

## The Young Boxer

The woman is to pick the young boxer up from the back alley of the stadium. She is to keep the car running, her foot on the pedal. This is what they've agreed. The boxer will leave the match in the middle of the round. She'll manoeuvre herself up against the ropes, will duck under them, she will walk out. This is the first time in the woman's life that she's done something like this—rash, daring. The engine is a low and constant rumble. In the rearview mirror, the sun is setting. There's a store made of yellow sandstone, covered in hot pink bougainvillea, petals floating in the breeze. The sky is soft blue and orange, smudged and uneven, like hand cream that doesn't rub in.

They call the young boxer 'Hi-Fi' in reference to the way she tries to box the ears of her opponents early on so they have to fight through the ringing. She's an offensive fighter with footwork and speed. In the woman's favourite fight, the boxer is knocked down in Round 6. There's a look of disbelief on her face. She's never fallen before. From her corner, you can see her father shaking his head. The woman has little respect for the boxer's father. Few fans do.