

## The Bees

The house was talking and you couldn't sleep.  
I heard the sound of fists of rice, running  
through rough hands, seedpods rattling in a  
breeze, if I heard anything at all. You said  
you heard the claws of scrabbling rats, the  
whispers of angry men. Sneaking things. But  
I did not hear that. Perhaps a susurrations,  
perhaps the wash of foam on bevelled stones.  
We prized a chunk of gyprock from the wall,  
opened the throat of the house a little more  
and there like the gears of some marvellous  
machine, the architectural origami of a hive  
of bees, shuttling, whirring, moving through  
their purpose, the shape of homely din. So  
of course, they had to go, you had to sleep,  
you had to stop those night terrors that  
would shake you out of restless sleep with the  
dragging sound of death. But now you say  
you want to put them back, scoop the beady  
jitter of their bodies, their fiddly wings back  
into the hole, gather up the pour, the spill  
of them and close up the breach. You tell me  
that you cannot sleep without the sound, but  
once we moved the hive the bees won't return,  
I told you that they follow on their Queen and  
that has comforted you. You do not yawn, but  
whenever you open your mouth a bee flies out.