

How to Win a Boxing Match

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First, picture your opponent seen
only in mirrors and murky puddles
after a spring evening's downpour.

You know them so well.
How did it come to this?

One minute, you manage coexistence,
a shaky truce with the one who dares
wear your face,

but the next, they're tearing you down, down,
down, into the bleakest depths of your mind,
where a ring awaits you both.

How many times have you done this?
How many more until you find peace?

Scan the crowd as it jeers, taunts, and jumps,
rabid beasts against the side of the ring.
Savage, formless entities frothing at the mouth
as they eagerly await your downfall.

Wait for the bell to sound, its ring cleaving through the air
like your mother's favorite butcher knife.

Wind up a punch and dodge as it skims your jaw.
This challenger knows all your secrets, all your moves.
How can you hide from yourself?

Several blows later you're bloodied.
Take another swing and hit your rival square in the nose.
Ignore the crack resounding through your skull,
how your hands are coated in red.

You can't give up now.

Starting in your legs, hoist momentum through your fist
straight down to their unguarded stomach.
The blow will connect, and you will crumple to the ground.

When the bell sounds again, the beasts will swarm into the ring,
gaping maws tearing into your flesh.
They are starving.

It's time to feast.