

The OLD NEIGHBORHOOD

(Verse)

A map of my city's a marvellous thing:
It will show you, by numbers and circle and lines,
The face of my city
And will show you, with white and with blue and with green,
The space of my city
But not even the best map can say much about
The embrace of my city.

(Spoken)

*Every city has not one, but a thousand hearts.
They're what we remember lovingly long after we leave -
They're called neighborhoods.*

(1)

All those sidewalks filled with potsie squares
Drawn by eager hands with heavy purple chalk
Near the big park bench with the broken slats
Where the old guys always love to sit and talk
See that nice young cop? Why, that's Patrick Keane -
He's just made the force, now he's mother's pride and joy
He grew up right here on our street
We remember the days when he was just a little boy!

(2)

Here's the grocery store near the butcher shop
And the cobbler's place that always seems so dark
Benny's candy store sells us baseball cards
And the pink "spaldeens" for our stickball in the park
That's our church right there, and my school's next door
Yeah, sometimes sister yells, but she's really not so bad
Jimmy's teacher is his mom's best friend -
The best darn luck that a fellow ever had!

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(Coda or Refrain, after 2nd and 4th chorus)

Gone, I know - those days are gone forever
Peaceful days - I'd re-live them if I could
So much has changed, makes me sad to see it happen:
No place will ever be
Like the old neighborhood

(3)

There's the barbershop owned by Mister Joe
Where I've learned a lot of good Sicilian words
And the empty lot near the hardware store
Where the crazy lady comes to feed the birds
There's a bar on almost every block -
In summer they're cool, but always smell of beer
We can stop at the drugstore for a two-cents-plain
Or maybe an egg-cream - Doc makes the best ones here!

(4)

The man with the broom is our super, John -
From Norway, he says - I guess that could be true
Leaving ash-cans out and chasing kids
Are the jobs he came to America to do
When the church bell rings, then it's six o'clock
We'll walk to the subway and maybe meet my Dad
You know by the way he climbs the stairs
If his day at work was a good one or a bad!

** (Spoken at end of last time thru)*

*Somewhere, sometime, each of us dreams of the old neighborhood.
Well, now you know a little more about mine.*

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