

Boys with shaved heads

by Ryan Robidoux

I.

make dangerous creatures.
Someone who takes a blade
to his own scalp should not be trusted
with something as fragile as a heart.
Which is to say I've been cut
too many times to count.
Which is to say I'm a masochist.

Boys with shaved heads

II.

self portraits of silhouettes
in a cityscape no smile & I wish
those shorts were just a bit shorter.
Thank you but I don't love you.
This before he ever got anywhere near
his golden playboy hair with a pair of scissors
but now I see he always had it in him.

Consider the photographer

III.

pronoun neutral, an amalgam
of dad sweaters, denim & blush
he called heroin chic.
I love you they said before texting
I can't & vanishing like a ghost
refusing to haunt & he shaved his head
every week that I knew her.

Or the boyfriend

IV.

I finally tore through my own locks
in defiance because boys who pair
bare heads with beaded earrings
& painted nails are alien.
Friends only know to scapegoat us, cast
us their sins, wash their hands, drive
us into the wilderness to become devils.

Or consider me.

V.

But boys without shaved heads

will also wield power.
He never holds the knife
but watches & commands
Cut yourself again for me.
So I recharge my razor in submission
to the boy with iridescent red hair
who likes me bald & exposed.

For if a boy with a head of hair
falls for me & since I refuse
to get cut on other boys
I smiling cut off my sable hair
again & again on demand
an evolutionary display to show
those other boys now I'm the danger.