Wasp Talk

Dead, but quizzical on my workdesk —
Buzz, buzz, poor stripy-coat
In and out of the apple, it is all done.

What I have written I have written.
Oh how we should understand each other,
Marauders of the dying fall.

You eased a passage through sweetness
And are gone. Here on the page
You leave your little lyric sting

As if to say Was it worth it?
All that fruitless irritation of the air
Never to come to ripeness until now.

But even as I sweep you to the ground
Your ghost is singing in the pane, a good line
Rescued from its poem. Try again.

On the Bridge

(a version of Rilke's "Pont du Carrousel")

Stone blind and half-way on this bridge of stone
He stands above the river. People glide
Like glittering water past him, open-eyed
But no less fated, just as much alone;
His blank face holds their passing in a frame
And makes a show of what they dare not name.

He is their paradigm, extinction's echo
Echoing itself, a boundary mark
To concentrate their absence in the dark
Which travels with them as they come and go.