

STEVE LANGAN

Hex

The wheel is angry and so is the blade.
Blue afternoon patiently umbers.
It is the word *contretemps* that hurts; the word
vicissitude. Beside me, the trained smile
even as she naps, webbed skin on her elbow,
the dilemma of a small, receding contusion.
I keep looking at some of the passing items
but mostly at myself in the beveled mirror—
when she is not looking—like a flashlight
trained deep into a well's awful opening,
an inch of sorrowful water, a piece of metal,
the whole summer's trapped thunder.