



# Verse: Eulogy for Brad

February 1, 1999 By Paul Schliesing

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I dreamed you hadn't died.  
I saw you freckled and pale  
(I guess it was the Irish in  
your blood),  
Flitting among vendors,  
Ghostlike in a marketplace

Which changed to a chic  
party scene.  
Angry, insistent,  
You were searching  
For a shot, a bump,  
Anything to inject

In an angry race to beat  
the virus,  
To stamp out the mitochondria  
And the faulty DNA.

Reagan killed you—  
"Indifference,"  
You'd say—  
The enemy in your cells,  
Now turning them to rot.

Also the medicine,  
Ugly colored pills  
with Dr. Seuss-demonized names  
Making you queasy  
And forcing Welfare,  
Being too expensive for  
minimum wage  
Or jobs a failing, variable body  
could do.

The port city of New Orleans  
Has bars which never close.  
"I'll drink myself across the river."  
And your liver swelled  
    basketball big,  
You lay in confusion on the floor.

Clothed with memories,  
You pulled off your shirt  
Before Mardi Gras even came.  
Family and friends paraded by  
In wild combinations.  
You closed your eyes.

My last sight of you alive,  
And you were almost blind,  
The lights going out.  
Only Stuart's snowy amaryllis  
    was unbroken  
As you passed away.

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