

JUST ONE

SHERRYL CLARK

see this arm, the ulna, the radius,
the elbow joint and humerus
the way it swings from your shoulder
like a well-oiled hinge
see the muscles, the tendons
the flexing and spreading of your fingers
the fist you can make
tight and hard and angry

see that skull, its hard carapace
its brow and rounded bone
the hollows for eyes and nose
those two neat rows of teeth
and behind it all, the brain
floating, a thick sponge
of memories and functions and life

and now we have a fist
and a skull, fist on skull,
fist smacking skull—smack
fist crunching cracking crippling skull
and a brain smashing
bouncing exploding

and you with your fist
holding onto it tight
nursing it
sore knuckles bruised skin
and over there
the skull on the ground
leaking, the brain dying
and you can never take back what
your fist did
what you did
you and your addled brain.