

At The Center Of Trauma

By Nicole Bond

High Holy Rabbinical
Original ghetto's claim to fame.
Low income statistical
Current ghetto's badge of shame.

Once a mighty giant
An innovator, a speculator, inventor of the incubator.
A beacon of care and Southside comfort for all the world to see.
Now a hovel of bricks, memories and ghosts,
Haunting prime lakefront property.

Bought and sold. Bankrupt gold.
Medicare-Medicaid swaddled the young; soothed the old – as it should,
When inhumane Humana one of the first to acquire turned out to be a liar
Did not continue the traditions as they said they would.

The doctors, the nurses, technicians in the lab, the custodial staff
All came to work but still could laugh.
They were a close-knit family; a neighborhood,
Proud, happy, dispensing philanthropic charity.
The neighborhood changed but never their mission.
Caring for all regardless of creed, color or condition.

Since 1881 generation after generation thrived
Among marble floors and clean glass doors
With friendly smiles in well-lit aisles.
Even I wore really nice shoes and
Went to Catholic schools and
Ate a lot of steaks and
My car got new brakes
Because of you.

Cummings, Kunstader, Baumgarten, Dreyfus honestly,
Truly you kept folks alive just being there...
Even the homeless man found a place.
He stayed inside your shuttle bus shelter space
And was never ever pushed away – just like all of us he needed to be safe
You had a Friend Pavilion.

Since 1959, each time, The Crystal Ball proved the money wasn't gone
The cotillions gave millions and millions for physicians to stay on
But gentrification is this generation's brand new song.

And now the mighty giant, High Holy Rabbinical is gone.

From the high-rise windows of Prairie Shores
We stood there tearful watching your doors
Crumble and fall with blow by blow of the wrecking ball.
The nerve, the indifference, the gall!

Olympic Village was the vision
But the IOC thwarted that decision.
Na-na nana na.

But what happens now? I don't know...
A prison, a mall, maybe a casino...

Still no trauma center for me to go...
Mercy has no mercy.
A St. Bernard is a dog.
U of C won't see me.
Northwestern is sequestered.
Rush isn't in a hurry.
And U of I will kill you, don't you worry.

Oh ((yawn)) Michael Reese you are deceased...
I don't mean to yawn
But it's a long ride in this ambulance
That's going all the way to Oaklawn.
Christ.

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