

A Trick of Light

You only think the butterfly is blue.

There are no natural blue
pigments
in the animal world.

See,
there are these tiny
overlapping rows of scales
on the wings.

They diffract the light
the same way an oil slick
does on a Walmart parking lot
after a first rain.

And for that matter,
Spring is only an anomaly
in the circuit of some planet
around a nondescript sun.

It warms the air,
because the air is there,
nothing more.

And that warm wisp
moist, like live breath,
only seems velvet
at your ear.

It is only meteorology and...

Oh look!
a blue butterfly.

—Kim Hancock

This poem won third place in the 2010 BYU Studies poetry contest.