

## A Bloody Mouth and Dripping Eyes

I thought things would be okay when  
he punched me in the mouth.  
Hard.  
Like he meant it.

One of those Casius Clay left jabs that  
you never see coming—  
snapped off with purpose, with intention.

I had wanted to even things up, to  
make amends—  
thought I could share the pain  
I'd caused him.

I staggered back, shocked, but  
relieved at the same time—  
the bittersweet blood slid to my chin.  
I watched him watch me—  
three feet away, but miles apart.  
His fist hurt—  
I could tell by the way it hung limp  
like his sullen shoulders.  
Lifeless.

My lip wept as his eyes dripped—  
both of us waiting for the words.

—Ryan Stetson

