

UNINSURED: LIFE AND DEATH IN THE LAND OF OPPORTUNITY

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“What happens to people around here who don't have any money when they need to go to the doctor?”

“They are shit out of luck.”

*(Francine, Mississippi)*

.....

“I go in there, the doctor, oh yeah, she did not even touch me. Here’s my \$50, right. I get in there, and waited forever and she said, ‘Oh you don’t have health insurance.’ Now this doctor is supposed to be asking, ‘What’s the matter with you?’ But she ain’t said nothing about me, only about the insurance. I’m sitting there. My feet are all swollen. She said, ‘Well, oh, I see you don’t have insurance.’ Finally after about five minutes of talking about the insurance thing, she said, ‘Well what’s the problem?’ I said, ‘Well I know I’m a diabetic. I just want you to look at my feet or something and tell me what I could do, and maybe you could give me the pills that I was taking before that had helped my feet.’ And she looked at me like I’m looking at you right now [from across the table]. She never touched me. We never got closer than you and I are right now.’ And I said, ‘Is that it?’ She said, ‘Yeah, that’s it.’ And I just looked at her and I said, ‘Why did you take my \$50 then?’”

*(Edna, Illinois)*

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