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Stillborn

By Meera Sheffrin

the day my baby died, I kept saying "I don't know, I don't know" over and over
I did not know what else there could be to say

the day my baby died, it still had to be born
I called Labor & Delivery to tell them I was coming. they asked if I could wait until tomorrow
I understood, they were very busy that night
I understood that other women, whose babies were still alive, were more important

the day my baby died, I asked to speak with a social worker
it was late at night, they connected us by phone
She wondered aloud why I had asked for her
and if this meant she needed to "come in"

the day my baby died, I wondered what symbol was outside on the door
I had walked past those hospital rooms many times
a wilted flower or a butterfly marking the grief inside
it was a dewdrop on a leaf
you never think you'll be in that room

the day my baby died, my watch stopped
one could find meaning in that I suppose
in my grief I did not notice

the day my baby died
is a day full of details no one else asks about
and ones I will never forget

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