

In My Town

Ry Cooder

Up here on the hill, it's starting to rain,
The sun's disappearing through my windowpane,
And everything's still in my room.
Then a trolley goes by with its clattering sound,
Like a clock on the wall and the rain coming down,
And somebody's chattering way down the hall from my room.

From my room, I see old town.
Crook town, wop town, and spic town.
Black town, shack town, and hick town, from my room.
Looking down through the rain,
I think the future's going my way.
And there's a freeway coming soon
Right through this dirty old room.
Can't you see a 50-story building
Where a palm tree used to be?
Well, I like a town that's flat, I like a street that's tame.
You take out the trash; they all do the same.
But get back inside and remain, until notified.
I want a town that's clean and I want a rule that's maintained.

If you're brown, back down.
If you're black, get back.
Better white than right.
Better dead than red.
Better keep it contained in my town.
Now, in my town, I'm the big cheese.
Don't like all those commie rats in the palm trees
Up there in Chavez Ravine.
They come down here to City Hall,
Creating a big scene, crying "foul ball."
We'll put the head rat on the stand.
"Are you now or have you ever been?"
Chief runs a make; director runs the names.
I write the rules; I call the game.
There's the pitch, it's good; there goes your old neighborhood.

Tell the mayor duck out the back,
Tell the monsignor keep the deal under his hat.
Chavez Ravine plugged up, Bunker Hill ripped down.
Cement mixers spreading the word around.
This here is my town.
Then the trolley stops by on its way down the hill,
And somebody's passing by my window sill.
No shoes on the stairs, no knock at the door
Of my room, of my room.
Why should I go down?