

To the woman I saw today who wept in her car

by Bianca Spriggs

There is a voice that doesn't use words. Listen.
—Rumi

Woman,
I get it.
We are strangers,
but I know the heart is a hive
and someone has knocked yours
from its high branch in your chest
and it lays cracked and splayed,
spilling honey all over
the ground floor of your gut
and the bees inside
that you've trained
over the days and years
to stay put, swarm
the terrain of your organs,
yes,
right here in traffic,
while we wait for the light to change.

I get it.
How this array of metal and plastic
tends to go womb room
once the door shuts,
and maybe you were singing
only moments before
you got the call,
or remembered that thing
you had tucked back and built
such sturdy scaffolding all around,
and now here it comes to knock
you adrift with only your steering
wheel to hold you up.

Or, maybe today
was just a tough day
and the sunlight
and warm weather
and blossoming limbs
and smiling pedestrians
waiting for their turn to cross
are much too much to take

when you think of all that's left
in this day, and here you are,
a reed stuck in the mud
of a rush hour intersection,
with so very many hours left to go.

Woman,
I know you.
I know how that thing
when left unattended
will show up as a howling maelstrom
on your front door
demanding to be let in
or it will take
the whole damn house with it.
I know this place too.

I get it.
And because we are strangers,
because you did not see me see you,
my gaze has no more effect
than a specter who stares at the living.
And yet, I want you to know that
today, in the hive of my heart,
there is room enough
for you.