**Blue Line Incident**

By [Jacob Saenz](http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/jacob-saenz)

He was just some coked-out,

crazed King w/crooked teeth

& a teardrop forever falling,

fading from his left eye, peddling

crack to passengers or crackheads

passing as passengers on a train

chugging from Chicago to Cicero,

from the Loop through K-Town:

Kedzie, Kostner, Kildare.

I was just a brown boy in a brown shirt,

head shaven w/fuzz on my chin,

staring at treetops & rooftops

seated in a pair of beige shorts:

a badge of possibility—a Bunny

let loose from 26th street,

hopping my way home, hoping

not to get shot, stop after stop.

But a ’banger I wasn’t & he wasn’t

buying it, sat across the aisle from me:

*Do you smoke crack?*

*Hey, who you ride wit’?*

*Are you a D’?*

*Let me see—throw it down then.*

I hesitate then fork three fingers down

then boast about my block,

a recent branch in the Kings growing tree;

the boys of 15th and 51st, I say,

they’re my boys, my friends.

I was fishing for a life-

saver & he took, hooked him in

& had him say goodbye like we was boys

& shit when really I should’ve

gutted that fuck w/the tip

of my blue ballpoint.

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This poem first appeared in *RHINO*.