

The Beginning and The End

(Inspired by Doug Ramspeck's "Mechanical Fireflies")

You showed me what you meant
When you told me it was only the beginning.

Sitting awake at two a.m.
reading Nicholas Sparks novels
in a lukewarm bath.

Watching the way your chest rises and
falls as you exhale in your sleep.

Smiling at the way your brows
knit when you frown.

Building an imaginary life
out of legos and masking tape.

Plucking emotions from a
worn and torn white
paper bag.

Bearing the desolate solitude
that fondles my lonely heart.

Removing the caked mascara from the
damp corners of my eyes and feeling
the stinging witch hazel that reminds me

I'm still alive.

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—Brittany Violet Long