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A Nest of Angry Wasps

by Lowell Jaeger

... in an old garage I don't recognize.
I suspect it's one of the dark
backrooms in my weary head. Forgotten
storage shed for old grievances. Thought
I'd walked away clean, but I've come
back. In this dream last night

I'm agape in the midst of dusty
clutter. High time I deal with this
overwhelming jumble
of useless artifacts. Can't puzzle out
why I've hung on to this stuff so long.
Can't figure where to begin...when

the electric hum of a hundred wasps
in the far corner of the back wall calls
out the first most necessary task:
rid yourself of these furies. Ah, exactly
as you told me I must to win the return
of your affections. You vacuumed, dusted,

mopped floors like a mad-woman
to shield yourself on weekends I'd brood
with such intensity I could charge the air
of every room, buzzing. No wonder you fled.
Now I've arrived at that irritated hive
of all my frustrations. I scrape away the nest

with a garden spade, smother it
in a burlap sack, smuggle it outside.
Run from a dozen yellow-jacket warriors
in hot pursuit. I'll get stung, I know.
I'll pay this price to bring you back

