Of the Vegas Dead
Ryan Garth Mitchell

The Old Mormon Fort, dead now, was born of adobe. Provisional, the sticks, straw, and mud didn’t last, nor did the conversions of the natives, a desert-scrubbed lot who has since been shoved to drier ground. The visitor center draws several genealogists each day. Around the corner, vagrants put bags to faces, lean against poles which advertise payday loans. Just miles away as the helicopter flies is a construction zone; it covers the scattered shotgun feathers of an imploded landmark. It is widely reported once the project is completed, scores of jobs will be sparked. Howard Hughes, a dead recluse from Texas, has his billion-dollar name on everything. An excavation would reveal a few resident bird bones but mostly cigarette butts of strangers that stand tall in the hardpan like tombstones.

by Ryan Garth Mitchell