

## 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"