

Lycaste Street and Vernor Avenue respond to the Chrysler Plant being built

Summer has arrived
and there are no children
to shriek in front yards,
chase behind the ice cream truck
careful to avoid the cracks
across our old corner.

Our corner store is gone.
Our apartment buildings- gone.
The small brick homes lining Lycaste
like a picket fence- all gone.

The only view from here
is what folks will migrate
across state lines for.
They all know the Plants
pay well—
clear the college debts,
earn the family a home
on the 'good' side of town
where the houses have not yet
been demolished, the sky free
of factory air.

Wouldn't be no *good*
side if we hadn't been
here, our land
widespread, so ripe
y'all paid good money
to pull us out
by the roots.

Every Monday, folks swarm your doors
like yellow jackets,
dressed in their Sunday best
hoping for hiring papers;
to work machinery until their hands

are brick rough, backs hunched over
for years post retirement.

There is no movement on the block
these days- only the screech
of machinery, the grinding
of hot metal.

Still no one driving by can say
the perks ain't plentiful-
that Chrysler employees
don't clock out
looking pleased
with their honest day's work.