

After so much darkness

by [Kathleen Wakefield](#) in the [April 22, 2008](#) issue

—for my father

After so much darkness, the field's excess of light,
the day floating on itself as in a dream.
But it isn't a dream, the small wound songs of the house finch,
the sun hammering the grasses' bronze tips.
We had gathered about your bed

like a boat we tried to push off stony ground.
We wanted to help: we believed in the buoyancy of that water.
You held onto the ruins instead of our hands.
What did we know of how it is to look back at one's life?

A bee swings from the nightshade.
Ants carry their burden up the post of the shed unmoved by song. The grasses bend
under the weight of so much light.
And the balm of the wind: from the woods the singing of leaves.
Or is it the sound of water flowing?