

Little Chicago Boy

Common

How should I begin?
This is the story of a boy named Lonnie Lynn
As I said it, the spirits enwhip me
He was raised in the belly of the city
Chicago
Discovered by du Sable
A Black Frenchman
That I had to mention
Extensions of a young man livin' on a low end
47th and Michigan, lackin' a little discipline
Grandma Mable did the best she could
You know how young brothers want a testy hood
There he stood, taller than most Black boys
One of the best ballers out of Illinois
Collagen, Ohio, this is like his bio
Talks that we had, man, they was never idle
He talked about readin' the Quran and the Bible
He talked how he smoked dope and sold it for survival
He talked about the ancestors, in our lives; they're vital
He said y'all boys love the bang 'cause you tribal
Spiral of life, Chicago to Denver
Anywhere he went, of attention, he's the center
6'9", big heart, big mind
He he spent his whole life tryin' to be big time
He did in a way, he made to the ABA
And the things he say on my record
When I was a shawty, he bought me "The Message"
It was his messages in life I would step with
Didn't see him much, spirits are connected
Father creates it, the son can reflect it
His perspective: sometimes seemed crazy
His perspective: sometimes seemed brilliant
His perspective: somehow it shaped me
His perspective: undoubted I feel it
He'd walk around in them Air Jordans I gave him
I said, "Pops, them from Mike, man, you better save 'em"
The fight that he had with cancer was a brave one
Took Dr. Sebi's herbs instead of medication
Breathing heavy, he talked reparations
He said, "Son, we live through our generations"
Offspring, coughing, Gene Ammons was playing
In the background, he was talking, I was praying
Our Father, take care of my father
As far as he went, may I go farther
May our dreams and legacies live through our children
Though I can't touch him, I can still feel him

As Pops would always say, "Keep the peace"