

Happy Men by Winter Miller

Let me set the scene: I walk up to five men skateboarding by the statue in Prospect Park, they are hanging with each other and I approach and I say, "Hey, I wrote a poem about you, for you, can I read it to you?"

All five of them look up at me like, what, what the hell is happening here? And then one by one they say, "Yeah, sure, do it." My phone has 1% battery left. It might die before I even begin. I am a white queer woman in her 40s wearing layers dressed to go running and only my eyes are visible. They are five young men of color, in their 20's, all masked. This scenario is admittedly the kind of thing you'd make fun of. By all means, do.

I almost walked right by them after I'd written it, but then I thought, why not tell your muse they are your muse? What harm could it do?

I'm new to poetry, but, I like that it is so much easier to share than an entire play. You can just give someone a poem.

I'd like to share it with you all too. I do think art heals, opens us up and bridges the gaps, and makes us feel less alone. It's true for me anyway. And I loved watching them skate, their glee filled me with happiness.

Skaters in red and black

Boards twirling

beneath white sneakers

Young gifted and

Egging each other on

A soft yehhhhhh

Jubilant grins

Smack talk

Whooo there it is

Scaling two overturned cones
Roadside orange and 911 blue
These are the happiest of men
Cradled among sycamores
Decks colliding
Seemingly oblivious
To twenty-five degrees
Beneath a Brooklyn sun

For those wondering what they thought - They were floored. They loved being the subject of a poem. They all offered fist bumps. ... It was an exchange of love. I had loved them and then I got to show them. And they gave it back. And to think I almost didn't turn back and say what the hell and read it to them. I mean, it was weird... hey, I wrote you guys a poem can I share it with you? ... but, what fun.