

# The language of the bees

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Optional descant harmony ©1999 by Karen J. Kaplan

Moderately (♩=150)

If you plant the ear-ly cro-cus to e - merge through mel-ting snow, If you let the ti-ny seed-lings of the wind-blown cos-mos grow,  
If you mow a-round the scyl-la, if you let the vio-let spread, If you sow the red nas - tur-tium as a bor-der for a bed,  
If you've pur-ple e-chi - na-cea with its roots a-mong the ferns, If you've gar-lic chive in blos-som when the e-qui-nox re - turns,  
And have as-ter and chry - san-the-mum un - til the eve-nings freeze, Then your name will stand for "god-dess" in the lan-guage of the bees.  
"Let us go to her gar-den," they will say, "For there is no gar-den fi-ner in the lands that we sur - vey.  
There are sweet scents in the air; There is food that we may share. You will know it by its glo-ri-ous ar - ray."

*The complete words are on the other side of the page*

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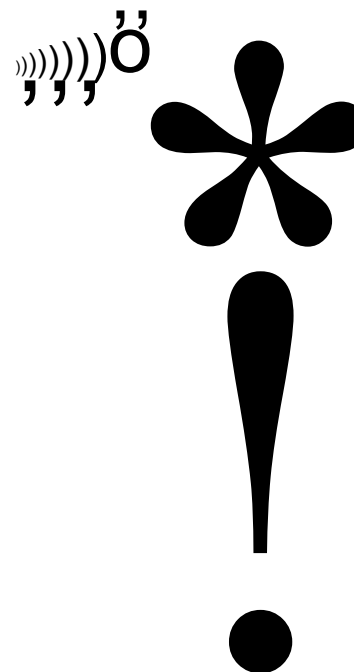
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If you plant the early crocus to emerge through melting snow,  
If you let the tiny seedlings of the wind-blown cosmos grow,  
If you mow around the scylla, if you let the violet spread,  
If you sow the red nasturtium as a border for a bed,  
If you've purple echinacea with its roots among the ferns,  
If you've garlic chive in blossom when the equinox returns,  
And have aster and chrysanthemum until the evenings freeze,  
Then your name will stand for "goddess" in the language of the bees.

"Let us go to her garden," they will say,  
"For there is no garden finer in the lands that we survey.  
There are sweet scents in the air;  
There is food that we may share.  
You will know it by its glorious array."

If you gather from your kitchen fibrous stems and pock-marked peels,  
With the corncobs and the bay leaves that are left behind at meals,  
If you add the softer prunings and the less aggressive weeds,  
Leaving out the blooming burdock, for you would not want its seeds,  
If you make of these a pile, where a pair of fences meet,  
For a season lying dormant after three absorbing heat,  
So it's crawling rich with earthworms when you dress the beds in spring,  
You will hear your name in praises when the red-breast robins sing.

If you plant the English walnut, with its shell so thick and hard,  
If its branches touch your neighbours', making paths from yard to yard,  
If you save more space for apple than you hide with stone and brick,  
If you leave some longer branches to bear fruit you cannot pick,  
If you plant the smoky saskatoon to share the summer's feast,  
If you leave the mushroom growing when a week of rain has ceased,  
And you leave the acorn fallen where the oak leaf dries and curls,  
They will name your garden "heaven" on the maps made by the squirrels.



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