

Ellipsis

I should say less
Lay my tongue beneath the deadfall
Try not to stir

That's actually the conclusion I drew the other night
As I watched your focus slip away
Wandering eyes, wondering when I'd stop talking
So you could say something
Anything

I, like every other woman in my life,
have made the tragic mistake of thinking I had something worth saying
I, like every other woman in my life,
have settled
For distracted nods and cheap validation
During commercials and red lights

You are a vacuum of thought
Of parroted late-night monologues and incidents given no context
Anecdotes that only ever begin and memories that aren't yours

You are unreceptive to anything from me that doesn't set up a punchline
But jokes are forgettable when they aren't funny
And it's become harder for me to be funny

You write all of our stories
which all end the same way: the way you intended
Unchanged by verbiage or concision
on my part

I'm a supporting character in our lives
Only here to laugh when desired,
comfort,
and to agree that you're the victim
You feed me lines
And I let you

Until now
I'm done with pretending
that your words are somehow more important than mine
that I'd rather hear you tell it than me
that if I loved you, I'd let it go this time
Consider this me breaking character

—*Ruksana Kabealo*