“Black Boys Play the Classics”

The most popular “act” in Penn. Station
is the three black kids in ratty sneakers & tee shirts playing
two violins and a cello-Brahms.
White men in business suits
have already dug into their pockets
as they pass and toss in
a dollar or two without stopping.
Brown men in work-soiled khakis
stand with their mouths open,
arms crossed on their bellies
as if they themselves have always
wanted to attempt those bars.
One white boy, three, sits
cross-legged in front of his
idols-in ecstasy—
their slick dark faces,
their think wiry arms,
who must begin to look
like angels!
Why do these strings
tremble so sweetly
to our ears?
A. Beneath the surface we are
one.
B. Amazing! I did not think that
they could speak
this tongue.

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