

# North of Oxford

Reviews, Commentary, Essays, Poetry

## Through the Window by Tom Block



I don't know if it's a bee or a hornet. Not being well-versed in the apiary sciences, I mean. Of course, the perspective might be all fucked-up (as it so often is these days) and it might be a far-off airplane or even a UFO. UFO's are back in vogue, after all — the Chilean air force, the pilot over Wales (United Airlines, I think), the new sitcom about Roswell.

No. I think it's a bee definitely — or it's safest to think so, at least. The one about the thread, right? Where the guy pulls at a small, loose thread on his coat and by the end of the story the whole world has unraveled.

And bees pollinate. They bring life. Weaving drunkenly from stamen to pistil, flower to flower, spreading the life-giving force, their time here spent as angels of creation, floating on the breeze.

They don't think.

They don't have to.

I read about a woman once who became paralyzed it might have been Guillain-Barre and she had to consciously re-learn how to walk. That is to say, she had to coach herself: "Left foot up, swing, down; right foot up, swing, down." She asserted that she felt like a robot. Can you imagine?

But: see. Not so for the humble bee. It simply follows the dictates of God like the wind or a stream or a mystic.

One time I thought that I was going to fly, too.

It lasted a long, long time — the time I thought that I was going to fly. It's what kept me going, really, day after day after day after day. The thought — no belief — that I was going to fly someday, like a bee or an airplane or a UFO, even.

But then I realized that I wasn't going to fly. And I came to understand how foolish I had been ever believing so in the first place.

Now, I walk with great precision: Left foot up, swing, down. Right foot up, swing, down. It's better. More grounded.

And out the window, I notice the bee or whatever it was is gone.

Or perhaps it was never actually there.