

REGAN HUFF

How the Wasp Flies

(Étienne-Jules Marey, 1869)

Marey admits a ray of sun.
The wing's tip, shining,
draws a figure eight
in the darkened air. He measures
the invisible by seeing
it; we measure, he insists,

to know. A wasp in a tiny metal harness.
A gold flake in a drop
of varnish at the edge
of its membrane wing.
Flying centimeters above the table

and no farther.
A wasp dying
measured and exhausted. Given only days
on earth to start with. On earth
but lifting from it, painted gold.