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
of the living.

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