Evolution of My Block

By Jacob Saenz

As a boy I bicycled the block
w/ a brown mop top falling
into a tail bleached blond,

 gold-like under golden light,
 like colors of Noble Knights
 'banging on corners, unconcerned

 w/the colors I bore—a shorty
 too small to war with, too brown
 to be down for the block.

 White Knights became brown
 Kings still showing black & gold
 on corners now crowned,

 the block a branch branded
 w/ la corona graffitied on
garage doors by the pawns.

 As a teen, I could've beamed
 the crown, walked in w/out
 the beat down custom,

 warred w/ my cousin
 who claimed Two-Six,
 the set on the next block

 decked in black & beige.
 But I preferred games to gangs,
 books to crooks wearing hats

 crooked to the left or right
 fighting for a plot, a block
 to spot & mark w/ blood

 of boys who knew no better
 way to grow up than throw up
 the crown & be down for whatever.

Source: Poetry (September 2010)