

## The Honeybee

With the flower season fading  
and little color left to show  
I observed a lonely honeybee  
as it foraged to and fro

I was given the impression  
that its searching was in vain  
Most flowers dried and withered  
or bent down by autumn rain

The goldenrod was still in bloom  
but not much nectar there  
The vines of multiflora rose  
stood blossomless and bare

I guess it doesn't really matter  
since bee's lives are numbered too  
And those busy summer workers  
seldom last the winter through

But lo, an aster lingers  
among the brown and gray  
For one last taste of sweetness  
before things fade away

Like most of my verse, this one was inspired by some special circumstance in my life. At the time, I was attending several workshops for caregivers, one of which was the state-sponsored Powerful Tools for Caregivers. As was typical, I found myself the only man in the class. I was deeply moved by the sad stories told by some of my classmates, especially those finding themselves trapped in a world of loneliness while caring for their sickly dying husband. Occasionally the suggestion might be made that it was really ok for them to seek new companionship, and I thought it ought to have been made more often, although I did not speak out. Instead of more lessons, the last meeting of this class was devoted to stories, comments, and suggestions by us. So my contribution was to pen this verse and read it

aloud, which I barely managed to do with a steady voice. Afterwards, one of my classmates asked me for a signed copy of it, which moved me even more.