

## October's Winner

The Last Bee

By Eileen Malone

Drunk on orange-red  
peppery nasturtium wine

a solitary bee banded  
with black and yellow fuzz

fumbles for a foothold  
on my bare arm  
wings trembling in place

I purse my lips and blow it off

after a quick circuit of my head  
it returns buzz buzzing  
undaunted, curious

I toss and wave at it with both hands  
afraid it might sting me

feel the skin connection  
I never intended  
-- furry fuzz on my arm

flick it away with finger and thumb

the bee spins wounded to the  
bright green umbrella leaves

from blood-orange-red throats  
the nasturtiums cry out  
at the falling of the last bee.

*Eileen Malone lives in Broadmoor Village, CA.*