

**BRETT ELIZABETH JENKINS**

**Phases**

It starts out nothing and becomes nothing. It does nothing of its own accord. All the acts are performed for it. A thing dancing upon another thing.

It begins like a bird pulling its wing up over its young. Slowly dragging open the curtain when you wake. The way I push your shirt up over your head.

Now, an open purse. You're sure you could reach in and grab nearly anything out of it. A pen, a stick of gum. Whatever you need. It's yours.

The middle, the part where we can't remember which way we started, where we will end. What part of this whole charade will be tainted next. An empty dinner plate. A face illuminated in a dark stairwell. A hole punched through a paper, or, say, a wall.

This is when things begin to end. Draw up the sides, like a hammock. Soon it will close up the light inside itself.

The end is tricky because we all feel we've seen this happen before. Drawing down the corners of your lips. The last sliver of an orange rotting on the kitchen table.

And now. We see nothing of it now. A blank board. A night lake you could walk across if it were cold enough. A table with nothing missing because nothing is there.