

BRIDGET BELL

The World Fails to Tell You about the Tedium

1

You will sit on top of an alphabet
floormat, rearrange the foam tiles to form
words like *sexy* or *fuck*;
you will wait hours for another
adult to arrive who can understand
your joke. Who might laugh.

2

Afternoons of la-la-la will laugh
in your face, the alphabet
of maternal mental illness I understand:
PPD, PTSD, PPA, PPOCD, letters form
a list of acronyms, which is another
way to say you are fucked.

3

You will narrate the fuck
out of everything as you walk. Cry-laugh
as your life slips into another's
life. A is for acorn. B is for bird. Alphabet
rising up from the forms
of a world you no longer understand.

4

The baby will never understand
that you just need it to shut the fuck
up; your spouse will form
dark jokes to try to make you laugh.
SOS inked on the milk-tracking sheet, alphabet
plea lifted up to each other.

5

You will sing, again, another
lullaby with lyrics no one understands,
Inky binky, bob-a-linky, an alphabet
of nonsense, but what the fuck?
Why not? It makes the baby laugh:
a new joy formed.

6

Torture comes in many forms:
middle-of-the-night monitor lights, another
the woman who can still laugh,
who seems to understand
exactly what it is the baby fucking
needs while I can't even recite the alphabet.