

Two Boys with the X Factor
After Ross Gay's Two Bikers on Broad Street

Two boys in line, not knowing then what they would come to see and hear and feel,
my gaze landed upon the stuttering beat of their impatient hearts,
their throbbing nerves reverberating in their bones, undiluted and raw.

One, with curls like ink droplets,
The other, with eyes of cornflower,
Stand clammy, wide-eyed,
Songbirds on the verge of their first lyrics.
Their shoulders brush, a casual collision, nothing more, yet
in that touch, in that soft whisper of skin, a cosmos unfurls
And I see a million realities branch out.

Ones where they wash away in the
Fluorescent shine of the X Factor stage,
One where their worlds brush again,
On parallel planes that are never to meet, stuck in
Merely the in-between moments.

They sway slightly, buffeted by the rush of dreams that scurry past them,
each gust filling their lungs with a new kind of air,
each breath they share, the ghost of a journey yet to unfold,
Two boys, still untamed, uncrowned, unbroken.

They stand a foot apart,
their hearts pitched to the same rhythm of the songs to be written,
in the liminal space between the planes of realities.