“Camera”
By Evan Riley

He holds five agents
on his body and his vacant
face has been holding
the pavement, and is bleeding.
At 26th and Pulaski he looks lost
in the lens of my camera.
I do not know if he has
committed a crime, or what.
Sirens are crying as
are some humans; the reason
for each tear—gas,
emotion, or something
more simple—is unclear.
Disguised as Immigration
and Customs Enforcement
the insistent knee
of the federal government
punches repeatedly the brown
man’s red face—God, it whips
cartoonishly back and forth
and cannot stop bleeding.
An agent is finally just
placing the man under arrest.
I do not know if he is still
alive, or what.
I know my camera is evidence—
and therefore I am
on my way to a large
cage impersonating liberty or justice,
where an old red-eyed
white
woman holding blue
bruises on her body will laugh,
and say, “Hey, you
gotta crack a few skulls
to make a dictatorship”—
but here with my lip busted
and my hands behind

my back against the back seat
of a masked man’s car,
I am just starting to understand
of whose crimes, whose blood,
whose tears.