange,

Red and black. I only know
To count then brace myself

As we bank, hard left, and fly away
At terrible velocity.

