

Hive

by [Jean Janzen](#) in the [November 26, 2014](#) issue

Honeybees hum in the chimney
as they work, nothing deterring
them from their devotion to our home,
not smoke, chemicals, or beekeepers.

Forty years of honey stored
inside the brick flue for generations
unknown, all of it perfectly
packed into tiny compartments,

much like our own gathering
and storing, what we guard like
worker bees fanning the queen.
In a dream the chimney overflows

in summer heat, honey streaming
over the roof. Time to sort, to give
and throw away, I say, tossing
books, clothes, even money.

And still I awaken into disbelief—
my unimaginable abandonment.
O sweet world, your mornings of lips
and birdsong. The deep sleep of winter.