

Sarah Sweeney

MY GIRL

I learned it on runs with my father—
no seatbelts,

just Motown,

my body stretched from passenger window,
head craned

I felt the wind in my teeth,

held what bits of earth
flew from our leaving
in the pits of my cheeks—

And when he got sick
of hearing me whine
Ma Ger, Ma Ger

he'd pass me the last half of his beer,
the salty, warm aluminum
mouth—

I still remember that taste
and his warning: first it stings,
then it kisses

and becomes love.