

LA is Better When We Ride Together

Mike The Poet

1. [WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE SURFACE]

In the shadow of Union Station
security cameras in operation
the Hall of Administration, poetics of location
a flyaway bus takes the turn around
a group of college kids hold art materials
the sky looks ethereal over the cathedral--
a woman holding a bicycle walks down the aisle
her red hat reads "I Love Jesus"
Please report harassment over the intercom
"If you see something, Say something"
"Be safe, be kind" "Stand behind the yellow line"
transfer to the Silver Line, the Silver Streak,
Amtrak, the Metrolink, cruise the corridor
You have dreams and goals

"Save these seats for seniors"
"Do not block or lean against the door"
Look out for the student is the skateboard
there's a helicopter over City Hall
hungry birds feast on the platform
twelve yellow poles, umbrellas on a rooftop
a modernist glass box, commuters in an elevator
a man selling cell phone chargers
a goth girl with Purple Hair
empty chairs in Pershing Square
"Objects in mirror are closer than they appear"
transfer at 7th Street Metro Center
Dodger dogs, Laker leathers
LA is better when We Ride Together

2. [WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON BELOW THE SURFACE]

The message on the Metro poster proclaims:
LA is better when We Ride Together
but policy makers don't take the measures
necessary to ensure equity across the board
the trend is rising poverty, a city of working poor
Resegregation has dislodged diversity
while absentee corporations buy real estate
driving up market rates, forget a living wage
the housing shortage is exacerbated by
greedy developers building luxury units
to line their pockets & isolate the populace –
the Ellis & Costa-Hawkins Act perpetuate the gap
there's a litany of laws reinforcing inequality:
21st Century crooked public policy

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but too many residents are *denied* the pleasure
of enjoying the landscape and weather
because they're working 2 jobs just to survive –
the city's most overcrowded neighborhoods
have the highest rent burdens & most pollution
the city of Angels needs *real angels*
to manipulate the angles controlled by devils
dominating financial levels & civic amenities –
the heartless moguls horde the resources
through crooked policy, a false democracy
the truth is scary, they won't share authority –
eradicating inequality should be the priority

3. [EPILOGUE]

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the question is: *will we ever?*