

Calm. Evening.

The garden has become a photograph.
Time caught in the act. So shocked
now might be any century. Everything

has stopped: our neighbour's sycamore,
the laburnum hanging in abeyance,
tendrils of honeysuckle motionless,
even my thoughts are slow as grass.

The smoke bush has halted in mid-gesture.
Light fades gently. The red of a wild poppy
poses against a darkening conifer.

Birdsong listens intently to itself.
Perfume from night-scented plants drifts
into self-hypnosis. Only a solitary bee
hasn't been told, cannot even guess.

Paul Surman

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