Being so wild, how can anyone hold her?

by Jeanne Murray Walker in the January 31, 2018 issue

This morning, early, a hummingbird flutters
beside the hibiscus, untamed as
your daughter’s
                infant daughter
now sleeping restlessly in her crib,
                her breath
softly creaking, like the Boston rocker where
you sit watching her,
                a new form
of prayer.
                Opening her eyes, what does
she see?
                You, but
                unfocused as a strange blue
river pouring around her, now raising her up,
your scent encircling her,
she finds she can swim in your voice
which hums the old hymn
                she has awakened
in you
                so she calms and releases herself
slowly and you begin to
understand: to keep a hummingbird
in your hand, you must
hold her firmly so she doesn’t panic,
lightly, lightly so she can breathe.