I am Trying to Break Your Heart

By Kevin Young

I am hoping
   to hang your head

on my wall
   in shame—

the slightest taxidermy
   thrills me. Fish

forever leaping
   on the living-room wall—

paperweights made
   from skulls

of small animals.
   I want to wear

your smile on my sleeve
   & break

your heart like a horse
   or its leg. Weeks of being

bucked off, then
   all at once, you’re mine—

Put me down.

I want to call you thine

to tattoo mercy
   along my knuckles. I assassin

down the avenue
   I hope

to have you forgotten
   by noon. To know you

by your knees
   palsied by prayer.

Loneliness is a science—

consider the taxidermist’s
tender hands

trying to keep from losing
   skin, the bobcat grin
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