

## **Cabrini Boys**

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in the deep end, senseless (serene)

one long exhale,  
spiral down, tornado descending  
& push off back up to inhale.

at the bottom, i watch the lazy-kicks above,  
revelling in my lung capacity

crossing the 10 ft's bottom,  
loving the pressure in my skull.  
Fingertips grazing the cool, smooth tiles

P                    C                    C

snaking my way through the legs, towards The Light

resting on the edge with you,  
that bright light between or below  
soft & fuzzy now with that chlorine-bokeh  
we played with the jet nearby,  
letting the warmth pass between my fingers while we talked  
filling our mouths, hitting our faces,  
thighs, toes, between my legs

you laughed  
“what? it feels so good! you try.”



### 2001, Remedial Math

I do not know what was going on in that math room. I think your dad might even have been teaching it, honestly. There were only like 8 of us in the class, and for some reason desks were originally paired in twos, but scattered at wild angles by now. You & I faced square west, but [REDACTED] faced a corner, & other pairs were at 20° or 77° whatever from the chalkboard. That was a wild year; they had given up on trying to control us, just waiting for us all to age out.

Someone was in trouble. We sat facing the window, and were playing War in our desks with different erasers & gum rappers & paper footballs. I remember being so excited to find someone who was still able to access imaginary play - I thought I was the only one left. This is also the first time I noticed your eyelashes, which I still talk about anytime you are mentioned.

Ancient Mrs. Coats came into the classroom & interrupted our game to ask if I would like to come to Honor's Math. "No, thank you." But they made me go anyway.

### 2011, [REDACTED] basement

At this point, you were the hottest guy in Allen Park by a lot. I don't know why but when you came down the stairs you announced,

"I'm only good at two things, smoking & fucking."



I lost you the other day.

I know I was in Chicago. In an apartment, presumably Berteau; dark, dingy, with built-in cherry bookshelves & books stacked everywhere. I had just finished putting dinner away in the kitchen & walked out expecting to find you on the couch, but I couldn't find you. I checked the bedroom & the bathroom, and the kitchen again - but you weren't anywhere. There's only so many places to be unseen here, and both the doors were bolted from the inside. I stayed still, to see if I could hear you shifting weight like you do on the creaky floors, but there was nothing.

“█?” I said to the empty apartment. I didn't want to ask it.

\*

I got very good at looking away from things at Cabrini. Averting my eyes & mind from people's tests, girls' skirts. Not asking the █-question, no matter how many times people asked me.

\*

“█?”, again, and then it disintegrated. I tried to play the tape back. Isn't this his LaCroix from dinner? I search for more clues, but in everything I scan (books, cookware, groceries), I can't label past their name & noun, or remember what is usually tangled up in them (history, intention, memories, ownership).

I see Carrot, “I know you're mine, buddy.” So, is this my apartment? I thought I lived in Portland. I see the green velvet couch, and that's got my name written all over it. But didn't we put it together, together? The blankets are left tossed on the couch after dinner, enough for two.

“█?”

I start to see things that I'm sure aren't mine. Boy things; a baseball hat with that Michigan “M”, a set of keys with an old Planet Fitness tag, a black Google phone. But these are all things that were █'s before as well. And now, I am afraid for who will answer, and stop calling out.