"Why Children Did Not Knock at My Door on Halloween This Year"

By Ifti Nasim

1 There was no knock at the door
my cats were waiting in the foyer,
listening to the steps passing by.
Children were knocking at the door
of the apartment in front of mine.

"Trick or treat. Trick or treat"
My money jar full of quarters
looked so empty.
What happened? Who played
these dirty tricks on me?

Thirty-one year as a law abiding citizen

I am still a foreigner. Foreigner
with a crude face and features of
a terrorist. My color—two shades
darker than an average white man
is not accepted anymore.
My café ole color, once I was so proud of,
is a guilt trip for me now.
My ethnicity has become a crime.

Mean streets of Chicago have become meaner.
"Go back to your country. Go back to your
country."
They yell at me.
And I am a citizen of USA
with no country.

Airports, train stations, shopping malls, schools,
hospitals wherever I go,
I am watched and scrutinized.

I yearn for the freedom I came here for.
Right now I am worst than a black slave.

I am tired. I am tired.
I feel like Rosa Parks
and there is no bus for me.
because I am not only two shades darker
than an average white man

but I am also a Muslim.