



1986

Boys

Philip White

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BOYS

Voices in the park, boy's voices.
Above empty municipal branches,
a football's predictable flight,
nosing up into the grey air,
then, toward mid-arc, tipping gently,
as if on a long tether, to earth,
and wobbling back down to the grass.

I stop to watch them darting through the trees,
the boys, smearing sweatshirts and levis
with earthstains, meaty greens and blood red,
spitting on hands for good grip,
cupping them to puckered mouths
to catch the small clouds that,
for an instant, shroud their tousled heads,

then vanish.

 In my mind I see
Gordon Marsh and Cutter Swallow,
my three older brothers, their flushed
faces staring out from my boyhood.
I think of a time when, innocent
of our own lives, we played
in the murky silence before rain.