

## The copperhead and me

*Oakley Ayden*

how many times did my  
bare callow feet retreat  
into those sweating woods?  
i don't know. one time though  
a copperhead coiled all her clout to strike me from her sanctum. i  
related as i ran, risking slash in mother's grass where the copperhead and me could  
off-recordly be slaughtered —  
beheaded, or desouled.

**Oakley Ayden** is an autistic, bisexual writer from North Carolina. Her poems appear or are forthcoming in *Ghost City Review*, *Motherscope Magazine*, *Not Very Quiet*, *The Minison Project*, *The Cabinet of Heed*, and elsewhere. She currently lives in California's San Bernardino National Forest with her two daughters. Find her on Twitter ([@Oakley\\_Ayden](#)) or Instagram ([@Oakley.Ayden](#)).

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