

The bees, etc., one Sunday afternoon in July

by [Charles Hughes](#) in the [July 22, 2015](#) issue

There are more urgent things to do than dig
Around thirteen astilbe plants. But I've
Had all my sins forgiven. Pinks and reds
Clarify in the sun. Bees whirligig
As bodied angels might: they dart and dive
At flower-spires, tending what earth soon sheds.

A plane flies over, low, jet engines screaming,
Obliterating thoughts. (Planes are routine
Here, near O'Hare.) Things are as they have been
Once quiet's back, but they're more real-seeming.
Things are as they have been, but now the bees
Look less angelic, more like predators—
Like weapons from some video game's strange wars
Controlled by players safe from enemies.

I push the pitchfork deep into hard ground,
As if both feet and my full weight were needed
And innocence could thereby be expressed.
Things are as they have been. Real wars abound
With players . . . Well, I'll get the garden weeded,
However far it is from sabbath rest.