

Mix Tape

by David M. Taylor

I drink wine and memories,
think about how you kissed me
when no one was looking,
that we held each other hidden
in the corner of a grade school party
where Guns N' Roses screamed
through the stereo in the basement.

I made a mix tape when I got home,
painted the case with black ink and poetry,
so I could show you the moment
when I didn't think
about my mother trying to stab my father,
that he left drunk in the darkness
where I'd eventually learn
I wouldn't see him again for three years.

I held the tape to give to you
at recess the next day,
to tell you I was going to run away
where no one knew my name
and I didn't have to lie
about how bruises found their way to my body.

But you said nothing ever happened,
that you'd never kiss a black boy,
and laughed at me in front of your friends.

I walked away, throwing the cassette
into the trash can baking under the sun,
and watched your friends skip to the playground.

Then I watched as you took the mix tape
from the trash and place it in your pocket.