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## Skinheads

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## Skinheads

I work at a library in a neighborhood where parents wear yarmulkes and prayer shawls. Their children wear t-shirts with their names printed in Hebrew.

Two boys with shaved heads and bruised faces study a book about Aryan resistance. They Xerox leaflets that say "White Power" and "Niggers Beware." They examine each page with the diligence of young seminarians.

Where do these boys go when they leave? How many leaflets will be put on windshields or nailed to telephone poles? What monster captured the imagination of boys who should be skateboarding and listening to Aerosmith rather than learning the hierarchy of racism? How do clubs with names like "American Frontists" and "Confederate Hammerskins" offer esteem and brotherhood by having their young men bomb churches and stomp Vietnamese Immigrants to death.

I'm told there are no more Weimar Republicans balancing Swiss Bank Accounts, pulling gold-plated watches out of vest pockets and maintaining that Kristallnacht was only a street brawl, an isolated incident not worthy of our attention. I've read there are no more Schutzstaffel conducting camp orchestras in front of signs that say "Arbeit Macht Frei" and planting flowers at the entrance of crematoriums.

A small child approaches my desk and chants a psalm he learned earlier that day. His mother selects five new works of fiction as she pushes a stroller that carries his baby sister.

I want to believe there are some boys who are just going through a phase at a certain time of their lives.

I want to believe I live in a safe place.