

# Have You Forgotten

Kevin Buckley

Dear Las Vegas:

I know we scarcely talk these days; in time we've grown apart. You the older sister, me the young upstart. But when did our relationship change? . One town birthed by a railroad. The other, a Seven Wonders version of a dam. With beginnings like that, how could it last?

In 1905, with the sound of a gavel, you proclaimed your claim on this barren desert land. You dreamed you'd have all the recognition. You didn't imagine, in a grandstand play, I would usurp the attention.

When, in 1931, the country gripped by depression, congress announced my birth, 5000 hardy souls signed on determined to show their worth. It took you twenty-five years to reach that number, I did it in a matter of months. Up until that juncture you ruled southern Nevada, and you looked upon my arrival like an underhanded stunt.

I can sympathize with how you felt. My emergence came like a flood. National focus, presidential visit, dignitaries galore. High up on my pedestal, you the mat at my door. So, how is it that you look down on us, now, since clearly, we look down on you. That's just geography.

Is it because they gave the power away after the dam was finished? Is that what caused this spat? I can hardly be blamed; the government left their fingerprints all over that.

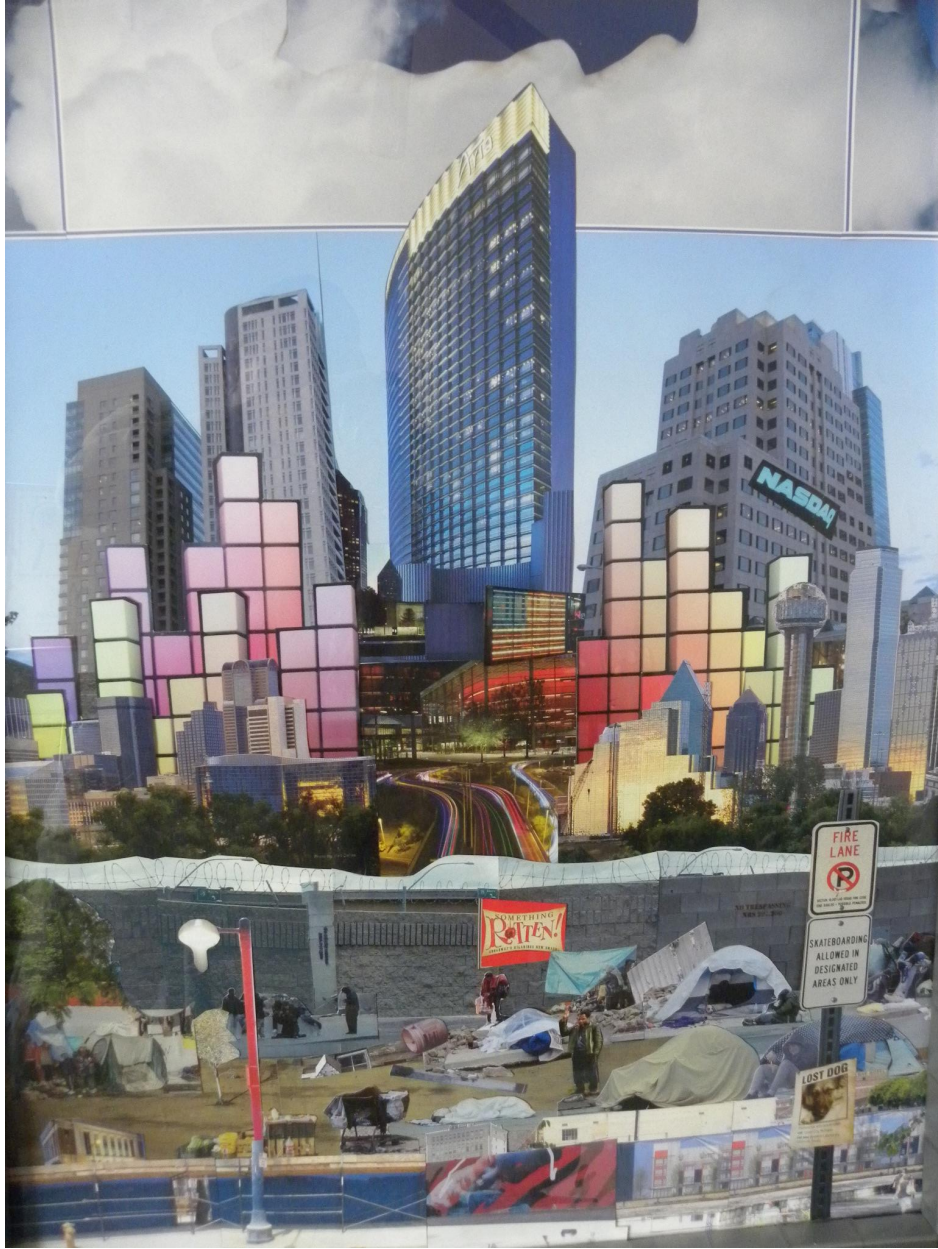
If not that, then what?

You've grown, but have you gotten the past? It's time to let go of the acrimony, cease the wrangling and sanctimony. Can't we put those events behind us? I'm content to be who I am. For me that's a damn sight better. A small family town, proud of our place in history. If you doubt that, just check out our riveting statues and that will clear up the mystery. We're content to put on our festivals, with art, food, and crafts. Come hike the railroad tunnels or tour the dam. Perhaps sit a while and enjoy the cuisine, or a craft made brew. Still, we reject gaming and growth, opting for a simpler way of life. You can keep your economic boom, along with its accompanying strife.

Don't get me wrong. We are pleased when you visit. Just don't get it in your head to stay.

Sincerely, resistant to change,

Boulder City



Photograph and collage by Kevin C. Buckley