

Catharine Lucas

BIRD, MIRROR, WINDOW

The mirror is only a mirror, over a mantle, in a room.
It reflects an open window, but is not itself a window;
Speaking of the way out, is not itself a way out.

A trapped bird flies into the mirror, colliding intimately.
The mirror does not open to the bird—
Only stuns it, saying, Not this way.

The bird revives, blunders again into illusion.
The One in charge thinks to drape the mirror. Waits.
The bird finds the open window,

Dives for the exit. The drape slips. The bird's double
Sweeps through the reflected window
Deep into the mirror's spacious heart.

This comforts the mirror, who remembers
With an ache, the soft thud of that embrace
Before it turned you the other way—

Your freedom more precious than the stars.