

New York State of Mind

De representatie van New Yorkse getto's in rapmuziek 1988-1995



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Inleiding

Tegenwoordig geldt het als een van de grootste (jongeren)culturen van de wereld: hiphop. Waar hiphop begon in de zwarte getto's van New York in de vroege jaren zeventig, is het inmiddels uitgegroeid tot een wereldwijde cultuur. Deze hiphopcultuur bestaat uit vier onderdelen: *mc'ing* (rappen), *dj'ing*, *breakdancing* en *graffiti*. Bij het grote publiek is hiphop vooral bekend als muziekstroming, maar voor de leden van de subcultuur gaat het verder dan alleen muziek maken. Hiphop geldt voor hen namelijk als een manier om het verhaal van de Afro-Amerikaanse bevolking te vertellen. Met behulp van rap wordt op deze manier een stem gegeven aan de met name zwarte Amerikaanse onderklasse. Van oudsher waren dit zwarte personen die woonden in de urbane regio's. Hiphop en de stedelijke omgeving zijn daarom met elkaar vervlochten.

De hiphopcultuur en rapmuziek zijn een product van de stedelijke omgeving, specifiek New York, en zo vormt de stad een factor van invloed op deze muziek. De relatie tussen rapmuziek en de stad kan eigenlijk als een wisselwerking gezien worden. Zo vormt de stad een grote inspiratiebron voor de rapmuziek. Vaker gaat die over het leven in het getto, ook wel de 'hood' genoemd. Het hoofdthema in de songteksten heeft meestal een sociaaleconomisch karakter. Rappers vertellen verhalen over wat zij meemaakten in de plaats waar zij wonen. Dit zorgt ervoor dat rap een sterk (auto)biografisch karakter in zich draagt. Doordat rappers spreken over het gettoleven, beïnvloeden zij ook de manier waarop er naar deze plaatsen gekeken wordt. Zo zorgen zij ervoor dat het getto een bepaalde uitstraling krijgt. Dit kan zowel op een positieve als negatieve manier worden vertolkt.

Lange tijd was hiphop geen onderwerp van gesprek in het wetenschappelijke debat. Veel wetenschappers erkenden niet dat dit de nieuwe Afro-Amerikaanse jongerencultuur was, maar zagen het eerder als een tijdelijke opleving. Vanaf midden jaren tachtig van de twintigste eeuw begon er interesse te komen voor hiphop en de rapmuziek. David Toop gold als pionier omdat hij het eerste boek over hiphop schreef genaamd *Rap Attack*. Hierin beweerde hij vooral dat rap een verlengde was van de al bestaande orale Afro-Amerikaanse muziektradities.¹ De context waarin rapmuziek vorm kreeg werd buiten beschouwing gelaten in zijn publicatie.

Begin jaren negentig waren er diverse culturele wetenschappers die pleitten dat rapmuziek en de hiphopcultuur wel een nieuw soort vorm van Afro-Amerikaanse expressie in de maatschappij was.² Het boek *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America* van Tricia Rose was een van de belangrijkste publicaties. Hierin werd belicht wat rap betekende voor de zwarte gemeenschap en hoe deze hiphopcultuur eruitzag. In tegenstelling tot Toop legde Rose als een van de eerste de

¹ David Toop, *The Rap Attack: African Jive to New York Hip Hop* (Londen 1984) 19.

² Houston A. Baker Jr., *Black Studies: Rap and the Academy* (Chicago 1993)., Russell A. Potter, *Spectacular Vernaculars: Hip-Hop and the Politics of Postmodernism* (New York 1995)., William Eric Perkins, *Droppin' Science: Critical Essays on Rap Music and Hip Hop Culture* (Philadelphia 1996)., Craig S. Watkins, *Representing Hip Hop Culture and the Production of Black Culture* (Chicago 1998).

connectie tussen de urbane omgeving als factor van invloed op de hiphopcultuur. Volgens Rose beschreef rap de positie waarin de Afro-Amerikaanse urbane gemeenschap verkeerde aan de onderkant van een steeds technischere en kapitalistischere maatschappij.³ Ze behandelde vooral algemene karakteristieken van rapmuziek en de boodschap die het in zich droeg.

Voortbordurend op het werk van Rose kwam er in 2002 het boek van musicologe Cheryl Keyes uit. In haar boek werd vooral over het dynamische karakter van hiphop geschreven op basis van etnomusicologie, folklore én cultuur.⁴ Voor zowel Keyes als Rose had rapmuziek een verbindende functie binnen de zwarte bevolking van de Verenigde Staten. Door ervaringen te delen via rapteksten, konden mensen zich hiermee identificeren. Zo zorgde rap ervoor dat etnische trots, culturele waarden en saamhorigheid in de Afro-Amerikaanse bevolking van de Verenigde Staten gepromoot werden.⁵

Tot omstreeks de millenniumwisseling verschenen vooral boeken over de functie van de hiphopcultuur in de zwarte gemeenschap van die tijd en hoe rap daaraan bijdroeg. Maar de specifieke context van de positie waarin deze jeugd verkeerde ten opzichte van de generatie van de *Civil Rights Movement* en *Black Power* werd nog niet belicht. Bakari Kitwana, voormalig redacteur van het hiphop tijdschrift *The Source*, publiceerde hier een boek over. Hierin werd de overtuiging en houding van de hiphop-generatie behandeld, waar de hiphop generatie heen ging en welke sociopolitieke factoren deze generatie geschapen hadden.⁶ Hij bakende de hiphop-generatie af door te zeggen dat deze bestond uit de Afro-Amerikanen die geboren waren tussen 1965-1984. Met dit boek ontstond er een nieuwe stroming die de totstandkoming van de hiphopcultuur wilde duiden. In navolging van dit boek verscheen er een publicatie van Jeff Chang die vooral inzoomde op het culturele verhaal van de hiphop-generatie zelf en daarbij de analyse van de rapteksten eigenlijk niet meewoog.⁷

In het artikel van Murray Forman kwam er een grotere focus te liggen op de invloed van de stedelijke omgeving op rapmuziek. Hierin besprak hij niet zozeer de rapmuziek in het algemeen, maar juist op welke geo-culturele aspecten te ontdekken waren in de teksten van het muziekgenre. Volgens Forman gingen rapteksten niet alleen over de beschrijving van plaats en ruimte, maar juist over de waarde die rappers toekenden hieraan.⁸ Hij erkende dat rapteksten een interessant onderwerp van studie konden zijn om te onderzoeken welke gevoelens men bij het leven in het getto had. In deze publicatie werd er specifiek over de ruimtelijkheid in rapmuziek gesproken, waarmee vooral bedoeld werd welke invloed de geografische omgeving op het karakter van rap had. Meer dan andere jongerenculturen in de jaren tachtig en negentig had hiphop een sterke *spatial awareness*, waarmee werd bedoeld dat het

³ Tricia Rose, *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America* (Hanover 1994) 184.

⁴ Cheryl L. Keyes, *Rap Music and Street Consciousness* (Chicago 2002) ix.

⁵ Ibidem, 229.

⁶ Bakari Kitwana, *The hip hop generation: young blacks and the crisis in Afro American culture* (New York 2002).

⁷ Jeff Chang, *Can't stop, Won't stop: a history of the HipHop generation* (New York 2005).

⁸ Murray Forman, 'Represent': Race, Space and Place in Rap Music', in: *Popular Music* 19:1 (Cambridge 2000) 65-90, alhier 88.

bewustzijn van de ruimte om je heen een grote rol speelde in de muziek. Dit artikel zou uiteindelijk de opmaat vormen voor verder onderzoek naar de urbane omgeving en de invloed daarvan op rapmuziek.

Een artikel dat het geo-culturele aspect van hiphop in een casus beschouwde was dat van Lidia Kniaz.⁹ Zij analyseerde drie liederen waarin het belang van ruimte geschetst werd in de stad New York. Zo wilde Kniaz laten zien hoe het concept van stedelijke ruimte in rapnummers terugkwam en de ‘hiphop realiteit’ vorm kreeg in de nummers. Door deze casus over New York liet ze zien dat de urbane regio het speelterrein voor rapartiesten bood. Daarmee bevestigde zij de connectie tussen de stad en rapmuziek. In haar casus werd de ‘hiphop realiteit’ in rapmuziek blootgelegd om zodoende de *spatial awareness* in rapmuziek aan te tonen.

In dit essay probeer ik het onderzoek van Lidia Kniaz uit te breiden. Juist vanwege de verscheidenheid aan wijken en de grote hoeveelheid aan rapartiesten in de jaren tachtig en negentig vormt New York een ideale casus om de representatie van het getto in rapmuziek te analyseren. Zoals al duidelijk werd in eerdere publicaties is het ruimtelijke karakter van groot belang voor de identiteit van een rapper. In dit onderzoek zullen daarom twee deelonderwerpen behandeld worden die te maken hebben met de omgeving van de rapper. Ten eerste zijn dat de economische mogelijkheden die er zijn voor zwarte personen in het getto. Vervolgens wordt er onderzocht hoe de rapper tegenover zijn leefomgeving in New York aankijkt en met welke gebieden hij zichzelf identificeert. De hoofdvraag die daardoor beantwoord zal worden is de volgende: hoe worden de getto's van New York gerepresenteerd in rapmuziek tussen 1988-1995?

Onderzoeksopzet

Om deze casus op een zo afgebakend mogelijke manier te onderzoeken, zullen er enkele criteria gesteld worden. De specifieke periode die dit onderzoek behandelt betreft de jaren 1988 tot 1995. Dit kan gezien worden als de jaren van de *Golden Age of Rap*. Hierin waren er veel verschillende stijlen te ontdekken en leek het genre zich om de haveklap opnieuw uit te vinden. Een van de belangrijkste genres van die tijd was de hardcore rap waar agressieve en confronterende teksten centraal stonden.¹⁰ Gangsta rap was de meest bekende vorm van hardcore rap, maar niet alle hardcore rap concentreerde zich op criminele thema's. Hardcore rap is zo een genre binnen de rap dat een breed scala aan thema's bevat.¹¹ Alle artiesten die behandeld zullen worden in deze scriptie vallen onder het genre van hardcore rap. In dit genre staat namelijk het leven van de rapper en diens leefomgeving vaak centraal. In deze vorm van rap wordt het gettoleven ook het meest frequent besproken in tegenstelling tot andere rapvormen. Vaak

⁹ Lidia Kniaz, 'My City, My 'Hood, My Street: Ghetto Spaces in American Hip-Hop Music', in: *New Horizons in English Studies* 1:2 (Lublin 2017) 114-126.

¹⁰ Alle rapgenres in dit essay worden niet cursief geschreven omdat het niet verbonden is aan één taal, maar als universele term geldt.

¹¹ Russell A. Potter, *Spectacular Vernaculars: Hip-Hop and the politics of Postmodernism* (New York 1995) 130.

geldt deze muziek als (indirecte) kritiek op de situatie waarin de zwarte bevolking in het getto leeft of wat ze daarin meemaken. Hierdoor is er vaak een overwegend negatief karakter in de muziek te ontdekken. Hoewel ik bewust ben van dit gegeven, acht ik de hardcore rap toch van waarde om te onderzoeken vanwege de frequentie waarmee het gettoleven in dit genre wordt besproken.

Naast de tijdsafbakening en het genre van dit onderzoek is het ook nodig om verdere criteria op te stellen waaraan de geselecteerde albums moeten voldoen. Allereerst moet een album minimaal 200.000 keer verkocht zijn. Een hoog verkoopcijfer geeft namelijk aan hoe groot het publiek ongeveer is dat de muziek heeft gehoord. Ten tweede moet het album in de top 25 hebben gestaan op de Top HipHop/R&B Albums van Billboard. Zo kan ook gemeten worden of het enigszins een groter bereik had dan alleen de stad New York. Als derde voorwaarde wordt er van elk van de *five boroughs* (Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens en Staten Island) één rapalbum onderzocht. Zo zal er niet te veel focus komen op een specifieke *borough* of wijk, maar ontstaat juist door de veelheid aan perspectieven een zo'n compleet mogelijk beeld over het leven in de zwarte getto's van New York. Daarnaast zal er af en toe naar liederen en albums verwezen worden die buiten de vijf behandelde albums vallen. Zo dienen deze liederen/albums als verduidelijking voor de inhoud van geanalyseerde albums.

Er zullen vier verschillende hoofdstukken zijn. In het eerste hoofdstuk zullen de diverse rapartiesten en deze albums kort worden geïntroduceerd. Het karakter van de rapartiest zal uitgelegd worden. In hoofdstuk drie en vier zullen we zien hoe hun interpretatie van het getto vorm krijgt in de teksten. Door hier een apart hoofdstuk van te maken, hoeft er niet steeds achtergrondinformatie bij de nummers gegeven te worden.

Het tweede hoofdstuk beschrijft de sociaaleconomische context waarin de hiphopcultuur is ontstaan. Hierin wordt uiteengezet hoe het sociale en economische leven eruitzag voor veel Afro-Amerikanen gedurende de jaren '70, '80 en '90. Ook wordt er besproken hoe de verschillende zwarte getto's in New York zijn ontstaan. Zo is er een helder beeld over de situatie in New York voor Afro-Amerikanen.

In het derde hoofdstuk wordt naar de economische mogelijkheden van de Afro-Amerikanen in hun wijk/borough of New York in het algemeen gekeken. Vaak gaat het hier om het perspectief van de zwarte man en specifiek om het verhaal van de rapper zelf. Hierdoor wordt er een beeld geschetst over het sociaaleconomisch karakter waar de artiesten het over hebben. Wat zijn de economische mogelijkheden voor zwarte personen uit het getto? Om deze economische factoren te onderzoeken wordt er gekeken naar bepaalde termen die rappers gebruiken in hun teksten, zoals het concept van 'hustling' bijvoorbeeld. Deze term zal in hoofdstuk drie verder uitgelegd worden. Economische thema's zijn namelijk een beroemd rapfenomeen. Ook wordt er gelet op de weglatingen in rapteksten. Welke economische onderwerpen worden bijvoorbeeld vermeden? Zo creëert de rapper ook een beeld waarmee hij een bepaalde visie over het leven in het getto wil uitdragen.

Het vierde hoofdstuk is gewijd aan het geografisch element in rapmuziek. Hierin wordt de relatie van rappers met hun omgeving behandeld. Zo creëert de rapper in zijn nummers vaak een *mental map*. Zo'n *mental map* geeft aan hoe een persoon een omgeving bekijkt en interpreteert op basis van

ervaringen en standpunten die hij of zij heeft.¹² Juist voor rapmuziek is dit heel sterk van toepassing omdat het zo gebonden is aan het lokale leven in het getto. In rapmuziek worden namelijk specifieke elementen van de ruimte om hun heen uitgelicht. Dit kan bijvoorbeeld de straat zijn, maar ook een appartementenblok. Op deze manier creëert de rapper een *mental map* waaruit blijkt hoe zijn of haar directe leefomgeving eruit ziet en welke gedachte de artiest daarbij heeft.

Deze casestudie kan een waardevolle aanvulling zijn op het reeds gedane literaire onderzoek naar *spatial awareness* in rapmuziek. Daarnaast laat deze scriptie zien welke gevoelens er voor een deel van de Afro-Amerikaanse gemeenschappen bestaan over de situatie waarin zij zitten. Rapmuziek is een vorm dat dit gevoel op een krachtige manier kan verwoorden. In de hoofdstukken drie en vier zullen er diverse concepten uitgelegd worden om de rapteksten beter te kunnen duiden. Hierdoor worden de overeenkomsten in de diverse albums beter te bevatten.

¹² Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge 1960) 2.

1. Allow me to introduce myself

Geanalyseerde rapartiesten

Om een duidelijk beeld te krijgen over de rapteksten, dient er als eerste de achtergrond van elke te bespreken hiphopartiest/groep te worden geduid. Zo biedt dit hoofdstuk de context voor de hoofdstukken drie en vier waarin de economische mogelijkheden in het getto volgens de artiesten besproken worden als wel hoe de rappers hun leefomgeving ervaren. Na dit hoofdstuk zal er ingegaan worden op het ontstaan van de zwarte New Yorkse getto's en de sociaaleconomische situatie in deze wijken.

Naar aanleiding van de verschillende criteria die in de inleiding zijn gesteld is er een selectie van albums ontstaan. Voor Queens is dat Nas met het album *Illmatic* (1994), voor Brooklyn is dat The Notorious B.I.G. met het Album *Ready to Die* (1994), voor de Bronx is dat Boogie Down Productions met het album *By All Means Necessary* (1988), voor Manhattan is dat Big L met *Lifestylez ov da Poor And Dangerous* (1995) en voor Staten Island is dat Wu-Tang Clan met *Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)* (1993). Al deze rapartiesten/groepen zijn te scharen onder het genre hardcore rap. Dit rapgenre typeert zich door harde, compromisloze teksten en zware beats. Hierdoor heeft het een kritisch en protesterend karakter. In het algemeen probeerde dit genre een boodschap over te brengen, specifiek over het gettoleven. Vaak is in dit genre ook een autobiografisch karakter te herkennen. Hardcore rappers lenen zich op deze manier uitstekend om te gaan onderzoeken welke economische mogelijkheden zij in het getto zagen en hoe zij hun leefwereld in het getto ervoeren. Hieronder wordt een korte context van de artiesten en de albums geschetst.

Nas

Nasir bin Olu Dara Jones, oftewel Nas werd geboren in Crown Heights in Brooklyn, maar groeide het grootste gedeelte van zijn jeugd op in Queensbridge. Zijn debuutalbum *Illmatic* beschreef op een levendige wijze Nas' leven in de Queensbridge Projects. Met thema's als ganggeweld, stedelijke afbraak en de effecten van armoede wilde hij een zo'n nauwkeurig beeld voor de toehoorder schetsen. Nas verklaarde zelf in een interview het volgende over de intentie van het album:

I want you to know who I am: what the streets taste like, feel like, smell like. What the cops talk like, walk like, think like. What crackheads do — I wanted you to smell it, feel it. It was important to me that I told the story that way because I thought that it wouldn't be

told if I didn't tell it. I thought this was a great point in time in the 1990s in [New York City] that needed to be documented and my life needed to be told.¹³

Wat heel duidelijk bij Nas' *Illmatic* naar voren kwam was het concept van *keepin' it real*, iets wat centraal stond in de thematiek van rap. Dit betekende dat authenticiteit in rapteksten van grote waarde werd geacht. Een van raps primaire functies was namelijk een stem geven aan de gemarginaliseerde zwarte groep in de stedelijke regio's van de Verenigde Staten.¹⁴ Juist dit is de kern van Nas' *Illmatic*. Het album gold als boodschap voor de Amerikaanse bevolking en politiek om te laten zien wat voor een effect de moderne kapitalistische maatschappij op de inwoners van het getto had. Nas' levensverhaal stond hier symbool voor het leven van talloze andere jonge zwarte personen.¹⁵ In het album is een nogal negatieve tendens over het gettoleven te ontdekken. Dit kwam mede door de moord op zijn vriend Ill Will. Dit was de persoon waarmee hij voor het eerst muziek maakte. Voor Nas gold dit als een *wake up call* over het leven in het getto.¹⁶ Over het algemeen wordt dit album nog steeds als een van de belangrijkste en invloedrijkste albums van de rapmuziek beschouwd.

The Notorious B.I.G.

The Notorious B.I.G. is de tweede artiest die onderzocht wordt in deze studie. Hij werd geboren als Christopher Wallace in Clinton Hill, Brooklyn. Biggie Smalls, een andere bijnaam voor de rapper, stond bekend als een 'bad nigger'.¹⁷ Het stereotype van de zwarte man als personificatie van geweld was opgekomen aan het einde van de twintigste eeuw. Specifiek voor New York werd dit bevestigd met de Central Park jogger verkrachtingszaak. Hierin werden vijf zwarte tienerjongens veroordeeld tot gevangenisstraffen van vijf tot tien jaar. Later zou blijken dat zij onschuldig waren. In plaats van protest te bieden tegen dit stereotype, omarmde Biggie dit juist.¹⁸

Het debuutalbum van Notorious B.I.G., *Ready to Die*, gold evenals Nas' album *Illmatic* als kritiek op de Amerikaanse maatschappij. Hierin schetste Biggie zichzelf als een outlaw; een persoon die buiten de wet om leefde. Juist vanwege deze manier van rap, bracht hij de problemen van het Amerikaanse maatschappij in beeld. In dit album portretteerde hij zichzelf als directe representatie van deze problemen. Zo versterkte Biggie het stereotype van de zwarte man als personificatie van geweld.

¹³ Nas On Marvin Gaye's Marriage, Parenting And Rap Genius - <https://www.npr.org/2012/07/22/157043285/nas-on-marvin-gayes-marriage-parenting-and-rap-genius> (geraadpleegd op 11-02-2020).

¹⁴ Tricia Rose, *Black Noise* (Hanover 1994) 2.

¹⁵ Ilkka Valta, From "Life's a Bitch" to Life is Good: Urban context and Identity Construction in Nas's Rap Lyrics (Masterscriptie University of Tampere 2016) 87.

¹⁶ Nas talks to Zane Lowe - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p01x1r4r> (geraadpleegd op 29-02-2020).

¹⁷ Eddie Malone, 'Long-Lost Brothers: How Nihilism Provides Bigger Thomas and Biggie Smalls With a Soul', in: *Journal of black Studies* 46:3 (Californië 2015) 297-315, alhier 297.

¹⁸ Michael S. Collins, 'Biggie Envy and the Gangsta Sublime', in: *Callaloo* 29:3 (Baltimore 2006) 911-938, alhier 911-912.

Maar er zijn ook andere thema's in zijn album te ontdekken: van rijke rapper in *Juicy*, tot een *player* in het nummer *Big Poppa*, maar ook van een gevaarlijke gangster in *Gimme the Loot*, tot een wanhopige Biggie in het nummer *Everyday Struggle*. The Notorious B.I.G. was daarom een hardcore rapper pur sang. Door de verschillende persona die de artiest in zijn album aannam, werd er een zeer divers beeld geschetst van hoe je tegenover deze rapper, en meer specifiek het stereotype van de zwarte man aan kon kijken. Zijn album liet zien dat er niet één type zwarte man bestond. Hoewel hij het stereotype deels bevestigt in zijn raps, laat hij tegelijkertijd zien dat hij een product was van zijn omgeving. Zo was hij onderdeel van het drugsprobleem en kaartte hij dit aan in zijn raps. Het album werd op deze manier (indirect) gebruikt om mensen opnieuw na te laten denken over het verleden van de Verenigde Staten en de zwarte bevolking. Hierdoor zou de maatschappij kunnen inzien hoe de Afro-Amerikaanse gemeenschap in de sociale situatie beland was waarin het zat.¹⁹

Boogie Down Productions

Boogie Down Productions (BDP), bestaande uit producer Scott La Rock en rapper KRS-One, is een volgende rapformatie die besproken wordt als het gaat over economische mogelijkheden in het getto en de beleving van de ruimte om hen heen. KRS-One is een afkorting van 'Knowledge Reigns Supreme Over Nearly Everyone'. Kern van KRS-One's rapmuziek was dat hij kennis als waardevol zag, maar dat hij kritiek had op de manier waarop deze overgedragen werd op de zwarte bevolking.²⁰ Hierdoor nam Boogie Down Productions zelf een agogische rol aan om de eigen gemeenschap te onderwijzen. Dit gebeurt op een manier door de zwarte gemeenschap direct toe te spreken. Kijk alleen al naar de titel 'Stop the Violence' op het album *By All Means Necessary*. Hierin was een duidelijke boodschap te herkennen. In het nummer verklaarde KRS-One de titel.²¹

Bij de rapgroep Boogie Down Productions was de overgang van *braggadocio*, opscheppen over jezelf, naar meer politiek georiënteerde rap goed te zien. Hoewel er nog veel zelfverheerlijking in de rapteksten te ontdekken is, werd hun album *By All Means Necessary* als een van de eerste voorbeelden van politiek-kritische rap gezien. *Braggadocio* was wel verweven met de rapmuziek. Deze conscious/hardcore rap verving deze manier van rappen daarom niet, maar voegde eerder een andere thematiek toe aan rapmuziek. De nadruk kwam meer op politieke, sociale en economische omstandigheden te liggen. Het album was een directe verwijzing naar Malcolm X. Op de albumcover poseerde KRS-One op dezelfde manier Malcolm X deed op een foto uit 1964. Daarnaast was de titel een afgeleide van Malcolm X' quote: 'by any means necessary'. Met deze uitspraak werd bedoeld dat de zwarte bevolking er alles aan moest doen om hun humanitaire rechten te claimen en zich verdedigen

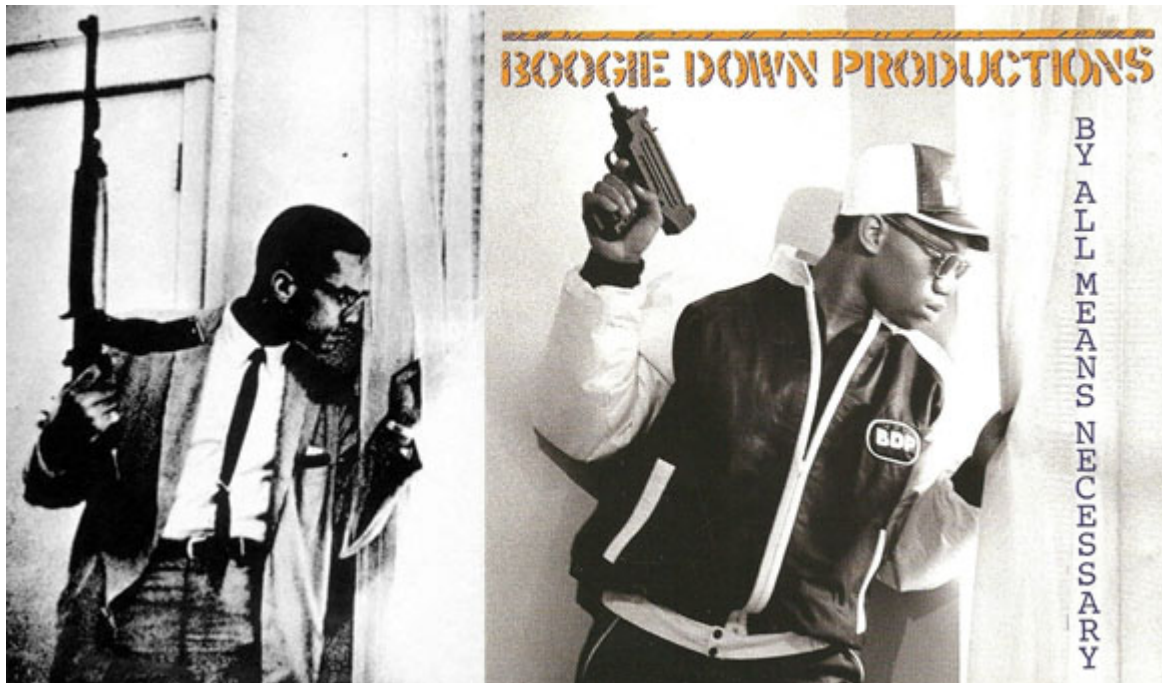
¹⁹ Eddie Malone, 'Long-Lost Brothers' (Californië 2015) 297-315, alhier 314.

²⁰ Adam Bradley & Andrew DuBois (red.), *The Anthology of Rap* (Yale 2010) 145.

²¹ Zie bijlage Boogie Down Productions - Stop the Violence, pagina 49-51.

tegen racisme in het algemeen.²² De term *hustling*, verder komen in het leven op zowel politiek, economisch als sociaal terrein, was hierbij zeker van toepassing. Dit concept was erg goed toepasbaar op rapmuziek. In hoofdstuk drie zal de term *hustling* uitgebreid toegelicht worden.

Boogie Down Productions, met name KRS-One, beschouwde zichzelf als de Messias van de originele rapmuziek waarbij vrede, liefde en eenheid de basisprincipes waren.²³ Ironisch genoeg is hun debuutalbum *Criminal Minded* juist een vormende factor geweest in de opkomst van het gangster genre in rap. Omdat dit album minimaal vijf jaar eerder (1988) uitkwam dan de andere albums (1993-1995), was hier nog een andere, minder agressieve vorm van *hardcore rap* te ontdekken. Het genre ontwikkelde zichzelf dus ook door de jaren heen.



Links: Malcolm X met geweer (1965), rechts: KRS-One op de albumcover van *By All Means Necessary*.

Wu-Tang Clan

Wu-Tang Clan, bestaande uit een producer en acht rappers, vestigde zich als grote naam in het rapgenre met hun album *Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)*. Het album was vrijwel direct een succes. Juist vanwege de *underground sound* en het rauwe karakter van de teksten en muziek in het algemeen was dit nogal opmerkelijk. Een ander bijzonder punt van het album was het *martial arts* thema dat het in zich droeg. De naam van de groep was bovendien afgeleid van een kung-fu film uit 1983, *Shaolin and Wu Tang*. Ze refereerden naar zichzelf als 'Wu-Tang Clan' die afkomstig waren van het eiland 'Shaolin', oftewel Staten Island. Vaak werd deze rapgroep geassocieerd met gangsta rap, een subgenre van hardcore rap. De focus lag deels ook op sociale verhoudingen in plaats van alleen gewelddadigheid. Een

²² Louis E. Lomax, *When the Word Is Given: A Report on Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm X, and the Black Muslim World* (Cleveland 1963) 173-174.

²³ About KRS-One - <https://www.krs-one.com/about> (geraadpleegd op 13-02-2020).

onderliggende gedachte voor Wu-Tang was om de *forgotten borough of Staten Island* te representeren. Ze werden volgens rapper Raekwon niet gezien als onderdeel van New York.²⁴ Het was noodzakelijk voor de rapgroep om Staten Island op de kaart te zetten. In de analyse in hoofdstuk vier zal blijken dat de termen *represent* en *shout out* erg van toepassing zijn op Wu-Tang Clan en andere rappers. Deze termen zullen ook in hoofdstuk vier worden uitgelegd.

Bovendien is Wu-Tang Clan een interessante groep om te onderzoeken of er een samenhang in de groep te ontdekken is. Werd er door de groep één gezamenlijke boodschap uitgedragen of zijn daar verschillen in te ontdekken? Met een dusdanige hoeveelheid aan personen in een groep, is het interessant om te zien of ze het over dezelfde soort ervaringen hebben.

Big L

Big L representeert in dit onderzoek de rapcultuur van Manhattan, in het bijzonder de wijk Harlem. De Harlemiter werd beschouwd als een uithangbord voor underground rap en werd daarmee in hetzelfde straatje als Wu-Tang Clan geplaatst. Hierin werd vooral een duister en gewelddadig beeld van het leven geschilderd, zoals dat bij gangsta rap gebeurde. Big L werd ook gezien als een artiest met een rauw karakter, vaak zelfs verbonden met horrorcore, een genre dat zo gewelddadig overkomt dat het bijna onrealistisch lijkt. Satanistische thema's waren daar ook een onderdeel van. Zo verklaarde Big L zichzelf als *devil's son*. Wat wel in overweging genomen moet worden is dat de balans tussen rauwe hardcore/horrorcore en de wat meer reflecterende hardcore teksten gestuurd zijn door platenlabel Sony. Dat wilde namelijk een album dat goed zou worden verkocht en wilde bovendien dat jongeren hier iets van konden opsteken. Harlem was namelijk een gevaarlijke plaats om te leven, blijkend alleen al uit de vele gewelddadige teksten die Big L in zijn muziek besprak. Er was een sterke gangster thematiek in zijn hele album te vinden. Als dit vergeleken wordt met de titel van zijn album, *Lifestylez ov da Poor and Dangerous*, kan er geconcludeerd worden dat het getto, specifiek Harlem, doordrongen was van geweld en gangs begin jaren negentig. Hierover zal in de volgende hoofdstukken verder uitgeweid worden. Big L is juist vanwege zijn gangster houding een ideale aanvulling op de vier andere artiesten. Bovendien is hij de enige rapper uit Manhattan die in de late jaren tachtig en vroege jaren negentig een grote populariteit genoot als we het hebben over hardcore rap.

Wat vermeld moet worden is dat alle rappers hun eigen teksten hebben geschreven. Hoewel dit gestuurd kon zijn, in het geval van Big L, waren zij uiteindelijk de verantwoordelijke over wat zij in hun raps zeiden. Het autobiografische karakter dat hardcore rap had is daarom waardevol voor de analyse. Zowel hoofdstuk drie als hoofdstuk vier zijn thematisch opgebouwd. Zo ontstaat er een duidelijker beeld en kunnen de diverse deelvragen beter beantwoord worden.

²⁴ Raekwon, 'New York State of Mind', in: *Hip-hop Evolution* (HBO 2016).

2. 'Dwellin' in the Rotten Apple'

Het ontstaan van de zwarte getto's in New York en de sociaaleconomische situatie

Als er een ding is wat de jaren zeventig in de Verenigde Staten kenschetste is het de economische neergang. Diverse steden werden hard getroffen. Veel industrie verplaatste zich naar de buitenwijken en het werkeloosheidscijfer steeg. Voor de stad New York was dit niet anders. De metropool had naast de economische neergang ook te kampen met andere grote problemen in de stad, namelijk toenemende criminaliteit en sociale onrust. Zo was Times Square een plek waar er veel prostitutie was en werd de New Yorkse metro beschouwd als een van de onveiligste plekken om jezelf te begeven. Daarnaast waren steeds meer mensen dakloos geworden en was drugscriminaliteit aan de orde van de dag. Zeker de zwarte getto's werden als probleemwijken gezien in het New York van de jaren zeventig. *The Big Apple* was langzaam veranderd in *The Rotten Apple*.

Maar hoe waren de zwarte getto's ontstaan en waardoor werden deze als zulke probleemwijken gezien? Om deze vragen te beantwoorden zal er eerst een overzicht gegeven worden over de verspreiding van de Afro-Amerikaanse bevolking over New York in de twintigste eeuw. Hierdoor wordt duidelijk waarom de Afro-Amerikaanse bevolking begin jaren zeventig in verschillende getto's zat. Daarna wordt er specifiek ingegaan op de sociaaleconomische situatie van deze bevolkingsgroep gedurende de jaren zeventig, tachtig en negentig. Zo wordt de context duidelijk waarin hiphop ontstond en zich ontwikkelde gedurende deze decennia. Deze ontwikkeling zal aan het einde van dit hoofdstuk besproken worden en vormt de basis voor de rest van de hoofdstukken.

Ontstaan zwarte getto's in New York in de twintigste eeuw

Aan het begin van de twintigste eeuw ontstonden de eerste zwarte getto's. Door een enorme migratie van Afro-Amerikanen van het zuiden van de Verenigde Staten naar onder andere het noordoosten, groeide de populatie in steden zoals Chicago, Detroit en New York. In het zuiden waren namelijk de Jim Crow-wetten, die segregatie en discriminatie na de afschaffing van slavernij in stand hielden, nog steeds actief. Dit was een reden voor veel Afro-Amerikanen om ergens anders een bestaan op te bouwen. Daarnaast was er in de jaren tien van de twintigste eeuw ook een enorme oorlogsindustrie in het noordoosten opgekomen waardoor er veel vraag was naar arbeiders.

Met een steeds groter wordende zwarte bevolking aan het eind van de jaren tien in het noordoosten van de Verenigde Staten, ontstond er ook een opleving van de zwarte cultuur. Deze manifesteerde zich primair in de *Harlem Renaissance* met als kern Harlem, New York. De 'New Negro Movement', zoals deze ook wel genoemd werd, was een literaire en artistieke stroming die leven werd ingeblazen door de Afro-Amerikaanse migranten uit het zuiden van de Verenigde Staten, als wel de geleerde klasse en de opkomende zwarte middenklasse. Harlem werd hierdoor een zwarte buurt waar veel mensen een nieuw leven konden opbouwen, zeker nadat veel blanke personen juist verder

noordelijk verhuisden. De zwarte bevolking van Harlem steeg van nog geen 1.500 in 1900, tot bijna 190.000 Afro-Amerikanen in 1930.²⁵

De wijk gold als bakermat van de nieuwe Afro-Amerikaanse cultuur. Het uiterlijke en innerlijke karakter van de 'negro' was voor deze tijd hoofdzakelijk bepaald door 'de ander', waarmee vooral de blanke gemeenschap bedoeld werd. De 'New Negro', zoals het gelijknamige boek heet van zwarte schrijver en filosoof Alain Locke, wilde zichzelf definiëren en af van het stereotype dat al decennialang over deze bevolkingsgroep bestond. Buiten de opleving van de zwarte cultuur, kwam de Harlem Renaissance vooral symbool te staan voor de bevrijding van de zwarte bevolking en het intellect van hun ras.²⁶ Het gold als een nieuwe start voor de Afro-Amerikaanse gemeenschap. Dit keer konden zij zelf invulling geven aan hun sociale leven. Met de Harlem Renaissance ontstond er een traditie van zwarte zelfdefiniëring. Dit zou later in veel andere zwarte culturele stromingen ook uiting krijgen, waaronder in de rapmuziek.

Door de Harlem Renaissance was er een forse toename van Afro-Amerikanen in New York gedurende eind jaren tien en de jaren twintig. De hele situatie in Harlem veranderde toen de *Great Depression* toesloeg. In oktober 1929 stortten de aandelenkoersen van Wall Street fors naar beneden. Door heel de Verenigde Staten brak een tijd van economische neergang aan. In New York raakten één op de zes personen werkeloos. In Harlem was dat zelfs één op de vier.²⁷ De groep van ongeschoolde werknemers werd het zwaarst getroffen. Deze bestond voor het grootste deel uit Afro-Amerikanen. Voor de 'Harlemites' betekende dit dat ze hun wijk in rap tempo zagen verslechteren. De buurt begon te vervallen; mensen raakten werkloos, werden dakloos en de criminaliteit steeg. Bovendien was opnieuw werk vinden in deze tijd erg lastig, met name voor zwarten. Dit kwam doordat veel werknemers blanke personen voorrang gaven bij het aannemen van personeel. Voor zwarten gold: 'last hired, first fired'.²⁸

Door de overbevolking die in Harlem heerste en de daarmee stijgende huurprijzen, zochten veel Afro-Amerikanen andere gebieden in de stad om te gaan wonen. Een van de populairdere bestemmingen werd Brooklyn, met name in de wijk Bedford-Stuyvesant. Deze wijk zag vanaf de jaren twintig al een toename van de zwarte bevolking, met name door de *Great Migration* en migranten uit het Caribische gebied.²⁹ Bovendien werd in 1932 het metronetwerk in New York geopend. Dit zorgde ervoor dat alle wijken in New York veel beter met elkaar in verbinding kwamen te staan. Specifiek de A-line verbond Harlem met Bedford-Stuyvesant waardoor het eenvoudiger werd voor Afro-Amerikanen om te gaan

²⁵ John R. Logan, Weiwei Zhand & Miao David Chunyu, 'Emergent Ghetto's: Black Neighborhoods in New York and Chicago 1880-1940', in: *American Journal of Sociology* 120:4 (Chicago, 2015), 1055-1094, alhier 1075-1076.

²⁶ Nathan Irvin Huggins, *Voices from the Harlem Renaissance: featuring over 120 selections from the political writings & arts of the period* (New York 1995) 3-4.

²⁷ Cherl Lynn Greenberg, *"Or Does it Explode?" Black Harlem in the Great Depression* (New York 1991) 42.

²⁸ William A. Sundstrom, 'Last hired, first fired? Unemployment and Urban Black Workers During the Great Depression', in: *The Journal of Economic History* 52:2 (Cambridge 1992) 415-429, alhier 420.

²⁹ Hilary Botein, 'From Redlining to Subprime Lending: How Neighborhood Narratives Mask Financial Distress in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn' *Housing Policy Debate* 23:4, (Virginia 2013) 714-737, alhier 718.

settelen in Brooklyn. Maar met de komst van de zwarten in Brooklyn, met name in de jaren dertig, begon vanaf eind jaren veertig de *white flight*. Dit was een nationaal fenomeen van de blanke migratie naar de sub urbane regio's. *White flight* zorgde in de decennia daarna dat er steeds meer over getto's gesproken kon worden in de Amerikaanse steden, met name zwarte getto's. Een oorzaak hiervan was de financiële voorspoed die de oorlogsindustrie gaf voor de Amerikaanse bevolking. Hierdoor konden, zeker na de oorlog, veel blanke Amerikanen naar de buitenwijken van steden verhuizen. Met de aanleg van het metronetwerk in New York was het bovendien niet meer nodig om dichtbij werk te wonen.

Ook voor de zwarte bevolking bood de oorlogsindustrie een uitkomst. In Brooklyn bestond er namelijk de Brooklyn Navy Yard die veel arbeidskrachten nodig had ten tijde van de Tweede Wereldoorlog. Dit was voor veel mensen een extra impuls om het overbevolkte Harlem te verlaten. Vanaf de jaren veertig werd Brooklyn steeds meer een zwarte wijk en een uitbreiding van de zwarte gemeenschap van Harlem. In de decennia daarna, toen de *white flight* op volle toeren was, werden de omringende wijken zoals Ocean Hill, Brownsville en Crown Heights ook steeds zwarter. Afro-Amerikanen wilde namelijk zo dicht mogelijk bij Bedford-Stuyvesant wonen om dicht bij hun gemeenschap te zijn.

Steeds meer *boroughs* kregen in de loop van de twintigste eeuw Afro-Amerikaanse gemeenschappen. Zo was al te zien dat Harlem al een echte zwarte wijk was geworden, en dat vanaf eind jaren dertig dat ook begon te gelden voor Bedford-Stuyvesant. Maar langzamerhand verspreidde de zwarte bevolking zich steeds verder over de verschillende delen van New York, zo ook in de Bronx en Queens. Deze twee maakten een soortgelijke demografische transitie door. Tijdens de oorlogsjaren groeide het aantal zwarte inwoners in de Bronx explosief. Waar er in 1940 nog 23.500 waren, was het aantal in 1950 rond de 99.600 Afro-Amerikanen.³⁰ Voor deze bevolking bood de plek betere kansen om een leven op te bouwen dan het overbevolkte en inmiddels afgetakelde Harlem. De Bronx was voorheen een witte *borough* geweest waar vooral veel blanken uit de betere klassen woonden. Vanaf de jaren twintig begon dit langzaamaan te veranderen. Door de grote vraag naar woningen en de naoorlogse groei van bouwprojecten, werden projectontwikkelaars genoodzaakt om zich vooral op middenklasse appartementen te richten met de bouw. Hierdoor kwam ook een deel van de zwarte bevolking hier wonen. Waar eerder *white flight* plaatsvond in Brooklyn, viel dat in de Bronx gedurende de jaren veertig en begin jaren vijftig mee. Doordat sommige blanken van de werkende klasse geen geld hadden om naar de middenklasse-woningen in Upper Bronx te gaan, was er vooralsnog geen sprake van segregatie.

Vanaf midden jaren vijftig ging dat veranderen. Discriminatie speelde een steeds grotere rol bij het verhuren van particuliere woningen. Daarom was de Afro-Amerikaanse bevolking vooral aangewezen op de huur van sociale woningen. Door de Housing Acts van zowel 1934, 1937 als 1949

³⁰ Carla J. DuBose-Simons, 'Movin' on Up: African Americans in the South Bronx in the 1940s', in: *New York History* 95:4, (New York 2014) 543-557, alhier 546.

waren in de loop van de jaren dertig, veertig en vijftig veel van dit soort gebouwen gerealiseerd.³¹ Een belangrijke schakel hierin was de New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA). Dit bureau zorgde ervoor dat er in de *five boroughs* gebouwen kwamen waar gezinnen met lage en modale inkomens in konden wonen. In de volksmond, en later ook door rappers, werden dit de *projects* genoemd. Het naoorlogse beleid van de NYCHA was erop gericht om de raciale balans te behouden in de verschillende *boroughs* van New York, maar in de praktijk leidde dit uiteindelijk tot de vorming van getto's. Een goed voorbeeld is dat van het project Forrest Houses in zuidoost-Morrisania in de Bronx. Dit was een van de *projects* die door de NYCHA werden gerealiseerd en in 1956 werd geopend. De organisatie had een quotum ingesteld waar ze zich aan wilde houden, namelijk: 58% zwart en 42% niet-zwart. Hier werd in theorie aan voldaan, maar in praktijk bleek slechts tien procent blank te zijn, en de overige 32% van Puerto Ricaanse oorsprong.³² Door dit soort projecten kwam de *white flight* richting de sub urbane regio's pas echt op gang en werd de concentratie van de armere bevolkingsgroepen in New York juist hoger.

Voor de Bronx was ook de aanleg van de 'Cross-Bronx Expressway' een grote factor in de demografische transitie in de *borough*. Deze weg zou New Jersey via de Bronx en Queens gaan verbinden met Long Island. Robert Moses, de grootste stedenbouwkundige in het New York van de twintigste eeuw, was verantwoordelijk voor het ontwerp. De *expressway* zorgde ervoor dat tienduizenden personen naar een andere woning op zoek moesten omdat deze op de plekken stonden waar de weg zou worden aangelegd. Dit project sloot aan bij het 'slum clearance' programma van de stad.³³ Oude gebouwen moesten wijken voor nieuwe, modernere complexen.

Queens was een andere *borough* die een soortgelijke ontwikkeling doormaakte als de Bronx. Waar in de jaren veertig slechts 25.000 Afro-Amerikanen daar woonden, was dat twintig jaar later meer dan verzesvoudigd naar 146.000.³⁴ Ook hier werden veel *projects* gebouwd, waarvan Queensbridge aan de rand van de East River de grootste was. Dit complex was in 1939 geopend en in eerste instantie een plaats met verschillende etniciteiten. Vanaf de jaren vijftig werd er een criterium ingesteld dat ervoor zorgde dat er meer families met een laag inkomen in de gebouwen kwamen. Hierdoor veranderden deze *projects* steeds meer in een getto. Dit zou later een complex worden waar veel rappers zoals Nas of het hiphop duo Mobb Deep vandaan zouden komen.

³¹ Nicholas Dagen Bloom & Matthew Gordon Lasner, *Afordable Housing in New york: The people, Places, and Policies That Transformed a City* (Princeton 2015) 7-8.

³² Nicholas Dagen Bloom, *Public Housing That Worked: New York in the Twentieth Century* (Pennsylvania 2008) 168-171.

³³ Richard Plunz, *A History of Housing in New York City: Dwelling Type and Social Change in the American Metropolis* (New York 1990) 257-273.

³⁴ Nathan Glazer & Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *Beyond the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians, and Irish of New York City* (Cambridge 1963) 59.

New York earliest census to 1990 -

<https://web.archive.org/web/20121005233613/http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0076/NYtab.pdf> (geraadpleegd op 5-1-2020).

Sociaal en economische situatie zwarte getto's 1970-2000

Nu er duidelijkheid is over hoe de zwarte gemeenschap over New York verspreid was, kan er ingegaan worden op de sociaaleconomische situatie van de Afro-Amerikaanse gemeenschap in de getto's. Aan het eind van de jaren zestig begon de geleidelijke economische en sociale neergang van de stad New York. Dit was met name merkbaar in de Bronx. De *expressway* had gezorgd voor een grote leegloop van de South Bronx waardoor vastgoedeigenaren geen winst meer haalden uit het verhuren van appartementen. Hierdoor staken ze de leegstaande gebouwen vaak in brand om zo een schadevergoeding te kunnen krijgen vanuit de overheid. Zo waren er verschillende blokken in de Bronx waar geen enkel persoon woonde en alleen maar uitgebrande gebouwen stonden. De achtergebleven inwoners, voornamelijk Afro-Amerikanen en Latino's, hadden vrijwel geen stedelijke voorzieningen, gefragmenteerd leiderschap en nauwelijks politieke macht om hun situatie te verbeteren. Gangs begonnen hier de dienst uit te maken. De Bronx stond gedurende de jaren zeventig symbool voor de ellende waar de Verenigde Staten in verkeerde.³⁵ Dit was de plek waar hiphop zijn oorsprong zou vinden.

Gedurende de jaren zeventig had de onderkant van de samenleving geen uitzicht op verbetering van zijn sociaaleconomische situatie. Het liberalisme van de jaren na de Tweede Wereldoorlog had plaats gemaakt voor het conservatisme. Er was bovendien een groot verlies aan vertrouwen in de nationale instituties en leiderschap onder de bevolking tijdens dit decennium. Daarnaast kwam er een verhit debat over zowel politieke als sociale zaken op gang.³⁶ Een goed voorbeeld hiervan is de situatie van New York in 1975. De stad stond aan de rand van een faillissement. Gerald Ford, toenmalige president van de Verenigde Staten, wilde New York niet uit deze financiële malaise trekken door de overmatige uitgaven die de stad in de jaren daarvoor had gedaan. Hierdoor had de metropool tientallen miljoenen dollars schuld opgebouwd die niet terugbetaald konden worden. New York kreeg uiteindelijk een federale lening, maar moest wel enorm gaan bezuinigen. Dit werd vooral gedaan op de sociale voorzieningen, waarmee het gat tussen arm en rijk alleen maar vergroot werd. De spanningen tussen de elite en de minderheden liepen zo verder op. Uiteindelijk kwamen deze tot een climax met de *black-out* in 1977. Een deel van de bevolking van New York begon massaal winkels te plunderen en te vernielen. Veel van deze gebeurtenissen vonden plaats in de wijken met een grote minderhedenpopulatie zoals Bedford-Stuyvesant, Crown Heights, Oost-New York, Harlem en de Bronx.³⁷ Voor de zwarte bevolking betekende de crisis van de jaren zeventig dat ze naar andere manieren moest kijken om brood op de plank te krijgen. Steeds vaker probeerde men via illegale praktijken geld te verdienen om in hun

³⁵ Tricia Rose, *Black Noise* (Hanover 1994) 31-33.

³⁶ Alphonso Pinkney, *The Myth of Black Progress* (Cambridge 1984) 18.

³⁷ Jeff Chang, *Can't Stop, Won't Stop* (Londen 2007) 15-17.

levensbehoeften te kunnen voorzien. Eind jaren zeventig was het percentage Afro-Amerikanen dat onder de armoedegrens leefde bijna dertig procent.³⁸

De jaren tachtig zouden voor de Afro-Amerikaanse gemeenschap niet veel beters beloven. Drugs waren na de oorlog, en met name vanaf de jaren zestig, een probleem in de Amerikaanse steden geworden. In 1971 had president Nixon de *War on Drugs* aangekondigd en in de jaren tachtig zou de Reagan *administration* er pas echt fanatiek mee aan de slag gaan. Waar voorheen cocaïne en heroïne de populairste drugs in New York waren, werd dat crack vanaf midden jaren tachtig. Zeker onder de lagere klasse was dit een probleem. Crack was namelijk een stuk goedkoper dan de duurdere variant cocaïne. In de toch al slechte sociaaleconomische situatie begonnen de criminaliteitscijfers de pan uit te rijzen. Er werd veel crack, of *base* zoals het in rapteksten genoemd wordt, gedeald en geconsumeerd in de getto's. Veel van deze *basehouses* waren namelijk te vinden in de zwarte wijken omdat daar ook de meeste afzet behaald kon worden.³⁹ Het aantal arme mensen en daklozen werd alleen maar groter door deze ontwikkeling. Bovendien hadden gangs sinds eind jaren zeventig weer de kop opgestoken nadat het een tijdje beter leek te gaan. Zij regelden het drugsverkeer in de verschillende getto's.

De situatie voor Afro-Amerikanen van de lagere klasse in New York van de jaren tachtig en negentig kwamen grotendeels overeen. Drugs, misdaad en prostitutie heersten in de stad New York. Burgemeester Edward Koch wist het tij niet te keren tijdens zijn ambtsperiode (1978-1989). Pas midden jaren negentig zou er een effectief beleid zijn dat de misdaad in de stad terug zou dringen. Dit was gestoeld op de in 1982 geïntroduceerde *broken windows theory* van sociologen James Wilson en George Kelling. De theorie veronderstelt dat een zichtbare afbreuk aan de urbane omgeving door criminaliteit, asociaal gedrag of ordeverstoring verdere criminaliteit en onwenselijk gedrag stimuleert.⁴⁰ Deze theorie vormde de basis van het *zerotolerance* beleid van politiecommissaris William Bratton en burgemeester Rudy Giuliani van New York. Vanaf dat moment gingen de misdaadcijfers in de stad dalen.

In deze tijd van misère in New York ontwikkelde hiphop zich als nieuwe jongerencultuur. De jaren zeventig stonden op muzikaal en cultureel gebied vooral in het teken van funk en disco, maar hiphop ging daar verandering in brengen. Vanaf dit decennium begon hiphop langzamerhand te gelden als nieuwe zwarte jongerencultuur, specifiek voor de lagere klasse. De postindustriële situatie in de stad vormde de basis van deze hiphopcultuur. Hiphops populariteit was explosief gegroeid in een korte tijd en sprak zowel zwarte als witte personen aan. Wat met kleine *block parties* begon in de jaren zeventig, voornamelijk in de Bronx, was eind jaren tachtig een nationale cultuur geworden. De rappers spraken

³⁸ Poverty in New York City 1969-1999 -

<https://www.newyorkfed.org/medialibrary/media/research/epr/08v14n1/0807levi.pdf> (geraadpleegd op 22-01-2020).

³⁹ Bruce D. Johnson, Terry Williams, Kojo A. Dei & Harry Sanabria, 'Drug Abuse in the Inner City: Impact on Hard-Drug Users and the Community', in: *Crime and Justice* 30:12 (Chicago 1990) 9-67, alhier 18.

⁴⁰ Broken Windows: The police and neighborhood safety -

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1982/03/broken-windows/304465/> (Geraadpleegd op 28 januari 2020).

over hun kijk op het alledaagse leven in het getto en alle positieve, maar met name negatieve kanten daarvan. Populaire onderwerpen waren criminaliteit, armoede, drugs, geweld en andere thema's met een overwegend negatieve connotatie. Dit gebeurde juist in het licht van *keepin' it real*, dat betekende dat een rapper authentiek moest zijn. Een rapper kon hierdoor indirect het narratief over de zwarte getto inwoners herstructureren. Ze moedigden hun publiek ook aan om dit verhaal mee vorm te geven.⁴¹ Zo werd het beeld over de Afro-Amerikaanse gemeenschap niet door 'de ander', maar door de eigen gemeenschap verteld. Genres zoals message rap en hardcore rap begonnen hierdoor gedurende de jaren tachtig steeds meer populariteit te winnen. Eind jaren tachtig en een groot deel van de jaren negentig waren dit de belangrijkste genres in rapmuziek. In de volgende hoofdstukken wordt duidelijk hoe dit gettoleven er precies uitzag volgens diverse rapartiesten.

⁴¹ Morgan Klatskin, 'Reclaiming the Black Personhood: the Power of the Hip-Hop Narrative in Mainstream Rap', in: *Criterion: A Journal of Literary Criticism* 11:1 (Utah 2018) 33-48, alhier 34.

3. ‘Cash rules everything around me, C.R.E.A.M.’

Economische mogelijkheden in het getto

Een terugkerend thema in de rapmuziek eind jaren tachtig en jaren negentig was dat van economische mogelijkheden van de getto-inwoners. Als rappers over het dagelijks leven rapten, dan was het moeilijk om dit thema te negeren. Het is daarom van belang om te kijken hoe verschillende rappers spraken over de economische mogelijkheden die zij zelf hadden of welke er überhaupt waren in de verschillende getto's van New York. In dit hoofdstuk zal in worden gegaan op deze onderwerpen door te kijken welke opties de rappers noemen om geld te verdienen in het getto. Zo zullen rapteksten geanalyseerd worden waarin een financieel thema te herkennen is. Hierdoor poog ik een algemeen beeld te geven over hoe rapartiesten spreken over financiële mogelijkheden in hun directe leefomgeving.

Bij het ontstaan van hiphop speelde de sociale realiteit nog geen nadrukkelijke rol in de thematiek van rapteksten. Dit veranderde in 1982 toen het nummer *The Message* van Grandmaster Flash and The Furious Five verscheen. Voor deze tijd had rapmuziek vooral in het kader gestaan van het concept *braggadocio*. *The Message* omschreef als eerste rapnummer de leefomstandigheden van het getto en werd zo een revolutionair nummer. Dit had dezelfde feestelijke melodie als de andere rap van die tijd, maar de tekst beschreef de negatieve werkelijkheid in het getto.

‘It’s like a jungle sometimes

It makes me wonder how I keep from going under’⁴²

Met de ‘jungle’ wordt New York bedoeld, ook vaker vergeleken met ‘concrete jungle’. In het nummer wordt de stad gezien als een roekeloze plek waar het ieder voor zich was. Het hele nummer staat in het teken van het gevoel van uitzichtloosheid dat voor zwarte personen in het getto heerste, zowel op sociaal als economisch gebied. In het eerste couplet vertelt Melle Mel dat hij wel wil verhuizen naar een andere plek maar dat hij daar simpelweg niet het geld of de mogelijkheid toe heeft. Het sociaalkritische karakter van dit nummer zou de basis vormen voor de latere artiesten van het hardcore rapgenre die eenzelfde thematiek in hun nummers hadden. Het kernthema in rap was niet hoofdzakelijk meer *braggadocio*, maar juist het weergeven van de dagelijkse realiteit in het getto. De rapper werd steeds meer een verhalenverteller.

Hustling

Voordat er dieper ingegaan wordt op de economische situatie die in de rapteksten werd beschreven, dient eerst het concept *hustling* toegelicht te worden. *Hustling* houdt in dat men op verschillende manieren probeert verder te komen in het leven op zowel sociaal, economisch als politiek gebied. Dit kon doormiddel van legale of illegale activiteiten. In rapteksten nam dit concept een zeer centraal thema

⁴² Grandmaster Flash and The Furious Five, ‘The Message’, in: *The Message* (New York 1982).

in. Naast het belang van de term in rapmuziek, was *hustling* ook een begrip dat van toepassing was op de Amerikaanse geschiedenis. Volgens historicus Walter McDougall was het revolutionair karakter van *hustling* een kernactiviteit in de totstandkoming van de (huidige) Amerikaanse samenleving.⁴³ Het concept is hierdoor nauw verweven met *The American Dream*, zowel voor de witte als zwarte bevolking. In praktijk zag dit er voor elke bevolkingsgroep echter anders uit.

Bij de zwarte bevolking werd er eerder een negatieve of illegale connotatie aan verbonden. Voor hen begon de *hustle* al tijdens de slavernij waar zij werkten voor hun blanke superieur. Zo lazen zij boeken om zichzelf te onderwijzen of trouwden met iemand van hetzelfde ras, alles om (uiteindelijk) verder te komen in het leven. Na de slavernij werd *hustling* pas echt groot in de Afro-Amerikaanse gemeenschap. Door de restricties die de Jim Crow-wetten de gemeenschap hadden opgelegd, zoals het verbieden van gelijk onderwijs, werk of andere sociale diensten, moesten zwarte personen mogelijkheden voor zichzelf creëren. Ambitie en *hustling* gingen zo hand in hand. Maar de illegale praktijken lonkten voor diegenen die geen geld of onderwijs hadden. Deze mensen gokten, transporteerden alcohol, dealden drugs, prostitueerden zichzelf of verkochten gestolen goederen.

Volgens hiphop historicus Micheal Eric Dyson zijn er verschillende vormen van *hustling* in de zwarte gemeenschap te herkennen. Ten eerste is dat *bright hustling* waarmee alle positieve en legale manieren van *hustling* bedoeld worden, zoals een baan vinden of een opleiding voltooien. Daarnaast is er *blight hustling*. Dit is het type dat verweven is met de illegale en negatieve interpretaties van het begrip *hustling*. Niet alleen de zwaar illegale activiteiten zoals drugs dealen, maar ook de minder strenge vergrijpen zoals het verkopen van mixtapes, wat populair is bij opkomende rapartiesten, wordt als *blight hustling* gezien. Tussen *bright* en *blight hustling* bestaat er nog een derde manier: *site hustling*. Bij deze manier van *hustling* is de noodzaak tot overleven het meest urgent. Dit kan verschillen van overgebleven etensresten uit een vuilnisbak eten tot het gras maaien om een paar centen te verdienen.⁴⁴ De term *hustling* zal verschillende keren voorbijkomen als er gesproken wordt over de economische kansen van mensen in het getto.

Daily Struggle

Dat veel hardcore rap een negatief karakter bevatte, werd al snel duidelijk als er gesproken werd over de economische mogelijkheden. Sommige artiesten concentreerden zich daarom op de dagelijkse *struggle* om geld te verdienen. In het album van Nas was dit thema duidelijk te ontdekken. Deze artiest ging rappen over de uitzichtloze situatie en de vicieuze spiraal van negativiteit waarin mensen van het getto leefden. Hierdoor was het vergaren van inkomen een van de belangrijkste drijfveren voor de inwoners volgens Nas. Het nummer 'Life's a Bitch' beschrijft op een duidelijke manier welke motivatie

⁴³ Walter McDougall, *Freedom Just Around the Corner: A New American History 1585-1827* (New York 2004) xii.

⁴⁴ Michael Eric Dyson, *Jay Z: Made in America* (New York 2019) 31-34.

er zat achter het verdienen van geld. In het eerste couplet rapt mc AZ, die samen met Nas het nummer maakte, het volgende:

‘Visualizin’ the realism of life in actuality
Fuck who’s the baddest, a person’s status depends on salary
And my mentality is money-orientated
I’m destined to live the dream for all my peeps who never made it’⁴⁵

Wat in deze tekst duidelijk naar voren komt is de zogenaamde *hood mentality*. Het is volgens de rapper er iedereen aan gelegen om te ontkomen aan de situatie van het gettoleven. Zoals het nummer beschrijft wordt iemands status ontleend aan het financiële vermogen dat hij of zij heeft, omdat dit het gestelde kader was in de maatschappij.⁴⁶ Het deed er niet toe wie je was, maar wat je verdiende. De grootste motivatie vormt voor hem de mensen ‘who never made it’. Dit slaat niet simpelweg op tijden van tegenslag, maar juist op de mensen die de dood hadden gevonden op weg naar financiële voorspoed. Even later in het nummer zegt Nas namelijk: ‘I woke up early on my born day; I’m 20, it’s a blessing’.⁴⁷ Volgens hem was het getto een plek waar mensen over het algemeen niet oud werden door de omstandigheden waarin zij leefden. Dit had voornamelijk te maken met de gevaren van het drugs dealen. Omdat dit gold als makkelijke optie om geld te verdienen, kwamen veel jonge zwarte Afro-Amerikanen terecht in dit circuit. Het concept van *hustling* zien we hier terugkomen. Zeker in vergelijking met zijn leven vroeger, was er op het moment van rappen wel ‘cash in abundance’ bij Nas.⁴⁸

In een ander nummer van zijn album *Illmatic* staat deze motivatie om geld te verdienen ook centraal. *The World is Yours* belicht deze *hustle*. De titel is direct afgeleid van de film *Scarface* waarin de drugdealer Tony Montana deze zin als motto gebruikt. Hierin staat het principe van *self made man* centraal waarbij zijn ambitie had gezorgd voor rijkdom. In die film is het concept van *blight hustling* te herkennen, met name door de illegale praktijken die te zien zijn in de film. De film eindigt met de dood van Tony Montana. Zijn succes was ook zijn ondergang geworden. Dat het in New York niet anders was volgens Nas, blijkt uit de volgende raptekst:

‘Dwellin’ in the Rotten Apple, you get tackled
Or caught by the devil’s lasso, shit is a hassle’⁴⁹

In deze zinsnede laat Nas duidelijk de uitzichtloze situatie voor menig Afro-Amerikaan zien in de stad New York. Ten eerste doet hij dit door te verwijzen naar de ‘Rotten Apple’ in plaats van de ‘Big Apple’. Er zijn hier twee scenario’s uitgetekend van hoe het met iemands leven kon verlopen: of je werd

⁴⁵ Nas ft. AZ, ‘Life’s a Bitch’, in: *Illmatic* (New York 1994).

⁴⁶ Het ironische is dat het volgens KRS-One juist niet gaat om iemands financiële status, maar om de realiteit waarin iemand leeft. Het is volgens hem belangrijk om te weten wat er allemaal om iemand heen gebeurt. Zie nummer ‘My Philosophy’ in bijlage, pagina 44-47.

⁴⁷ Nas ft. AZ, ‘Life’s a Bitch’, in: *Illmatic* (New York 1994).

⁴⁸ Ibidem.

⁴⁹ Nas, ‘The World is Yours’, in: *Illmatic* (New York 1994).

aangevallen en overleefde het niet of je ging zelf participeren in de illegale/criminele activiteiten in de stad. Dat wordt er bedoeld met 'caught by the devil's lasso'. Deze 'hassle', oftewel een situatie die voor problemen zorgde, typeert het karakter van Nas' album sterk, namelijk het moeilijke getto leven waar nauwelijks uit te ontsnappen was.

Deze getto werkelijkheid wordt nog eens extra benadrukt in het album van Wu-Tang Clan. Hierin komt de dagelijkse *struggle* duidelijk naar voren, door situaties over het leven van de leden zelf te bespreken. In het nummer *C.R.E.A.M.*, een afkorting voor *Cash Rules Everything Around Me*, staat het economische aspect centraal. De naam van het nummer is indirecte kritiek op de post-industriële maatschappij waarin de rapgroep leefde. Zoals AZ op het album van Nas al sprak over het belang van iemands kapitaal, wordt dat in dit nummer nog eens benadrukt. Leden van de Wu-Tang Clan probeerden dit in eerste instantie via de weg van *blight hustling* te doen:

'A man with a dream with plans to make cream
Which failed I went to jail at the age of 15
A young buck sellin' drugs and such who never had much
Trying to get a clutch at what I could not touch'⁵⁰

In dit tekstfragment legt Inspectah Deck, een van de rappers van Wu-Tang Clan, uit dat hij al vroeg in de problemen raakte met het dealen van drugs *and such*. Deze drang om geld (*cream*) te verdienen zorgde er uiteindelijk voor dat hij opgesloten werd. Hoewel de artiest hier zijn eigen problemen aankaart, diende dit nummer als een waarschuwing voor de zwarte jeugd in de getto's. Hen moest niet hetzelfde overkomen als de leden van de Wu-Tang Clan, namelijk in de gevangenis belanden. Inspectah Deck constateerde echter dat de jeugd hier waarschijnlijk niet naar zou luisteren:

'Leave it up to me while I be living proof
To kick the truth to the young black youth
But shorty's running wild smokin' sess drinkin' beer
And ain't trying to hear what I'm kickin' in his ear
Neglected, for now, but yo, it gots to be accepted
That what? That life is hectic'⁵¹

De rapartiest ziet zichzelf als levend bewijs van iemand die het verkeerde pad heeft bewandeld. Hierdoor achtte Inspectah Deck zichzelf in de positie om de jeugd te vertellen wat de gevaren waren van bepaald gedrag in het getto. In zekere zin is hier een indirect agogisch karakter te herkennen. De rapper wilt namelijk de jeugd, *shorty's*, een les leren. Maar de *shorty's* waren druk bezig met andere bezigheden waardoor ze waarschijnlijk negeerde wat de artiest te vertellen had. Met deze tekst dramatiseert hij de problemen in het getto en typeert het als een plek vol gevaren en hectiek. Als er in het album van Wu-

⁵⁰ Wu-Tang Clan, 'C.R.E.A.M. (Cash Rules Everything Around Me)', in: *Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)* (New York 1993).

⁵¹ Ibidem.

Tang Clan gesproken wordt over economische mogelijkheden, dan komt vaak het aspect van *blight hustling* naar voren. Een nadruk op een andere vorm van geld verdienen is nauwelijks in het album te ontdekken. Zo schetst Wu-Tang Clan eenzelfde soort economische omgeving als Nas dat doet. De financiële mogelijkheden in het getto worden vooral verweven met illegale activiteiten om geld te verdienen aangezien er niet tot nauwelijks kans was om dat op een andere manier te doen.

A regular job

Een andere manier van geld verdienen was door een reguliere baan te hebben. Dit kon verschillen van doorsnee arbeid zoals een supermarktmédewerker tot het hebben van een kantoorbaan. In het genre hardcore rap werd hier vrijwel niet over gesproken. Dit kwam doordat het genre met name de nadruk legde op de negatieve leefsituatie van de mensen in het getto. Als er al over de arbeidsmarkt of het hebben van een baan werd gesproken, bevatte het meestal een kritische noot. Zo maakte RZA van Wu-Tang Clan de vergelijking dat zijn groep, Wu-Tang Clan, even snel groeide als de werkloosheid onder de zwarte gemeenschap:

‘My clan increase like black unemployment’⁵²

De tekst over de negatieve situatie voor zwarte personen op de arbeidsmarkt vormt zo de enige zinsnede uit het hele album van Wu-Tang Clan dat zij besteden aan de arbeidsmarkt of het hebben van een legale baan. Doordat het banenperspectief voor zwarte mensen slecht was, wordt dit juist wél uitgelicht.

Rapartiesten zelf zaten ook niet op een reguliere baan te wachten. Omdat er een focus lag op het snel verdienen van geld, werd er ook negatief aangekeken tegen het hebben van ‘normale’ baan. Dit bleek uit het nummer *Lifestylez ov da Poor And Dangerous* van Big L:

‘My moms told me to get a job, fuck that
Ayo, picture me getting a job
Taking orders from Bob, selling corn on the cob
Yo, how the hell I'mma make ends meet
Making about 120 dollars a week
Man, I'd rather do another hit’⁵³

Wat voor Big L vooral het probleem vormde was dat hij niet genoeg geld kon verdienen in een korte tijd. Juist vanwege deze drang om op korte termijn veel geld te verdienen, werd 120 dollar als weinig gezien. Daarom wilde hij liever een *hit*, oftewel een overval plegen om zo meer geld in een keer binnen te halen. Het interessante aan deze zinsnede is dat er wel degelijk mogelijkheden zijn tot het verwerven van een legale baan, maar dat daar geen interesse voor was. Een directe mogelijkheid om hun leven te beteren sloegen ze dus ook af. Doordat het hardcore genre een (auto)biografisch karakter in zich droeg,

⁵² Wu-Tang Clan, ‘Protect Ya Neck’, in: *Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)* (New York 1993).

⁵³ Big L, ‘Lifestylez ov da Poor & Dangerous’, in *Lifestylez ov da Poor & Dangerous* (New York 1995).

ging het vooral uit van eigen ervaringen. Het hebben van een legale baan hoort niet tot deze ervaringen of was niet interessant genoeg om te bespreken. Daarom komt het ook amper aan bod in de verschillende albums.

Take your chance

Het ontwikkelen van talent werd door veel artiesten gezien als de enige manier om in financiële voorspoed te raken als getto-inwoner. Dit kon bijvoorbeeld door te excelleren in sport, kunst of muziek. Specifiek voor de geanalyseerde artiesten was dat het ontwikkelen van hun vaardigheden als rapper. In de rapteksten van KRS-One wordt dit concept van *bright hustling* behandeld, zonder direct naar dit concept te verwijzen. Hierin ziet hij zichzelf als een persoon die het beste probeerde te maken van zijn leven via een legale weg. Rap is voor hem een wijze om zijn inkomsten te krijgen. Hij spoort via deze raptekste andere personen aan om ook hun talenten voor het algemeen belang van de zwarte gemeenschap in te zetten. Dit blijkt bijvoorbeeld uit de volgende songtekst van het nummer 'I'm Still #1':

'Now it's my turn, and I am concerned
About idiots posing as kings
What are we here to rule?
I thought we were supposed to sing
And if we oughta sing, then let us begin to teach
Many of you are educated, open your mouth and speak
KRS-One is something like a total renegade
Except I don't steal, I rhyme to get paid'⁵⁴

KRS-One spreekt hier tegen de Afro-Amerikaanse bevolking, specifiek tegen andere rappers. De songtekst dient vooral als aansporing om rappers over hun ervaringen te laten spreken. Zo zou de boodschap van de zwarte bevolking gehoord kunnen worden. Rap was een manier om hun rechten als mens te claimen, *by all means necessary*. Om deze claim kracht bij te zetten wilde KRS-One het bestaande beeld over de zwarte gemeenschap veranderen. Hij probeerde het stereotype van de zwarte man als drugsverkopers te ontcrachten. Dit uit hij in het eerste nummer van het album, *My Philosophy*:

'But I don't walk this way to portray
Or reinforce stereotypes of today
Like all my brothers eat chicken and watermelon
Talk broken english and drug selling'⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Boogie Down Productions, 'I'm Still #1', in: *By All Means Necessary* (New York 1988).

⁵⁵ Boogie Down Productions, 'My Philosophy', in: *By All Means Necessary* (New York 1988).

In tegenstelling tot sommige rapartiesten, fixeerde KRS-One zich niet op de drugshandel als vorm van inkomsten. Dit was volgens hem een onterechte stereotypering van de zwarte man. Hoewel hij erkende dat het dealen van drugs wel degelijk een probleem was in het getto, zag hij dit niet als de enige bron van inkomsten. Door het drugs dealen niet tot nauwelijks te bespreken, probeert de artiest de negatieve stereotypering te ontkrachten. Wat betreft het *broken english* voegt KRS-One ook daad bij het woord. In zijn hele album is geen *slang* te ontdekken, iets wat wel gebruikelijk is in rapmuziek. Het album zelf lijkt dus al een uiting van een contrastereotype te vormen. KRS-One gaf ook kritiek op de vercommercialisering van sommige artiesten. Wederom pleitte hij ervoor dat de artiesten hun talenten moesten gebruiken om iets waardevols te kunnen vertellen aan de zwarte gemeenschap, in plaats van het versterken van stereotypes. Hoewel er niet over specifieke economische occupaties van de zwarte bevolking wordt gesproken, staat de *hustle* wel centraal in het album. Zo is de titel, *By All Means Necessary*, in overeenstemming met het kernthema van het album. Hierin wordt het getto dus niet getypeerd als een plek waar amper economische mogelijkheden waren en waar men alleen maar op drugs dealen was aangewezen. Boogie Down Productions zag wel degelijk kansen en probeerde de mensen aan te sturen om hun talenten in te zetten ten gunste van de zwarte gemeenschap.

Dezelfde manier van agogische rap komt ook terug bij het nummer *Street Struck* van Big L. Hij besprak evenals KRS-One dat het ontwikkelen van een vaardigheid hem de mogelijkheid had gegeven om zijn leven te beteren. Hierin merkte hij wel op dat er gevaren waren op de weg naar succes, specifiek in het getto. Hij attendeerde mensen erop dat zij daar waakzaam voor moesten zijn. Dit blijkt bijvoorbeeld uit het nummer *Street Struck* waarin hij het volgende zei:

'Before the rap contract, I was sellin' crack
Stay strapped with a Mac, I was into all of that
I started rappin' and got nice as hell
If it wasn't for this, I might be doin' life in jail
And some of my peeps are still in the game selling 'caine
If that's what you gotta do to maintain, go 'head, do your thing
But with the cash profit, make an investment
And try not to go to the grave like the rest went
'Cause you can be rich with crazy loot, own a house and nine cars
What good is that if you're dead or behind bars?
And yo, it's not even funny
I've seen a lot of my peers give up their careers for some fast money
They could've been boxers, ballplayers, or rap singers
Instead they bank robbers and crack slingers
Ayo, they used to be legit kids, now they corrupt
They had dreams, but gave 'em up 'cause they street struck'

In dit nummer beschrijft de rapper hoe het gettoleven effect had op de jeugd van Harlem. Hij gaf toe dat hij ook geparticipeerd had in het verkopen van drugs, maar dat hij zijn dagelijkse routine kon omgooien door zijn talent als rapper te ontwikkelen en zo niet *street struck* te raken. Deze term betekent dat het straatleven een bepaalde aantrekkingskracht heeft op personen die hierdoor in de verleiding komen zich te wenden tot criminaliteit en drugshandel. De straat fungeerde als toneel voor deze activiteiten volgens Big L. In deze songtekst komt zowel het concept van *bright* als *blight hustling* terug. Hij prees het verkopen van drugs niet aan, maar keurde dit ook niet duidelijk af. Als je dit moest doen om in je onderhoud te voorzien, dan was dat maar zo. Maar mocht je hiermee veel geld verdienen, investeer dit dan om je leven te verbeteren op een legale manier (*bright hustling*). Een te lange carrière in de drugswereld had geen fortuinlijk einde zo stelt Big L.

Doordat de artiesten zelf hun vaardigheden als rapper hadden ontwikkeld, waren zij in een financieel betere situatie gekomen. Een voorbeeld hiervan is Biggie Smalls. Het nummer waarin dat het meest nadrukkelijk tot uiting komt is *Juicy*. Hierin maakt de artiest een vergelijking tussen zijn vroegere en hedendaagse leven:

'Uh, damn right, I like the life I live
'Cause I went from negative to positive
And it's all (It's all good, nigga)
And if you don't know, now you know, nigga'⁵⁶

Zijn leven was financieel zorgeloos geworden dankzij zijn succes als rapper. Het concept *hustling* is heel duidelijk bij Biggie Smalls te herkennen. Zeker in dit nummer is de transformatie van een *blight* naar een *bright hustler* duidelijk zichtbaar. Deze metamorfose wordt ook wel het *rags-to-riches* genoemd. Verderop in het nummer zegt Biggie dat hij een *born sinner, opposite of a winner* was. Hiermee beweert hij dat mensen uit Bedford-Stuyvesant, waar Clinton Hill onderdeel van was, niet veel kans hadden om iets van hun leven te maken. Het is dus opvallend dat dit Biggie Smalls wél lukte. Dit blijkt ook uit de intro van het nummer *Juicy*:

'Yeah, this album is dedicated
To all the teachers that told me I'd never amount to nothin'
To all the people that lived above the buildings that I was hustlin' in front of
Called the police on me when I was just tryin' to make some money to feed my daughter
(it's all good)
And all the niggas in the struggle
You know what I'm sayin'? It's all good, baby baby'⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Notorious B.I.G., 'Juicy', in: *Ready to Die* (New York 1994).

⁵⁷ Ibidem

Net zoals in het nummer *Life's a Bitch* van Nas en AZ, is hier heel duidelijk een motivatie om het te maken in het leven te herkennen. Biggie wil laten zien dat hij dezelfde tegenslagen heeft gehad als andere mensen in het getto. Dit album, specifiek dit nummer, vormt een inspiratie voor al die mensen die worstelden met hun leefsituatie. Hoewel Biggie hier niet direct advies over gaf, zoals Big L wel in zijn nummer deed, moest het succes van de rapper uit Brooklyn dienen om de mensen te laten reflecteren op hun eigen situatie in het getto.

Economische mogelijkheden in het getto

Na de analyse van de verschillende albums over het aspect van economische mogelijkheden in de getto vallen er een paar dingen op. Ten eerste wordt vaak het negatieve karakter van het getto als plek van uitzichtloosheid en *blight hustling* gekenmerkt. Hierdoor leggen de rapartiesten geen nadruk op de reguliere banen die ook in het getto te verwerven waren. Noodzakelijk hierbij is vooral het tonen van de problemen door (auto)biografische situaties te schetsen. Dit brengt mij bij het tweede aspect, namelijk dat het getto een plek was waar je het leven kon beteren als je investeerde in jezelf. Rap had hierin een agogische rol. Door de fouten te schetsen die rappers zelf hadden gemaakt of hadden gezien in hun omgeving, wilden zij ervoor zorgen dat anderen niet in dezelfde problemen raakten. Er wordt benadrukt dat er kansen waren in het getto als de gemeenschap zich aan bepaalde regels hield en investeerden in haar eigen capaciteiten. Zo kon men de *blight hustle* in de *bright hustle* veranderen. Ten derde kan het getto bij uitstek gezien worden als een plek waar iemand succesvol kon worden als rapartiest. Doordat authenticiteit van belang was in de rapteksten en dit als nieuw soort vorm van maatschappelijk protest gold, vormde het getto een geschikte basis voor een rapcarrière. Zo boden de negatieve omstandigheden in het getto een scala aan sociale, economische en politieke thema's. Een persoon kon succesvol worden als rapartiest, maar alleen als je het *real* wist te houden.

4. Where I'm from

Arena of experience van de rapartiest

In dit hoofdstuk zal gefocust worden op hoe rappers hun leefomgeving ervaren. Hierin staat centraal welke omgeving de rapper vooral beschouwt in zijn raps en welke niet. Door te kijken over welke omgeving de artiesten spreken, probeer ik een *mental map* te creëren. Om deze *mental map* te creëren gaat een rapper van ervaringen uit die hij bij bepaalde plekken heeft en schetst zo een omgeving waarin zijn leven afspeelt. In deze studie zal niet ingegaan worden op specifieke plekken zoals 5th Avenue, maar zal er gekeken worden naar algemene aanduidingen: *streets*, *projects/hood* en *boroughs*.

Wat meteen opvalt aan deze categorieën is dat het allemaal plekken zijn die vooral betrekking hebben op het leven buitenshuis. Het leven binnenshuis was namelijk niet het belangrijkste thema in rap. Als er al werd gerefereerd aan thuis dan ging dat meestal over de relatie met familieleden en hoe moeilijk deze waren (geweest). In het nummer *Everyday Struggle* van Biggie Smalls kwam dit tot uiting:

'I got P-A-I-D, that's why my moms hate me
She was forced to kick me out, no doubt'⁵⁸

Uit deze tekst blijkt dat het leven van buitenshuis dat van binnenshuis kon beïnvloeden. Biggie stelde dat hij geld verdiende als drugdealer. Eerder in het nummer zei hij namelijk dat hij bezig was met 'sellin' drugs to all the losers'. In deze raptekst blijkt dat Biggie's moeder deze twee werelden, het leven binnenshuis en buitenshuis, liever gescheiden wilde houden. De rapper begreep ook waarom ze dit moest doen, getuigende van de zinsnede 'no doubt'. Voor Biggie was het leven binnenshuis niet te verenigen met het leven van de straat. Zo vormde het leven buitenshuis voor deze rappers de voornaamste *arena of experience*, oftewel de plekken van ervaringen.

The Streets

De *streets* fungeerden als speelterrein voor diverse rappers. Zij werden gevormd door de straat en reflecteerden hier vaak op in hun teksten. De straat had een bepaalde aantrekkingskracht voor personen omdat daar vaker de *hustle* plaatsvond. Maar dit straatleven bracht wel gevaren met zich mee, zo stelt Big L:

'You better listen when L rhyme
'Cause being street struck'll get you nothin' but a bullet or jail time'⁵⁹

Het nummer, en specifiek deze zinsnede, geldt als waarschuwing voor de gevaren van het straatleven. Dit straatleven was volgens Big L verweven met negativiteit. Als een persoon zich liet verleiden door

⁵⁸ Notorious B.I.G., 'Everyday Struggle', in: *Ready to Die* (New York 1994).

⁵⁹ Big L, 'Street Struck', in: *Lifestylez ov da Poor And Dangerous* (New York 1995).

de allure van geld, vrouwen en sociale contacten op straat, zou dit eindigen in de gevangenis of de dood. Zoals blijkt uit het nummer moest een persoon investeren in zijn leven op een manier die je verder brengt. Big L beriep zich hier op persoonlijke ervaringen. Een ander nummer van zijn album beschrijft specifiek de locatie waar dit gevaar zich voordoet in de ogen van Big L:

'Cause one-three-nine and Lennox is the Danger Zone
Where no man can withstand or hold his own'⁶⁰

Deze zinsnede uit het nummer *Danger Zone* benoemt een specifieke plek, namelijk 139th Street en Lennox Avenue. Deze plek was een locatie waar het leven van de straat direct te herkennen was. In dit nummer zelf profileert Big L zich als een product van de straat, iemand die ook leefde als een gangster. In diverse andere nummers op zijn album, positioneert hij zich ook op die manier en legde hij de praktijk van het leven op straat verder bloot.⁶¹ Zijn *arena of experience* was Harlem, specifiek 139th Lennox Avenue waar hij drugs heeft gedeald en zijn vrienden ontmoette. Voor Big L was de straat de voornaamste plek waar zijn sociale leven zich afspeelde. Later bleek 139th Lennox Avenue echter ook de plek te zijn waar hij doodgeschoten zou worden. Het nummer *Danger Zone* kreeg zo een hele letterlijke betekenis.

Dit concept van *streetlife* is ook goed te herkennen bij Biggie Smalls. Doordat het concept van *hustling*, zowel *blight* als *bright*, nauw verweven is met zijn album, komt het aspect van de *streets* ook terug bij hem. In het nummer *Things done changed* spreekt Biggie over het straatleven en hoe dat veranderd was in de loop der jaren. In het nummer vergelijkt hij de situatie van de *streets* voor en na de uitbraak van de crackepidemie. De leefwereld in Bedford-Stuyvesant was op een negatieve manier beïnvloed hierdoor:

'Damn, what happened to the summertime cookouts?
Every time I turn around, a nigga gettin' took out'⁶²

Door hier te refereren naar de goede oude tijd, toen 'cookouts' op straat plaatsvonden, laat Biggie zien dat er een breuk met het verleden was. Het getto krijgt in het nummer geen inherent slecht karakter, maar laat zien dat het juist gevormd werd door de factoren die in de Amerikaanse maatschappij speelden, zoals de crackepidemie. Het leven op straat was voor hem negatief veranderd. Biggie zelf werd ook onderdeel van deze negatieve verandering, blijkend uit de rapteksten die hij op het album *Ready to Die* schreef.

Zo is er een verandering wat betreft de relatie tot de straat te merken in Biggie's album. In het album evalueert hij zijn leven en sprak hij over hoe de straten hem gevormd hadden. Duidelijk wordt Biggies wisselende mentale gesteldheid, blijkend uit de variëteit van zowel positieve, maar vooral

⁶⁰ Big L, 'Danger Zone', in: *Lifestylez ov da Poor And Dangerous* (New York 1995).

⁶¹ Zie de nummers: 'No endz, no skinz', 'All Black', 'Lifestylez ov da Poor & Dangerous' en 'Da Graveyard' in bijlage.

⁶² Notorious B.I.G., 'Things Done Changed', in: *Ready to die* (New York 1994).

negatieve thema's zoals angst, rancune, liefde, paranoia en zelfhaat. 'The Game', zoals de illegale praktijken van het straatleven werden getypeerd, beïnvloedde zo zijn karakter. In de plaat van Biggie Smalls is daarom een sterke notie van *black nihilism* te herkennen. Dit houdt niet alleen anti-autoritair gedrag in, maar gaat eerder over een uitzichtloze situatie waar hopeloosheid en liefdeloosheid de boventoon voeren. Het resultaat is een gevoelloze houding tegenover anderen en een zelfvernietigende houding ten opzichte van de wereld. Het leven zonder betekenis, hoop en liefde zorgt voor een koelhartige kijk op de realiteit die vernietigend werkt voor zowel het individu als voor anderen.⁶³ De dagelijkse *struggle* vormt een leidraad in het album van Biggie. De titel van het album, *Ready to Die*, past daarom ook perfect bij de thematiek die door de hele plaat vervlochten zat. Ook al had hij nu een carrière als rapper, het straatleven had mentaal voor hem zijn tol geëist. Zo was hij misschien niet meer langer fysiek een onderdeel van de *streetlife*, maar zeker wel mentaal *street struck*.

Het straatleven kan zelfs zo verweven met iemands leven raken, dat diegene er zich in zijn naam of bijnaam mee identificeert. Dit gebeurde bijvoorbeeld bij Nas. Hij kroonde zichzelf als *street's disciple*, oftewel een volgeling van de straat. Door het woord discipel te gebruiken, krijgt het begrip *streets* in zekere zin ook een religieuze lading. Zo vergelijkt Nas het leven op straat indirect met een geloofsovertuiging. De term *street disciple* was bovendien zo belangrijk voor de artiest, dat hij zijn allereerste openbare optreden startte met het benoemen van deze titel. Deze zinsnede herhaalt hij tevens op de eerste plaat van zijn debuutalbum, *The Genesis*:

'Street's disciple, my raps are trifle'⁶⁴

Door zichzelf te bestempelen als 'street's disciple' kwalificeert Nas zichzelf als iemand die het recht heeft om over het leven van de straat te praten. Door zo'n titel aan zichzelf te geven, lijkt hij een belofte aan het publiek te maken dat hij waarachtig zal spreken over het gettoleven. In het licht van *keepin' it real* kan dit ook als taak gezien worden die de rapper had ten opzichte van de gemeenschap die hij representeerde. Hij zet deze status van *street's disciple* kracht bij in het nummer *Represent* waarin hij zichzelf als *street dweller* positioneert.⁶⁵ Deze titel geeft wederom aan hoe belangrijk de urbane regio voor de rapper was. Bovendien laat het nummer heel goed zien hoe het leven op straat eraan toeging door een beschrijving te geven over de dagelijks praktijken die Nas ervaaarde.

Duidelijk wordt dat Nas met het album *Illmatic* zijn *street cred* wilde halen, oftewel zich wilde bewijzen als rapper tegenover anderen. Toch onderscheidt hij zich van andere rappers door zichzelf als een persoon neer te zetten die het geweld en de criminaliteit op hem heen wel meemaakte, maar daar niet aan meedeelde. Zelfs als hij spreekt over vijanden neerschieten concentreert hij zich vooral op de sociale implicaties van dat gegeven en poogt hij de problemen in zijn wijk te belichten. Nas wil zichzelf niet als gangster portretteren, maar meer de poëet van het straatleven zijn.

⁶³ Cornel West, *Race Matters* (New York 1994) 23.

⁶⁴ Nas, 'The Genesis', in: *Illmatic* (New York 1994).

⁶⁵ Zie bijlage Nas – Represent, pagina 114-116.

Representing the borough/hood/projects

In deze paragraaf zal gekeken worden met welke locaties een rapper zich identificeerde. Van belang hierbij is het concept van *represent*. Hierin staat het vertegenwoordigen van een persoon, groep of plek centraal. Een rapper uit dit op verschillende wijze, bijvoorbeeld door een *shout out* te geven. Dit is een boodschap van publieke erkenning aan een bepaalde persoon, groep of plek. Belangrijk was om te laten horen waar je vandaan komt. Het aspect van de *streets* hoort hier zeker bij, maar een rapper representeert eerder een wijk of *borough*. Er zal in deze paragraaf eerst gekeken worden naar het representeren van een *borough* en vervolgens wordt er verder ingezoomd op een bepaalde wijk of *project*.

Het belang van *represent* in rapmuziek werd al in de jaren tachtig duidelijk. Toen was er 'The Bridge War'. Dit was een ruzie tussen Boogie Down Productions (Bronx) en Marley Marl (Queensbridge) over de plek waar hiphop was ontstaan. Marley Marl kwam met een nummer in 1985 uit genaamd *The Bridge*, waarmee hij Queensbridge als Mekka van de hiphop betitelde. Boogie Down Productions reageerde hier in hun debuutalbum *Criminal Minded* op met het nummer *South Bronx* waarbij zij claimden dat de South Bronx de geboorteplaats van hiphop was. Voor rappers was het van belang om een bepaalde lading te geven aan hun woonplaats. Zo maakten zij zichzelf onderdeel van een collectief en tevens vertegenwoordigden ze die gemeenschap. KRS-One reageerde ook op deze onenigheid tussen de twee partijen in het album *By All Means Necessary*.⁶⁶

Het representeren van een bepaalde omgeving werd van belang geacht in rap, zeker als daar een bepaalde claim op werd gelegd. Maar dit betekent niet dat een rapper zich maar met één plaats kan vereenzelvigen. In het nummer *Tch'a-Tch'a* laat KRS-One een duidelijk gelaagdheid horen wat betreft het concept *represent*:

'I represent the Bronx, but I am a New Yorker'⁶⁷

Hij vertegenwoordigt de Bronx, maar voelt zich ook onderdeel van New York als stad. Voor mensen buiten New York kan hij gezien worden als New Yorker, maar voor mensen in New York is hij iemand die de Bronx representeert. Dit ligt eraan wie het publiek is. Hierdoor zijn er verschillende niveau's in representatie te ontdekken, ook in rapmuziek. De algemene tendens in het album van KRS-One is niet negatief richting zijn thuissituatie. Dit komt omdat KRS-One de Bronx en zijn thuis niet zag als plekken die inherent verweven waren met negativiteit. Hoewel KRS-One wel maatschappelijke problemen in het getto aankaartte, had hij eerder lof voor de Bronx dan een afkeer tegen zijn woonplek.

Bij de Wu-Tang Clan werd al snel duidelijk waar ze voor stonden: Staten-Island. Omdat er nog geen grote rapartiesten uit deze *borough* kwamen, achtte de groep het noodzakelijk om hun woonplaats op de kaart te zetten in de *rapgame*. De rapformatie bestond uit negen leden die niet allemaal uit dezelfde

⁶⁶ Zie bijlage Boogie Down Productions - My Philosophy, pagina 44-47.

⁶⁷ Boogie Down Productions, 'Tch'a-Tch'a', in: *By All Means Necessary* (New York 1988).

wijk kwamen. Hierdoor lag de nadruk niet op het representeren van een bepaalde wijk, maar juist op Staten-Island als geheel:

‘I come from the Shaolin slum, and the isle I’m from
Is comin’ through with nuff niggas and nuff guns’

Hoewel ze Staten Island op de kaart wilden zetten, deden ze dit niet per se op een positieve manier. Ten eerste noemden ze hun *borough* een *slum*, waarmee bedoeld werd dat ze het als een achterbuurt ervaarden. Daarnaast wordt er op een *braggadocio* manier over hun *borough* gesproken. Juist omdat Staten Island nog niet op de kaart was gezet, probeerden de rappers extra onbevreesd over hun woonplaats te spreken. Staten Island was namelijk de plek met ‘nuff niggas and nuff guns’, oftewel het wordt door de Wu-Tang Clan voorgesteld als een gevaarlijke plek.⁶⁸ Hoewel de voornaamste focus op het representeren van de *borough* lag, betekent dit niet dat er alleen daarover werd gesproken. Het leven in de *projects* benoemden zij ook in hun muziek. Inspectah Deck heeft het bijvoorbeeld over hoe de *projects* hem gevormd hebben:

‘I’m mad vexed, it’s what the projects made me’⁶⁹

Hij beweert dat zijn kwade karakter te wijten is aan het leven in de *projects*. Ook hij beschouwt zichzelf, net zoals Big L en Biggie Smalls, als een product van zijn omgeving. Het milieu waar iemand in opgroeit heeft een grote impact op diens leven. Voor hem zijn de *projects* een bron van negativiteit. Inspectah Deck zelf benadrukt dit nogmaals in het nummer *C.R.E.A.M.* waarin hij beweert dat het leven in zijn *slum* niet anders was dan het leven in een cel.⁷⁰

Bij Boogie Down Productions en de Wu-Tang Clan speelt de representatie van met name de *borough* een grote rol. De *projects* worden hier niet frequent genoemd. Bij de individuele artiesten is te zien dat er een hele duidelijke verwijzing naar de *projects* of *hoodis* te vinden. Nas is bijvoorbeeld iemand die zich sterk identificeert met zijn Queensbridge *project*. Zoals al vermeld, wordt door Nas negatief gesproken over het leven in de *projects*. Het straatleven kon echter niet worden afgesloten als Nas zijn appartement binnenkwam. Queensbridge werd verweven met een plek van dood en verderf waaraan je niet kon ontsnappen:

‘My window faces shootouts, drug overdoses
Live amongst no roses, only the drama’⁷¹

In dit nummer verwijst hij naar een nummer van Tupac Shakur, namelijk ‘The Rose That Grew From Concrete’. Dit is een metafoor voor het leven van een jonge zwarte man in het getto. Het was onwaarschijnlijk dat iemand succesvol zou worden als hij daar was opgegroeid, net zoals het

⁶⁸ Nuff is *slang* voor enough, dus genoeg.

⁶⁹ Wu-Tang Clan, ‘Da Mystery of Chessboxin’, in: *Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)* (New York 1993).

⁷⁰ Zie bijlage Wu-Tang Clan - C.R.E.A.M pagina 147-149.

⁷¹ Nas, ‘Memory Lane’, in: *Illmatic* (New York 1994).

onwaarschijnlijk is dat een roos uit beton groeit. Het woord 'concrete' verwijst ook indirect naar het straatleven. Nas probeert dit beeld juist te weerleggen voor de situatie in Queensbridge, want daar leefde hij niet tussen 'roses' maar 'only the drama.' Ook bij Nas is het aspect van *represent* enorm belangrijk. Zijn getto was volgens hem namelijk een van de vele die in een dergelijke negatieve situatie verkeerde. Daarom zegt hij in het nummer *Represent* ook het volgende:

'This goes out to everybody in New York
That's living the real fucking life and every projects, all over'

Wat Nas hier deed is een *shout out* geven aan alle mensen in New York die leefden in moeilijkheden. Dit waren voornamelijk de personen in de *projects* die dagelijks dezelfde *struggle* moesten doorstaan om te overleven in het getto. Hij gaf namelijk regelmatig een *shout out* naar alle *boroughs* van New York. Zo zien we hier wederom die gelaagdheid van representatie terugkomen. Net zoals KRS-One laat Nas blijken dat hij zich ook onderdeel voelt van New York en dat hij zich niet alleen maar vereenzelvigd met Queensbridge. Hij voelde zich verbonden met iedereen in New York die onder dezelfde leefomstandigheden in de zwarte getto's/*projects* leefde.

Algemeen beeld over de leefomgeving van rappers

Wat duidelijk wordt uit deze analyse is dat rappers zich sterk verweven met hun lokale omgeving en dat ook uitin hun teksten. De algemene indruk van de rappers over de stad is negatief. Dit past bij het concept hardcore rap als protestmuziek. Het belang van de rapper ligt namelijk niet in het opkomen voor iedereen in New York, maar specifiek voor de Afro-Amerikaanse gemeenschap. Om de zwarte gemeenschap te doordringen van de problemen waarin zij leefden, benoemde de rapper vooral de negatieve kant van de leefomgeving. Dit kreeg vorm op verschillende geografische niveau's: New York, de *borough*, de *hood* en de *streets*. Een rapper representeerde die locatie waar zijn sociale leven zich afspeelde. De *arena of experience*, zoals Murray Forman het noemt, speelde zich voor veel rappers af in het getto.⁷² Hierdoor werd er vooral gesproken over het leven in een bepaalde wijk/*borough* in plaats van heel New York. Wél kon er een gelaagdheid zitten in representaties, afhankelijk van welk publiek een rapper wilde toespreken. Plekken zoals school werden ook genoemd, maar dit waren plekken die niks te bieden hadden voor rappers en waar hun sociale leven zich ook niet afspeelde. Veel van hen verlieten namelijk vroegtijdig school en raakten verstrikt in het leven op straat. Economische mogelijkheden waren voor hen namelijk op straat te vinden. Dit is waarom artiesten het zo vaak over de *streets* hebben in hun rapteksten. De oorzaak van de sociale problemen was vaker verweven met het getto waar rappers op dat moment leefden. *Hoods*, *projects* en *boroughs* kregen dus bij de meeste

⁷² Murray Forman, 'Represent': Race, Space and Place in Rap Music', in: *Popular Music* 19:1 (Cambridge 2000) 65-90, alhier 88.

artiesten een negatieve lading wat ervoor zorgde dat er niet positief naar New York als geheel werd gekeken.

Conclusie

New York werd vaak gezien als *the city of dreams* waar iedereen het kan maken. Maar dit gold niet voor iedereen. Voor veel mensen was het een moeilijk bestaan in New York, zeker voor de mensen in getto's. Met ongunstige sociale omstandigheden en een steeds conservatievere politiek zag de toekomst voor veel mensen er niet rooskleurig uit vanaf de jaren zeventig van de twintigste eeuw. In rapmuziek werden deze sociale omstandigheden in het gettoleven van New York besproken. Dit gebeurde via de perceptie van de rapper van de realiteit in zijn leefomgeving. Hierdoor kan er gesproken worden over een bepaalde hiphoprealiteit die in diverse teksten naar voren komt. In dit essay heb ik rapteksten geanalyseerd om na te gaan wat deze zeggen over de leefomgeving in de getto's van New York.

Ten eerste gold rap als de nieuwe protestmuziek van de zwarte bevolking. Hierbij stond vooral het negatieve karakter van het gettoleven centraal. Door te reflecteren op situaties uit hun eigen leven, probeerden ze te laten zien voor welke dagelijkse problemen ze gesteld werden. Dit kon verschillen van criminaliteit tot armoede en van drugsgebruik tot geweld. Rappers konden zelf onderdeel zijn (geweest) van dit probleem, zoals Big L, Biggie Smalls en de Wu-Tang Clan in hun teksten laten blijken. Daarnaast konden deze problemen ook aangekaart worden zonder hier zelf deel van uit te maken, zoals Nas en Boogie Down Productions. In ieder geval had rap een agogisch karakter dat zowel mensen uit de getto's als de Amerikaanse maatschappij wilde aansporen om deze situatie te verbeteren.

Ten tweede kan er gesproken worden over een dagelijkse *struggle* waar de rappers en de mensen in het getto mee te maken hadden. Zo is er weinig in hun raps te herkennen over een bepaalde toekomstvisie, maar zijn ze vooral bezig met het leven van dag tot dag. Voor veel rappers was een lang leven in het getto namelijk niet een gegeven, vooral door de gewelddadige omstandigheden die ook in de rapnummers naar voren kwamen. De *struggle* van het gettoleven had met name te maken met economische kansen. De fixatie van rappers op het verdienen van geld vormt een van de hoofdthema's in rap. In de teksten wordt New York, meer specifiek de getto's, nauwelijks gezien als een plek van mogelijkheden, maar juist als een plek waar nauwelijks tot geen ruimte voor verbetering was voor iemands levensstandaard. Volgens de rappers kon iemand alleen door te rappen of een ander talent te ontwikkelen uit de misère van het gettoleven ontsnappen. Voor de meeste besproken rappers gold dat hun talent ervoor had gezorgd dat ze in een betere financiële situatie waren gekomen, maar dit gold niet voor elke getto-inwoner. Als een persoon niet in zichzelf investeerde, dan was diegene al snel vatbaar voor participatie in illegale praktijken zoals drugs verkopen, overvallen plegen of mensen vermoorden. De methode van geld verdienen voor Afro-Amerikaanse personen in het getto werd door rappers dus vooral gekenmerkt door het concept van *blight hustling* of het ontwikkelen van talenten. Daarnaast wordt er nauwelijks gesproken over reguliere banen of de arbeidsmarkt. Voor een rapper was dit geen deel van zijn leven of niet belangrijk om te vermelden in zijn raps. Het zou namelijk alleen maar het negatieve sociale beeld dat zij willen uitdragen aan de maatschappij afzwakken en er blijk van geven

dat er wel degelijk kansen waren in het getto. Zo prevaleert de illegale manier van geld verdienen in hun raps.

Omdat het leven van rappers zo gefixeerd was op het verdienen van geld, werden voornamelijk de plaatsen waar dit te verdienen was uitgelicht in de rapteksten. Zo vormen de *streets* een belangrijke plek om inkomsten te krijgen van *blight hustling*. Over plekken zoals school of thuis werd nauwelijks gesproken. Dit kwam voornamelijk omdat dit niet de plekken waren waar het *streetlife* voornamelijk te merken was. Hierdoor werd ook nauwelijks over de stad New York als geheel gesproken, maar bleef het vaak bij iemands *borough*, *project* of *hood*. Het getto was namelijk de *arena of experience* en ook de enige plek waar geld verdiend kon worden volgens de rappers. Uit de rapteksten blijkt dat de artiesten veel waarde hechten aan de plaats waar ze vandaan komen. Hoewel ze hun leefomgeving misschien verweven met negativiteit, ervaren zij deze niet als negatief op zichzelf. Er ging namelijk een bepaalde eendracht en trots uit van deze lokale gemeenschap. Dit kreeg vorm door middel van het *representen* van lokale gemeenschappen, door bijvoorbeeld een *shout out* te geven aan bepaalde personen of een *wijk/borough* in het algemeen.

De fixatie op de dagelijkse *struggle* en het verdienen van geld vormt zo een leidraad in rapmuziek. Doordat deze *struggle* verweven is met negativiteit en het verdienen van geld met illegale praktijken, is het beeld dat de rappers over het getto uitdragen ook negatief. New York vormt zo geen stad die kansen biedt in de ogen van de rapartiesten, maar juist een plek waar de mensen in de getto's aan hun lot worden overgelaten door de maatschappij. Net zoals in de tijd van de slavernij dienden zij voor zichzelf mogelijkheden te creëren.

In dit onderzoek heb ik geprobeerd de verwevenheid van rapartiesten met hun omgeving, oftewel de *spatial awareness*, te verklaren. De bestaande literatuur focust vooral op de theoretische kant van deze verwevenheid. Aan de hand van een casus, het analyseren van rapteksten die informatie geven over de getto's van New York, heb ik gepoogd om deze theorie in praktijk te brengen. Zo is gebleken dat muziek een waardevol middel kan zijn om onderzoek te doen naar de leefomstandigheden in de getto's.

Om dit onderwerp verder uit te diepen, kan er bijvoorbeeld onderzoek gedaan worden naar andere zwarte muziekgenres zoals soul, funk of blues. Hierdoor kan er gekeken worden of daar ook over de leefomstandigheden van de zwarte bevolking in de getto's wordt gesproken. Zo kan duidelijk worden hoe de generatie van de Black Panthers of van de *Harlem Renaissance* tegen hun leefomgeving aankeek. Daarnaast zijn andere steden in de Verenigde Staten, zoals Los Angeles of Chicago, de moeite waard om te onderzoeken. Hier is namelijk ook een breed scala aan rapartiesten die uit getto's komen. Door meer casussen te behandelen kan zo een algemener beeld van de zwarte getto's in de Verenigde Staten tot stand komen. Het onderzoek doen naar muziek van de zwarte bevolking kan zo helpen voor een beter begrip van de sociale, economische en politieke opvattingen van deze gemeenschap.

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Pagina : Links: Malcolm X met geweer (1965), rechts: KRS-One op de albumcover van *By All Means Necessary*, <https://thesource.com/2018/05/19/malcolm-xs-top-10-influences-in-hip-hop-music-3/>.

Bijlage

Alle liederen zijn geraadpleegd via de site www.genius.com

De verschillende arceringen staan voor de volgende verwijzingen:

Groen: Economische mogelijkheden in het getto en de activiteiten die daarmee verbonden zijn.
Deze arceringen hebben voornamelijk betrekking op de inhoud van hoofdstuk drie.

Rood: Plekken die rapartiesten representeren of waar hun sociale leven afspeelt. Hierbij wordt er ook vaak een bepaalde lading gegeven aan diverse geografische locaties. Deze arceringen hebben voornamelijk betrekking op de inhoud van hoofdstuk vier.

Geanalyseerde albums:

1. **Boogie Down Productions – By All Means Necessary**
2. **The Notorious B.I.G. – Ready to Die**
3. **Nas – Illmatic**
4. **Big L – Lifestylez ov da Poor And Dangerous**
5. **Wu-Tang Clan – Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)**

Boogie Down Productions – By All Means Necessary

Korte inhoud van het album:

Dit album heft nogal een agogisch karakter. Hoewel er veel elementen van *braggadocio* in te herkennen zijn, schemert de situatie in het getto ook door. KRS-One erkent dat er problemen zijn, maar ziet dit niet als iets inherent verweven met het getto. Hij legt eerder de schuld bij het politieke systeem dat voor deze situatie zorgt. De rapper wijdt daarom ook niet te erg uit over de negatieve kanten van het getto, maar richt zich vaker tot de zwarte bevolking om te

vermelden hoe ongunstig het politieke systeem voor hun is. KRS-One portretteert zichzelf in dit album vooral als leraar die als taak heeft om de zwarte bevolking te onderwijzen over de situatie waarin zij leven.

1. My Philosophy

[Intro]

("So, you're a philosopher?")

("Yes, I think very deeply.")

In about four seconds, a teacher will begin to speak

[Verse 1: KRS-One]

Let us begin, what, where, why or when

Will all be explained like instructions to a game

See I'm not insane, in fact I'm kind of rational

When I be asking you, "Who is more dramatical?"

This one or that one, the white one or the black one

Pick the punk and I'll jump up to attack one

KRS-One is just the guy to lead a crew

Right up to your face and diss you

Everyone saw me on the last album cover

Holding a pistol, something far from a lover

Beside my brother, S-C-O-T-T

I just laughed 'cause no one can defeat me

This is lecture number two, "My Philosophy"

Number one, was "Poetry" you know it's me

This is "My Philosophy," many artists got to learn

I'm not flammable, I don't burn

So please stop burning and learn to earn respect

'Cause that's just what KR collects

See, what do you expect when you rhyme like a soft punk?

You walk down the street and get jumped

You got to have style and learn to be original

And everybody's gonna wanna diss you

Like me, we stood up for the South Bronx

And every sucker MC had a response

You think we care? I know that they are on the tip

My posse from the Bronx is thick

In real real life, we roll correctly

A lot of suckers would like to forget me

But they can't 'cause like a champ I have got a record

Of knocking out the frauds in a second

On the mic, I believe that you should get loose

I haven't come to tell you I got juice

I just produce, create, innovate on a higher level

I'll be back, but for now just sekkle!

[Break]

In about four seconds, a teacher will begin to speak

[Verse 2: KRS-One]

I'll play the nine and you play the target
You all know my name so I guess I'll just start it
Or should I say start this, teaching I'm the artist
Styles and new concepts at their hardest
Yo, 'cause I'm a teacher and Scott is a scholar

It ain't about money cause we all make dollars

That's why I walk with my head up
When I hear wack rhymes I get fed up
Rap is like a set-up, a lot of games
A lot of suckers with colorful names
I'm so-and-so, I'm this, I'm that
Huh, but they all just wick-wick-wack
I'm not white or red or black, I'm brown
From the Boogie Down
Productions, of course, our music be thumping
Others say they're bad, but they're bugging
Let me show you something now about Hip Hop
About D-Nice, Melodie, and Scott La Rock
I'll get a pen, a pencil, a marker

Mainly, what I write is for the average New Yorker

Some MCs be talking and talking
Trying to show how Black people are walking
But I don't walk this way to portray
Or reinforce stereotypes of today
Like all my brothers eat chicken and watermelon

Talk broken English and drug selling

See, I'm telling and teaching pure facts
The way some act in rap is kind of wack
And it lacks creativity and intelligence
But they don't care 'cause their company's selling it
It's my philosophy on the industry
Don't bother dissing me or even wishing we'd
Soften, dilute or commercialize all the lyrics
'Cause it's about time one of y'all hear it
And hear it first-hand from an intelligent brown man
A vegetarian, no goat or ham
Or chicken or turkey or hamburger
'Cause to me that's suicide, self-murder
Let us get back to what we call hip-hop
And what it meant to DJ Scott La Rock

[Break]

("So, you're a philosopher?")

("Yes, I think very deeply.")

In about four seconds, a teacher will begin to speak

[Verse 3: KRS-One]

How many MCs must get dissed
 Before somebody says, "Don't f*** with Kris!"?
 This is just one style, out of many
 Like a piggy bank, this is one penny
 My brother's name is Kenny, that's Kenny Parker
 My other brother I.C.U. is much darker
 Boogie Down Productions is made up of teachers
 The lecture is conducted from the mic into the speaker
 Who gets weaker: the king or the teacher?
 It's not about a salary, it's all about reality⁷³
 Teachers teach and do the world good
 Kings just rule and most are never understood
 If you were to rule or govern a certain industry
 All inside this room right now would be in misery
 No one would get along nor sing a song
 'Cause everyone'd be singing for the king, am I wrong?
 I say yo, what's up? It's me again
 Scott La Rock, KRS, BDP again
 Many people had the nerve to think we would end the trend
 With *Criminal Minded*, an album which is only ten
 Funky, funky, funky, funky, funky hit records
 No more than four minutes and some seconds
 The competition checks and checks and keeps checking
 They take the album, take it home and start sweating
 Why? Well, it's simple, to them, it's kind of vital
 To take KRS-One's title
 To them, I'm like an idol, some type of entity
 In everybody's rhyme, they wanna mention me?
 Or rather mention us, me and Scott La Rock
 But they can get bust, get robbed, get dropped
 I don't play around, nor do I eff around
 And you can tell by the bodies that are left around
 When some clown jumps up to get beat down
 Broken down to his very last compound
 See how it sound, a little un-rational
 A lot of MCs like to use the word "dramatical"

2. Ya Slippin'

(Yo man, these people around here in '87 just slippin-dough, you know what I'm sayin? Boogie Down Productions not slippin-dough, so hold ya hands-you Know what I'm sayin? (word) Yo! What's goin' on? Mr. Magic-you know what Happened? He slipped on us-he die. Pumpin KISS FM, we rock. To my man DJ Red Alert- we chillin' (word). Yo man! Yo do, heard about, man, this shit About this kid-Wearin' the, ah, Jheri Curls, man. Word up! He was slippin' Yo dough, word up, word up. He had a yellow coat on, but no description was Given)

⁷³ Misschien gebruiken als tegenstelling van het nummer Life's a bitch van Nas

Now what you just heard, people, was a little kickin
But let me tell you this while the clock is still tickin
This is the warning, known as the caution:
Do not attempt to dis, cause you'll soften
Just like a pillow, or better yet a mattress
You can't match this style or attack this
While I'm telling you, write on schedule
Fuck with K-R-S and I'll bury you
Deep in the dirt, or sand with a shovel
No fight, no scurry, or scuffle, just muffle
Total domination on stage
Kris is the name, 22 is the age
Those that wanna battle, I know who you are
You got a little girl, you drive a little car
You come into the place with that look on your face
Before you ran the mile, you lost the race
So assume you're doomed when you step in the room
I'll be the witch and you'll be the broom
I'll ride you, guide you into the concrete
I'll slide you to a funky beat
So what do we have here?
A sucka in fear
I snatched your heart
Put it way up on the chart
At ten you're fucked
At nine you suck
At eight you're a sucker
At seven-a mothafucka
At six you're slapped
At five you're just wacked
At four you're lost
At three, you're just soft
At two you're an ass
At one, you're a dick
But before you slip, I'll whip
Cuz homeboy, ya slippin'

(Yo get my slip on, I'm chillin on. A long time, ya see me slip on, crack dealer
And I'll slip on, everybody-I slip on. Sayin? I'll come back if I miss you
Sayin?)

I understand that music calms the savage beast
But keep in mind that I compose my music piece by piece
First a bass, a snare
A little cut over there
I add my name K-R-S
And the shit becomes fresh
I ask Moe and ICU for their thoughts

Lay it down at Power Play all the suckas are tough
One again, the tactics of original arts
We're gettin' payed to the end cuz we were down from the start
We're known as Boogie Down Productions, ain't no B-boy stance
Gauranteed to make ya dance, if you give us a chance
We're goin' off and of course all ya suckas are lost
You wanna hear a fresh rhyme? You've come to the source
Because I'm the type of guy who's not put up on a pedestal
Run my rhyme on time and on schedule
One after another, another to the next
Can't rhyme when you're tense, or your muscles won't flex
Check your larynx
It may get lower havin' sex
Or may get higher
When bustin' as a liar
These are the things I teach so be tough
To me you're kinda short, how many battles have you fought?
If you come up with a number, notebook, or list
It just doesn't matter, you can still get dissed
I'm bringin' back that ol' New York rap
That gets you jacked while you're hands still clap
It's funny
Just dissin' you I can make money
But no one's tippin'
My message is simple: Ya' slippin!

(They slippin'-dough-1987-they spippin', but we goin' all the way to the top
Man (word)-you know what I'm sayin? To my brother KRS-1, you're large, I'm
Sayin, large-everytime, man, large. They're slippin')

E-N-O, S-R-K
When you go through other albums, you're sure to say
"Goddamn, they all seem to sound alike!"
Till you hear the crew standin' over in the light
Showing, glowing, on the top growing
The lyrics keep flowing and flowing and just flowing
Just like a river, or better yet a stream
I'm proud to be down with the winning team
So don't ever in your life even think about a [sic] arguement
Cuz you'll get walked on like carpet
We'll pick you up, and dust you off
Stamp BDP on your head and you're off
But you would even change that to say instead
"I'm down cuz I got a BDP on my head!"
So just before you inherit that ass kicking
I suggest you wake right up cuz ya slippin'

(Yo! They slippin'-dough, they slippin'-dough, they slippin'-word up, I
Don't care no more, man, I'm commin' out of the shell-dough, they slippin')

Man. B-boy Records, Magic, yo all the time they slippin-ya know what I'm
Saying? This other kid-I don't know what his name is, but you know what time
It is. (WORD UP!) He's slippin' too (everybody). Slippin', and everytime they dis ya?, he's
slippin'. Slippin'.)

3. Stop the Violence

[Intro]

Worldwide!
BDP are the freshest!
Worldwide!
Worldwide!
Worldwide!

[Hook]

One two three, the crew is called BDP
And if you want to go to the tip top
Stop the violence in Hip Hop, Y-O

[Verse 1]

Time and time again, as I pick up the pen
As my thoughts emerge, these are those words
I glance at the paper to know what's going on
Someone's doing wrong, the story goes on
Mary Lou just had a baby someone else decapitated
The drama of the world shouldn't keep us so frustrated
I look, but it doesn't coincide with my books
Social studies will not speak upon political crooks
It's just the presidents, and all the money they spent
All the things they invent, and how their house is so immaculate
They create missiles, my family's eating gristle
Then they get upset when the press blows the whistle
Phone calls are made, profiles are kept low
You tamper with some jobs, now the press is controlled
Not only newspapers, but every single station
You only get to hear the president is on vacation
But uh, stay calm, there's no need for alarm
You say goodbye to your mom, and you're off to Vietnam
You shoot to kill, come back and you're a veteran
But how many veterans are out there peddling?
There's no telling, cause they continue selling
As quiet as it's kept, I won't go into depth
You could talk about Nigeria, people used to laugh at ya
Now I take a look, I see USA For Africa?

[Bridge]

Huh
What's the solution, to stop all this confusion?
Rewrite the constitution, change the drug which you're using

Rewrite the constitution or the emancipation proclamation
We fight inflation, yet the president's still on vacation
BDP posse!

[Hook]

[Verse 2]

This might sound a little strange to you
Well here's the reason I came to you
We gotta put our heads together, and stop the violence
Cause real bad boys move in silence
When you're in a club, you come to chill out
Not watch someone's blood just spill out
That's what these other people want to see
Another race fight endlessly
You know we're being watched, you know we're being seen
Some wish to destroy this scene called hip-hop
But I won't drop
Not I or Scott LaRock
Well here is the message that we bring today
Hip-hop will surely decay
If we as a people don't stand up and say

[Hook]

[Verse 3]

BDP and me
We step into the party top celebrity
Say when we come in the dance, we never have to pay a fee
Cause that's cos we got R-E-S-P-E-C-T
I have this one wife, her name is Miss Melody
Although I'm from the Bronx, she from the Brooklyn posse
I tell ya a little of this and then I tell you some of that
Sometimes I comb my hair and sometimes I wear a hat
Sometimes I'm in a Mercedes and sometimes I'm in a plane
Sometimes I find myself upon the number two train
Some people look at me and see negativity
Some people look at me and see positivity
But when I see myself I see creativity
So if I can create, well then I make some money
Jah man just put your hands up if you're out here gettin' paid
Jah man just put your hands up if you're out here gettin' paid

[Hook]

4. Illegal Business

[Hook:]

Cocaine business controls America

Ganja business controls America
KRS-One come to start some hysteria
Illegal business controls America

[KRS-One]

One afternoon around eleven o'clock
It was freezin cold, he was standing on the block
Sellin cheeba, nick's and dimes
Sayin a rhyme just to pass the time

The cops passed by, but he stayed calm
Cause the leather trench coat was keepin him warm
But this time they walked by real slowly
He thought to himself, "They look like they know me"
They drove away, but he didn't stay
He jumped in the cab and he paid his tab
But guess who he saw when he hit the block
It was the same cop car, the same two cops
They jumped out quick, they pulled a gun
They said, "Don't try to fight and don't try to run
Cooperate and we will be your friend
Non-cooperation will be your end"
He jumped in the car, and while they rode
They ran down the list of things he owed
They said, "You owe us some money, you owe us some product
Cause you could be right in the river tied up"
He thought for a second and he said, "What is this?
You want me to pay you to stay in business?"
They said, "That's right, or you go to prison
Cause nobody out there is really gonna listen
To a hood," so he said, "Good!
I'll pay you off for the whole neighborhood"
Because

[Hook]

{*DJ scratches "What can we get for 63 cents?"*}

[KRS-One]

A guy named Jack, is sellin crack
The community, doesn't want him back
He sells at work, he sells in schools
He's not stupid, the cops are the fools
Cause everyone else seems to go to jail
But when it comes to Jack, the cops just fail
They can't arrest him, they cannot stop him
Cause even in jail the bail unlocks him
So here is the deal, and here is the facts
If you ever wonder why they can't stop crack
The police department, is like a crew
It does whatever they want to do

In society you have illegal and legal
We need both, to make things equal
So legal is tobacco, illegal is speed
Legal is aspirin, illegal is weed
Crack is illegal, cause they cannot stop ya
But cocaine is legal if it's owned by a doctor
Everything you do in private is illegal
Everything's legal if the government can see you
Don't get me wrong, America is great place to live
But listen to the knowledge I give

[Hook]

{*DJ scratches "What can we get for 63 cents?"*}
Illegal business controls America
{*DJ scratches "What can we get for 63 cents?"*}
Illegal business controls America
{*DJ scratches "What can we get for 63 cents?"*}
Illegal business controls America
{*DJ scratches "What can we get for 63 cents?"*}
KRS-One come to start some hysteria
{*DJ scratches "What what what what, what what what what
What can we get for 63 cents?"*}

[Hook]

{*DJ scratches "What can we get for 63 cents?"*}
Yeah, illegal business controls America
{*DJ scratches "What can we get for 63 cents?"*}
Yeah, KRS-One come to start some hysteria
{*DJ scratches "What can we get for 63 cents?"*}
Yeah, BDP takin over America
{*DJ scratches "What can we get for 63 cents?"*}
Ganja business controls America

{*DJ scratches "What can we get for 63 cents?"*}
Cocaine, sensai
Aspirin, coffee
Morphine, sugar
Tobacco, got to go

{*DJ scratches "What what what what, what can we get.."*}
Illegal business controls America
{*DJ scratches "What what, what can we get.."*}
Yeahhhhhh, ganja business controls America
{*DJ scratches "What what what what what what
What can we get for 63 cents?"*}
Yeahhhhhh, cocaine business controls America
{*DJ scratches "What what what what.."*}
Illegal business controls America

5. Nervous

[KRS-One]

By All Means Necessary

Written, produced, directed, by Blastmaster KRS-One

Mixed, by DJ Doc

And now.. it's TIME.. to GET {NERRRRRRRR-VOUS!}

BDP is in full and total effect

I'm gonna shout out a couple of names

We're gonna do it like this

DJ Doc.. Manager Moe.. Ms. Melodie.. I.C.U., McBoo

{NERRRRRRRR-VOUS!}

D-Nice.. Scott LaRock.. KRS-One, I think that's me

And you know what? I'm down with BDP

{NERRRRRRRR-VOUS!}

So right about this time

You should throw your hands up in the air

How many people got Nike's on?

If you got your Nike's on, put your feet up in the air

If you don't got Nike's on

I think you need to keep your feet down

Cause the party is live {NERRRRRRRR-VOUS!}

And we're in total stereo, yaknowhatI'msayin?

So all the suckers out there that wanna test

It's time to get {NERRRRRRRR-VOUS!}

And at this point, we gettin a little stupid

I'd like to say, DJ Doc is in the back chillin out

On the 48-track board without a doubt

Break it down Doc, like this! {NERRRRRRRR-VOUS!}

I'd like to give a shout out to who? Big Daddy Kane

Heavy D, and Eric B

Melody, D-Square {NERRRRRRRR-VOUS!}

So just throw your hands in the air

Just throw your hands in the air

KRS-One is here without a care

And I don't have NO fears homeboy

So all the suckers out there that wanna test BDP

It's time to get {NERRRRRRRR-VOUS!}

Now, here's what we do on the 48-track board

We look around for the best possible break

And once we find it, we just BREAK..

.. or, we just BREAK {NERRRRRRRR-VOUS!}

There's two ways to do this, you see what I'm sayin?

If you feel the board, you feel around

We got tracks one to track 48

We find track seven, and break it down!

{NERRRRRRRR-VOUS!}

Okay.. this album has been funded
By the Blastmaster KRS-One Fund
Ha ha ha ha ha hah!
You know what? We're gettin {NERRRRRRRR-VOUS!}
Okay, we gon' play a little game, break it down Doc
Like this, or like THIS
{NERRRRRRRR-VOUS!}

You know what? I used to be a graffiti artist
I used to write KRS-One all over the place
All up in Soundview, in Brooklyn
Then when the cops come for you, ha ha hah
You just get {NERRRRRRRR-VOUS!}
And another thing:
Me and my crew, we made hit records all over the place
But we left B-Boy Records
And you know what happened after that point?
Ha hah, they just got {NERRRRRRRR-VOUS!}

6. I'm Still #1

[Intro]
D.J. Doc you know he's down with us
D-Square, he's down with us
Keyboard Money Mike, is down with us
I.C.U., you know he's down with us
D-Nice and McBoo, they're down with us
Ms. Melodie, she's down with us
Just-Ice and DMX, they're down with us
My manager Moe, he's down with us
Castle-D boy, he's down with us
D.J. Red Alert, he's down with us
Robocop boy, he's down with us
Makin' funky music is a must
I'm number one

[Verse 1]
People still takin' rappin' for a joke
A passing hope or a phase with a rope
Sometimes I choke and try to believe
When I get challenged by a million MCs
I try to tell them, "We're all in this together!"
My album was raw because no one would ever
Think like I think and do what I do
I stole the show, and then I leave without a clue
What do you think makes up a KRS?
Concise teaching, or very clear speaking?
Ridiculous bass, aggravating treble
Rebel, renegade, must stay paid

Not by financial aid, but a raid of hits

Causing me to take long trips
I'm the original teacher of this type of style
Rockin' off-beat with a smile
Or smirk or chuckle, yes some are not up to
BDP Posse so I love to
Step in the jam and slam!
I'm not Superman, because anybody can
Or should be able to rock off turntables
Grab the mic, plug it in and begin
But here's where the problem starts, no heart
Because of that a lot of groups fell apart
Rap is still an art, and no one's from the Old School
Cuz Rap is still a brand-new tool
I say no one's from the Old School cuz Rap on a whole
Isn't even twenty years old
Fifty years down the line, you can start this
Cuz we'll be the Old School artists
And even in that time, I'll say a rhyme
A brand-new style, ruthless and wild
Runnin' around spendin' money, havin' fun
Cuz even then, I'm still number one

[Verse 2]

Blastmaster KRS-One of course
Comes to express with style the lost
Ways of rhyming, old and new, past and present
Knock, knock, who is it?
A brand-new style, hup, time to change
People talk about me when they see me on stage
Live in action, guaranteed raw
I hang with the rich and I work for the poor
Now tomorrow you can say you saw
KRS-One stompin' once more
I play by ear, I love to steer
The Alfa Romeo from here to there
I grab the beer, but not in the ride
Cuz I'm not stupid, I don't drink and drive
I'm not a beginner, amateur, or local

My album is sellin' because of my vocals

You know what you need to learn?
Old School artists don't always burn
You're just another rapper who's had his turn

Now it's my turn, and I am concerned

About idiots posing as kings

What are we here to rule?

I thought we were supposed to sing

And if we oughta sing, then let us begin to teach

Many of you are educated, open your mouth and speak

KRS-One is something like a total renegade

Except I don't steal, I rhyme to get paid

Airplanes flyin', overseas people dyin'
Politicians lyin', I'm tryin'
Not to escape, but hit the problem head-on
By bringin' out the truth in a song
So BDP, short for Boogie Down Productions
Made a little noise cuz the crew was sayin' somethin'
People have the nerve to take me for a gangster
An ignorant one, something closer to a prankster
Doin' petty crimes, goin' straight to penitentiary
But in a scale of crime that's really elementary
This beat is now compelling me to explain in silence
Why my last jam was so violent
It's simple: BDP will teach reality
No beatin' around the bush, straight up, just like The P Is Free
So now you know, a poet's job is never done
But I'm never overworked, cuz I'm still number one

[Outro]

Kool Moe Dee, he's down with us
Eric B. and Rakim, they're down with us
Stetsasonic, they're down with us
Dana Dane, he's down with us
Sleeping Bag Records, they're down with us
My lawyer Jay, he's down with us
Jive/RCA is down with us
Makin' funky music is a must
I'm number one

7. Part Time Suckers

[Intro]

Alright, now here we go

[Verse 1]

T'cha t'cha, that boy is a t'cha
I want you all to understand I'm down with BDP
I got so many styles, but I'm not an MC
I am a teacher teaching rap, and of course I am back
Because these other MC's out here are so weak and wack
So BDP will teach them, hey, we will teach them
BDP will teach them, hey, we will teach them
All about the guy who first is down but then he lies
What he is to you, he's a part time sucker
Among thousands and thousands of very good MC's
A poet will flow like the breeze
Like the wind, air is all around us
From what I hear, it's a good thing you found us
And in a hurry, just in the nick of time

Cause I do four things: rhyme, produce, teach, and bring to you new styles
 Well here's the first style, right out the pile
 It's called vocabulary. Difficult, isn't it?
 At least it looks that way when you witness it
 Kill (kill?) meaning to deprive of life
 Fiancee: future wife
 Poet (poet): a person who writes poems
 Wandering, meaning to roam
 Everyone sees me when I walk into the public
 Even the suckers, I just love it
 When they get disgusted every time I prove
 (Boogie Down Pro...) Boogie Down Productions will move
 Meaning to motivate, lest rhyme straight
 Hate is a very very big mistake
 It rhymes with frustrate and aggravate
 Let me just demonstrate why I won't abbreviate
 Television, a view of scenes transmitted
 Every single second you get it
 Pepsi (what?) the choice of a new generation
Fired from work: termination
 Quality: something special about an object or person
 Can you rock a party without rehearsing?
 I can, anytime, on the spot rhyme
 Many recording artists can't do it, but I'm
 More than just a recording artist kicking dust (who?)
 I'm a sandstorm, taking human form
 K plus R S equals one
 I don't burn anymore, I just cook 'till you're done
 And when you're done, then I serve
 Like alphabet soup, (letters) letters, (words) words
 Sentences, chunks of meat into a paragraph
 Get the meaning then ask the question 'bout the guy
 Who first is down but then he lies
 What he is to you, he's a part time sucker

[Verse 2]

Kewe-kewe-K, Arewa-arewa-R, Ewe-ewe-S, my rhymes are fresh
 Please step back, let me progress
 Meaning to advance, you only get a glance
 Of me at a time, sayin' some rhyme
 Or sayin' some rekkid, that should respect it, select it
 I'm never ever wack or reject it
 Challenge BDP it get's dissed, expect it
 I travel the nation by mostly plane
 I travel New York by either cab or the train
 Some say that I'm insane, they say
 Why would you want to ride the train
 (But I) but I don't care, as long as I get there
 I never used to pay my fare, but now I think I got to

Because from a jail cell I can't rock you
That's being incarcerated, meaning locked up
(A tool) a tool for holding water is a cup or pail
The opposite for fresh is stale
(The largest) the largest sea-mammal is a whale
Beer is called ale, or sometimes it is called brew
(A group a) a group of human beings is a crew
You know what I'm gonna do? Explain Criminal Minded
Cause much too many people still are blinded
Let me rewind it, and elaborate on blinded, meaning can't see through me
He he he he he, these people make me laugh
The way they like to change up the past
So when you're there in class, learning 'his story'
Learn a little of your story, the real story
It doesn't pay to know the life and times of someone else
It doesn't benefit your wealth or your mental health
I go for self, but the real self is one with all
The self who's by himself does fall
Down, just like the guy who first was down, but then he lies
What he is to you, he's a part time sucker

8. Jimmy

[Intro]

The J, the I, the M, the M
The Y, the J, the I, the M
It's Jimmy! It's Jimmy!
(Repeat x2)

[Verse 1]

Here is a message to the super hoes
Just keep in mind when Jimmy grows
It grows and grows and grows, so let it
But keep in mind about the epidemic
When Jimmy releases, boy it pleases
But what do you do about all these diseases?
Jimmy is Jimmy, no matter what
So take care of Jimmy cos you know what's up
Cos now in winter AIDS attacks
So run out and get your Jimmy Hats
It costs so little for a pack of three
They're Jimmy Hats for the winter attack
Good for a present, great for lovers
Demonstrated by The Jungle Brothers
Protect your Jimmy and keep it fresh
They're Jimmy Hats by KRS

[Hook]

So, remember you're never too old (Jimmy is wearing a hat!)

Remember you're never too bold (Jimmy is wearing a hat!)
Do me a favour, wear your hat
So Jimmy will have the opportunity to come back

[Verse 2]

Well, Red Alert is down with BDP
Teaching you all about Jimbrowski
I don't wanna hear that you're not with it
Turn around and see your butt in a clinic
Having doctors just poke at Jimmy
Let me express what now what's in me
Too many people take too many risks
Too many people I see get dissed
Jimmy Hats are now in style
Cause you can't trust a big butt and a smile
Some are dry and some lubricated
Many companies make and made it
So all you super hoes, wear your hat
Cos dripping Jimmies is straight up wack
Keep in mind about Jimbrowski
Jimmy Hats by BDP

[Intro]

[Hook]

9. T'cha – T'cha

[KRS-One]

Easssssssssy mahn!
It's impossible to take out Boogie Down Productions
SEEN?

Yes.. come mi say

Intro/Chorus: KRS-One

Come to the t'cha, come mi say come to the t'cha
Come mi say come to the t'cha come to the t'cha come to the t'cha
Come mi say come to the t'cha, come mi say come to the t'cha
Come mi say come to the t'cha come to the t'cha come to the t'cha

[KRS-One]

Me bus' upon the scene around 1986
A few hit records got me started real quick
I represent the Bronx, but I am a New Yorker
All vegeterian, never eat pork or
Chicken in a battle yes my brain starts clickin
Just like the gears of a watch, tock-tickin

I never lose time cause the rhyme is all digital
For suckers like you, I turn the power up to critical
On every playlist, waxin that anus
Suckers or professionals, BRING DOWN THE DECIMAL
Point every time you subtract an emcee
People look at me, a P-O-E-T
Teachin suckers like you about the I.C.U
And the KRS-One, sounds like arithmetic
Very psychological; why are you on the dick?
Well, my evaluation is sudden
Takin me out, is somethin closer to impossible
You could try your best
But frankly I don't think it's logical
This is yes the DJ writer superproducer Kris
God gave me a talent, so let me flaunt the gift

Chorus

[KRS-One]

Push up ya han-ds, if you out here gettin PAID

Push up ya han-ds, if you don't have AIDS, biddi-by-by
Push up ya han-ds, if you out here gettin PA-AI-ID
Push up ya han-ds, if you won't be delayed
Boogie Down Productions at the head of the raid
Always gettin brighter while the suckers will fade
Life is very serious, it's not an arcade
So everything you're hearing, KRS has made
MC's grab the microphone but don't know what to say
So DJ KRS has come to show dem the way
I always call you females by your name, not "Hey!"
Cause "Hey" will only make a real woman turn away, GWAN
Unless the woman is the freak of the yearrrr
Well then you know that KRS don't carrrrre
Unless the woman is the freak of the yearrrr, biddi-by-by
And then you know that KRS don't carrrrre
You always call a freak, by the garment they wear
Instead of call it clothes they always callin it gear
Big derriere to make the next man stare
Attracted to the man with jheri curls in him hair
Always puffin cheeba with a forty of beer
But to a re-al wo-man freaks-a can-not compare, GWAN
Hold up ya han-ds if you a real wo-man, BO!
Hold up ya han-ds, if you do underst-and
The style that I'm sayin, without no delayin
Is Blastmaster KRS-One, just playin
It's really kinda easy for me, to do a style like this
It's kinda primitive, so please don't miss
The way I do this on the microphone, cause I was never shown
My mother wasn't into b-boyin at the Home
No one out can compete

And not another DJ rocks this type of beat
Come mi say

Chorus

[KRS-One]

Come mi say jump up when ya high, and jump up when ya low-ah
Boogie Down Productions make the lyrics just flow
With M-E-L-O-D-I-E and Manager Moe
We'll wrap up any MC in a ribbon or a bow
People takin pictures of me everywhere I go
Take out three MC's and call it Tic-Tac-Toe

YES!

ZHOOM, dum, da-dum, da-da-dum, da-dum
ZHOOM, dum, da-dum, da-da-dum, zhiggi-zi
ZHOOM, dum, da-dum, da-da-dum, da-dum
ZHOOM, dum, da-dum, da-da-dum, come mi say

Chorus

10. Necessary

[Spoken Word: KRS-One]

When some get together and think of rap, they tend to think of violence
But when they are challenged on some rock groups, the result is always silence
Even before the Rock and Roll era, violence played a big part in music
It's all according to your meaning of violence and how or in which way you use it
Oh no, it's not violent to show in movies the destruction of the human body
But yes indeed it's very violent to protect yourself at a party
And, oh no, it's not violent when under the Christmas tree there's a look-alike gun
But, yes, of course it's violent to have an album like KRS-One
By all means necessary, it's time to end the hypocrisy
What I call violence, I can't do, but your kind of violence is stopping me
By all means necessary, the rap audience must grow up
The same type of fighting we do, they do, except we've got nothing to blow up
It doesn't matter if you win or lose, it's only how good you play the game
This is the oldest sneak attack, because it takes away our senses to gain
If all I do is play the game then I am just mediocre
We strive to be the best we can be, not to just get over
Some people say that life on a whole is serious and nothing is funny
But that's only if you base your life around competition and money
Yeah, I'm making some money, he's making some money, but none of these things are necessities
What I find to be a necessity is controlling a positive destiny
With this, money, fame, glory and credit will come in time
The people down with me know this, everyday they hear me saying rhymes
I got some friends, I got some allies like Stet and Big Daddy Kane

They know that by all means necessary that Peace is the name of this game
Whether peace by war, or peace by peace, the reality of peace is scary
But we must get there, one way or another, by all means necessary

The Notorious B.I.G. – Ready to Die

Korte inhoud van het album:

Dit is een album waar Biggie Smalls veer verschillende persona van zichzelf schetst, zowel als drug dealer als succesvolle rapartiest. Daarnaast zijn er veel verschillende thema's in te ontdekken zoals depressie, angst, wrok en succes. Door verschillende scenario's te schetsen van zijn leven, wil hij laten zien hoe zijn directe leefomgeving eruit ziet. Hij zet zichzelf in dit album neer als directe representatie van het leven van de jonge zwarte man in het getto. Hierdoor kunnen vaak hele nummers rood gearceerd worden omdat dit een directe situatie in het getto aangeeft. Er zal hier alleen expliciet naar het gevoel dat de rapper bij het getto of

zijn leefomgeving heeft verwezen worden in het rood. Ook zijn de schuingedrukte teksten andere stemmen. Deze kunnen zowel van Biggie zijn of een ander persoon.

1. Intro

[Skit: Puff Daddy]

Push

C'mon, shorty, stay push, c'mon

C'mon, c'mon, push it's almost there

One more time, c'mon

C'mon, push, baby, one more time

Harder, harder, push it harder

Push, push, c'mon

One more time, here it goes

I see the head!

Yeah, c'mon!

Yeah! Yeah!

You did it, baby, yeah!

[Interlude]

But if you lose, don't ask no questions why

The only game you know is do or die

Ah-ha-ha

Hard to understand what a hell of a man...

Hip hop the hippie the hippie

To the hip hip hop and you don't stop

Rock it out, baby bubba, to the boogie, the bang-bang

The boogie to the boogie that be

Now, what you hear is not a test...

[Skit: 'Prince' Charles Alexander]

God damn it, Voletta, what the fuck are you doin'?

You can't control that God damn boy? *What?*

I just saw Mr. Johnson, he told me he caught the motherfucking boy shoplifting

What the fuck are you doin'? (*Get your black ass the fuck off!*)

You can't control that God—

I don't know what the fuck to do with that boy

What the fuck do you want me to do?

If— if you can't con— fucking control him

I'ma send him— (*All you fucking do is bitch all day, motherfucker*)

I'ma send him— Bitch, bitch, I—

I'ma send his motherfuckin' ass to a group home God damn it, what?

I'll smack the shit outta you, bitch! (*Kick my black ass, motherfucker!*)

What the fuck?

Yo— You— You are fucking up (Comin' in here, smellin' like sour socks, you dumb motherfucker)

I'ma fuck you up

[Interlude]

*When I'm bustin' up a party I feel no guilt
Gizmo's cuttin' up for thee
Suckers that's down with nei—*

[Skit: The Notorious B.I.G. & Accomplice]

What, nigga, you wanna rob them motherfuckin' trains, you crazy?

Yes, yes, motherfucker, motherfuckin' right, nigga, yes

Nigga, what the fuck, nigga? We gonna get—

Nigga, it's eighty-seven nigga, is you dead broke?

Yeah, nigga, but, but, nigga—

Motherfucker, is you broke, motherfucker?

We need to get some motherfuckin' paper, nigga

Yeah, but nigga, it's a train, ain't nobody robbed no motherfucking train

Just listen, man, your mother giving you money, nigga?

My moms don't give me shit, nigga

It's time to get paid, nigga

Is you with me?

Motherfucker, is you with me?

Yeah, I'm with you, nigga, c'mon

Alright then, nigga, let's make it happen then

All you motherfuckers get on the fuckin' floor!

Get on the motherfucking floor!

Give me all your motherfucking money (And don't move, nigga!)

I want the fuckin' jewelry, give me every-fuckin'-thing

Nigga I'd shut the fuck up or I'ma blow your motherfuckin' brains out! (Gimme your fuckin' money, motherfucker!)

Nigga, give me your jewelry, empty your pockets (Fuck you, bitch)

Get up off that shit

What the fuck you holding on to that shit for, bitch?

[Interlude]

I get money, money I got

Stunts call me honey if they feel real hot

[Instrumental]

[Part 4: The Notorious B.I.G. & Guard]

Open C-74, Smalls

Mr. Smalls, let me walk you to the door

So how does it feel leaving us?

C'mon man, what kind of fucking question is that man?

Trying to get the fuck up out this joint dog

Yeah, yeah, you'll be back

You niggers always are

Go ahead man, what the fuck is you hollering about?

You won't see me up in this motherfucker no more

We'll see

I got big plans nigga, big plans, hahahaha

2. Things Done Changed

[Chorus]

Back in the day

Things done changed on this side

Remember they used to thump, but now they blast, right? (Uh)

Back in the day

Things done changed on this side

Remember they used to thump, but now they blast, right?

Back in the day

Things done changed on this side (Yeah)

Remember they used to thump, but now they blast, right?

Back in the day

Things done changed on this side (Yeah)

Remember they used to thump, but now they blast, right?

[Verse 1]

Remember back in the days when niggas had waves

Cazal shades and corn braids?

Pitching pennies, honeys had the high-top jellies

Shooting skelly, motherfuckers was all friendly

Lounging at the barbecues, drinking brews

With the neighborhood crews hanging on the avenues

Turn your pages to 1993

Niggas is getting smoked, G, believe me

Talk slick, you get your neck slit quick

'Cause real street niggas ain't having that shit

Totin' TECs for rep

Smoking blunts in the project hallways

Shooting dice all day

Waitin' for niggas to step up on some fightin' shit

We get hype and shit and start lightin' shit

So step away with your fistfight ways

Motherfucker, this ain't back in the days

But you don't hear me though

[Chorus]

[Verse 2]

No more coco-levio one, two, three

One, two, three, all it is to me is a mystery

I hear you motherfuckers talk about it

But I stay seeing bodies with the motherfuckin' chalk around it

And I'm down with the shit, too

For the stupid motherfuckers want to try to use Kung-Fu

Instead of a MAC-10, he tried scrappin'

Slugs in his back and that's what the fuck happens

When you sleep on the street

Little motherfuckers with heat wanna leave a nigga six feet deep
And we coming to the wake
To make sure the crying and commotion ain't a motherfucking fake
Back in the days our parents used to take care of us
Look at 'em now, they even fuckin' scared of us
Calling the city for help because they can't maintain
Damn, shit done changed

[Chorus]

[Verse 3]

If I wasn't in the rap game
I'd probably have a ki, knee-deep in the crack game
Because the streets is a short stop
Either you're slingin' crack rock or you got a wicked jump shot
Shit, it's hard being young from the slums
Eatin' five cent gums, not knowing where your meal's coming from
And now the shit's getting crazier and major
Kids younger than me, they got the Sky brand pagers
Goin' out of town, blowing up
Six months later, all the dead bodies showing up
It make me wanna grab the nine and the shotty
But I gotta go identify the body
Damn, what happened to the summertime cookouts?
Every time I turn around, a nigga gettin' took out
Shit, my mama got cancer in her breast
Don't ask me why I'm motherfucking stressed, things done changed

[Chorus]

[Outro]

*Back in the day
Things done changed on this side
Remember they used to thump, but now they blast, right?
Back in the day
Things done changed on this side
Remember they used to thump, but now they blast, right?
Back in the day
Things done changed on this side
Remember they used to thump, but now they blast, right?
Back in the day
Things done changed on this side
Remember they used to thump, but now they blast, right?*

3. Gimme the Loot

[Intro: Notorious B.I.G.]

Yeah, motherfuckers better know
Huh, huh (*I'm a bad, bad, bad*)

Lock your windows, close your doors
Biggie Smalls
Huh, yeah
(*I'm a bad, bad, bad*)

[Verse 1]
My man Inf left a TEC and a nine at my crib
Turned him self in, he had to do a bid
A one-to-three, he be home the end of '93
I'm ready to get this paper, G, you with me?
Motherfuckin' right, my pockets lookin' kinda tight
And I'm stressed
Yo, Biggie let me get the vest
No need for that, just grab the fuckin' gat
The first pocket that's fat, the TEC is to his back
Word is bond, I'ma smoke him, yo, don't fake no moves (What?)
Treat it like boxin', stick and move, stick and move
Nigga, you ain't got to explain shit
I've been robbin' motherfuckers since the slave ships
With the same clip and the same four-five
Two point blank, a motherfucker sure to die
That's my word, nigga even try to bogard
Have his mother singin', "It's so hard"
Yes, love, love your fuckin' attitude
Because the nigga play pussy
That's the nigga that's gettin' screwed
And bruised up from the pistol whippin'
Welts on the neck from the necklace strippin'
Then I'm dippin' up the block and I'm robbin' bitches, too
Up the herringbones and bamboos
I wouldn't give a fuck if you're tnangerp
Give me the baby rings and the #1 Mom pendant
I'm slammin' niggas like Shaquille, shit is real
When it's time to eat a meal I rob and steal
'Cause mom duke ain't givin' me shit
So for the bread and butter, I leave niggas in the gutter
Huh, word to mother, I'm dangerous
Crazier than a bag of fuckin' angel dust
When I bust my gat, motherfuckers take dirt naps
I'm all that and a dime sack, where the paper at?

[Interlude]
When he's stickin' you and takin' all of your money

[Chorus]
Gimme the loot, gimme the loot (*I'm a bad, bad, bad*)
Gimme the loot, gimme the loot (*I'm a bad, bad, bad*)
Gimme the loot, gimme the loot (*I'm a bad, bad, bad*)
Gimme the loot, gimme the loot (*I'm a bad, bad, bad*)
(*What's mine is mine and what's yours is mine*)

Gimme the loot, gimme the loot (*I'm a bad, bad, bad*)
Gimme the loot, gimme the loot (*I'm a bad, bad, bad*)
Gimme the loot, gimme the loot (*I'm a bad, bad, bad*)
Gimme the loot, gimme the loot (*I'm a bad, bad, bad*)
(*What's mine is mine and what's yours is mine*)

[Verse 2]

Big up! Big up! It's a stick up! Stick up!
And I'm shootin' niggas quick if ya hiccup
Don't let me fill my clip up in ya back and headpiece
The opposite of peace, sendin' mom duke a wreath
You're talkin' to the robbery expert
Step into your wake with your blood on my shirt
Don't be a jerk and get smoked over bein' resistant
'Cause when I lick shots them shits is persistent
Goodness gracious, the papers
Where the cash at? Where the stash at?
Nigga, pass that
Before you get your grave dug from the main thug
Three fifty-seven slug
And my nigga Biggie got a itchy one grip
One in the chamber, thirty-two in the clip
Motherfuckers better strip, (Yeah, nigga, peel!)
Before you find out how blue steel feel
From the Beretta, puttin' all the holes in ya sweater
The money-getter, motherfuckers don't know better
Rolex watches and colorful Swatches
I'm diggin' in pockets, motherfuckers can't stop it
Man, niggas come through, I'm takin' high school rings too
Bitches get ***** for their earrings and bangles
And when I rock her and drop her, I'm taking her door knockers
And if she's resistant: blakka, blakka, blakka
So go get your man, bitch, he can get robbed, too
Tell him Biggie took it, what the fuck he gonna do?
Man I hope apologetic or I'm a have to set it
And if I set it, the cocksucker won't forget it

[Interlude]

Hey bitch, hey bitch, gimme your money bitch (*When he's stickin' you and takin' all your money*)

[Chorus]

[Verse 3]

Man listen, all this walkin' is hurtin' my feet
Ooh, money looks sweet
Where at? In the Isuzu Jeep
Man, I throw him in the fiend you grab the fucking cream
And if he start to scream, bom-bom, have a nice dream
Hold up, he got a fucking bitch in the car

Fur coats and diamonds, she think she a superstar
Ooh, Biggie let me jack her, I'll kick her in the back
Hit her with the gat
Yo, chill, shorty, let me do that
Just get the fucking car keys and cruise up the block
The bitch act shocked getting shot on the spot
Oh shit, the cops
Be cool, fool
They ain't gonna roll up, all they want is fucking doughnuts
So why the fuck he keep looking?
I guess to get his life taken
I just came home, ain't trying to see Central Booking
Oh shit, now he looking in my face
You better haul ass 'cause I ain't with no fucking chase
So lace up your boots, 'cause I'm about to shoot
A true motherfucker going out for the loot

4. Machine Gun Funk

[Intro]
Yeah

[Verse 1]
So you wanna be hardcore?
With your hat to the back
Talkin' about the gats in ya raps
But I can't feel that hardcore appeal that you're screamin'
Maybe I'm dreamin'
This ain't Christopher Williams
Still some MC's gotta feel one, caps I gotta peel some
To let niggas know that if you fuck with big-and-heavy
I get up in that ass like a wedgie
Says who? Says me, the lyrical
Niggas sayin', "Biggie off the street, it's a miracle!"
Left the drugs alone, took the thugs along with me
Just for niggas actin' shifty
Sticks and stones break bones, but the gat'll kill ya quicker
Especially when I'm drunk off the liquor
Smokin' funk by the boxes, packin' Glocks-es
It's natural to eat you niggas like chocolates
The funk, baby

[Chorus]
"I live for the funk, I'll die for the funk"
"I live for the funk, I'll die for the funk"
"I live for the funk, I'll die for the funk"
"I live for the funk, I'll die for the funk"
"I live for the funk, I'll die for the funk"
"I live for the funk, I'll die for the funk"

"I live for the funk, I'll die for the funk"
"I live for the funk, I'll die for the funk"

[Verse 2]

All I want is bitches, big-booty bitches
Used to sell crack so I could stack my riches
Now I pack gats to stop all the snitches
From stayin' in my business, what is this?
Relentless approach to know if I'm broke or not
Just 'cause I joke and smoke a lot
Don't mean I don't tote the Glock
Sixteen shots for my niggas in the pen
Until we motherfuckin' meet again, huh
I'm doin' rhymes now, fuck the crimes now
Come on the Ave, I'm real hard to find now
'Cause I'm knee-deep in the beats
In the Land Cruiser Jeep with the MAC-10 by the seats
For the jackers, the jealous-ass crackers in the (blue suits)
I'll make you prove that it's bulletproof
Hold your head 'cause when you hit the bricks
I got gin, mad blunts, and bitches suckin' dick
The funk, baby

[Chorus]

[Verse 3]

So I guess you know the story, the rap-side, crack-side
How I smoke funk, smack bitches on the backside
Bed-Stuy, the place where my head rests
Fifty-shot clip if a nigga want test
The rocket launcher, Biggie stomped ya
High as a motherfuckin' helicopter
That's why I pack a Nina, fuck a misdemeanor
Beatin' motherfuckers like Ike beat Tina
"What's love got to do..."
When I'm rippin' all through your whole crew?
Strapped like Bamboo but I don't sling guns
I got bags of funk and it's sellin' by the tons
Niggas wanna know how I live the mack life
Makin' money, smokin' mics like crack pipes
It's type, simple and plain, to maintain
I add a little funk to the brain
The funk, baby

[Chorus]

5. Warning

[Verse 1: The Notorious B.I.G. & Pop]

Who the fuck is this, pagin' me at 5:46 in the morning?
Crack of dawn and now I'm yawnin'
Wipe the cold out my eye
See who's this pagin' me and why
It's my nigga, Pop from the barbershop
Told me he was in the gambling spot and heard the intricate plot
Of niggas wanna stick me like flypaper, neighbor
Slow down, love, please chill, drop the caper
Remember them niggas from the hill up in Brownsville
That you rolled dice with, smoked blunts and got nice with?
Yeah, my nigga Fame up in Prospect
Nah, them my niggas, nah, love, wouldn't disrespect
I didn't say them
They schooled me to some niggas that you knew from back when
When you was clockin' minor figures
Now they heard you're blowin' up like nitro
And they wanna stick the knife through your windpipe slow
So, thank Fame for warnin' me, 'cause now I'm warnin' you
I got the MAC, nigga, tell me what you gonna do

[Chorus]

Damn, niggas wanna stick me for my paper
Damn, niggas wanna stick me for my paper
Damn, niggas wanna stick me for my paper
Damn, niggas wanna stick me for my paper

[Verse 2: The Notorious B.I.G. & Pop]

They heard about the Rolexes and the Lexus
With the Texas license plates out of state
They heard about the pounds you got down in Georgetown
And they heard you got half of Virginia locked down
They even heard about the crib
You bought your moms out in Florida, the Fifth Corridor
Call the coroner!
There's gonna be a lot of slow singin' and flower-bringin'
If my burglar alarm starts ringin'
What ya think all the guns is for?
All-purpose war, got the Rottweilers by the door
And I feed 'em gunpowder so they can devour
The criminals tryin' to drop my decimals
Damn, niggas wanna stick me for my cream
And it ain't a dream, things ain't always what it seem
It's the ones that smoke blunts with ya, see your picture
Now they wanna grab they guns and come and get ya
Bet ya Biggie won't slip
I got the Calico with the black talons loaded in the clip
So I can rip through the ligaments
Put the fuckers in a bad predicament
Where all the foul niggas went

Touch my cheddar, feel my Beretta
Buck what I'ma hit you with, you motherfuckers better duck
I bring pain, bloodstains on what remains
Of his jacket, he had a gun, he shoulda packed it
Cocked it, extra clips in my pocket
So I can reload and explode on your asshole
I fuck around and get hardcore
C-4 to your door, no beef no more, nigga
Feel the rough, scandalous
The more weed smoke I puff, the more dangerous
I don't give a fuck about you or your weak crew
What you gonna do when Big Poppa come for you?
I'm not runnin', nigga, I bust my gun and
Hold on, I hear somebody comin'

[Skit]
C'mon, motherfucker
Man, I'm comin' as fast as I can
Just g— bring your motherfuckin' ass on, come on
Are we gettin' close, huh?
It's right over here
You sure it's Biggie Smalls crib, man?
Yeah, I'm sure, motherfucker, come on
Man, fuck, this better be his motherfuckin' house
Fuck, right here
Tsk, this better be this motherfucker's house
Oh shit
What? What's wrong?
What's that red dot on your head, man?
What red dot?
Oh shit! You got a red dot on your head, too
Oh shit!

6. Ready to Die

[Intro: Puff Daddy]
Yeah, yeah, you ready motherfucker?
We gonna kill your ass, kill your ass
I'm ready

[Verse 1: The Notorious B.I.G.]
As I grab the Glock, put it to your headpiece
One in the chamber, the safety is off release
Straight at your dome, holmes, I wanna see cabbage
Biggie Smalls the savage, doing your brain cells much damage
Teflon is the material for the imperial
Mic ripper, girl stripper, the Henny sipper
I drop lyrics off and on like a light switch
Quick to grab the right bitch and make her drive the Q

-45, Glocks and TECs are expected when I wreck shit
Respect is collected, so check it
I got techniques dripping out my butt cheeks
Sleep on my stomach so I don't fuck up my sheets, huh
My shit is deep, deeper than my grave, G
I'm ready to die and nobody can save me
Fuck the world, fuck my moms and my girl
My life is played out like a Jheri curl, I'm ready to die!

[Chorus]

Yes, I'm ready
Yes, I'm ready
Yes, I'm ready
So die motherfuckers, die motherfuckers, die

[Verse 2: The Notorious B.I.G.]

As I sit back and look when I used to be a crook
Doing whatever it took from snatching chains to pocketbooks
A big bad motherfucker on the wrong road
I got some drugs, tried to get the avenue sold
I want it all from the Rolexes to the Lexus
Getting paid is all I expected
My mother didn't give me what I want, what the fuck?

Now I've got a Glock making motherfuckers duck
Shit is real and hungry's how I feel
I rob and steal because that money got that whip appeal
Kickin' niggas down the steps just for rep
Any repercussion lead to niggas getting wet
The infrared's at your head real steady
You better grab your guns 'cause I'm ready

[Chorus: The Notorious B.I.G. & Puff Daddy]

Yes, I'm ready
Yes, I'm ready
I'm ready to die
Yes, I'm ready
So die motherfuckers, die motherfuckers, die
Nah we ain't gonna kill your ass yet, we gonna make you suffer

[Verse 3: The Notorious B.I.G.]

In a sec, I throw the TEC to your fucking neck
Everybody hit the deck, Biggie 'bout to get some rec
Quick to leave you in a coffin for slick talkin'
You better act like CeCe and keep on walkin'
When I hit ya, I split ya to the white meat
You swung a left, you swung a right, you fell to the concrete
Your face, my feet, they meet with stompin'
I'm rippin' MCs from Tallahassee to Compton
Biggie Smalls on a higher plane
Niggas say I'm strange, deranged because I put the 12 gauge to your brain

Make your shit splatter
Mix the blood like batter then my pocket gets fatter
After the hit, leave you on the street with your neck slit
Down your backbone to where your motherfucking'shit drip
The shit I kick, ripping through the vest
Biggie Smalls passing any test, I'm ready to die!

[Chorus: The Notorious B.I.G. & *Puff Daddy*]

Yes, I'm ready
Yes, I'm ready
I'm ready
Yes, I'm ready
Time to go, we gon put you out your misery motherfucker
Niggas definitely know what time it is (Yes, I'm ready)
The Notorious one in full effect for '93 (Yes, I'm ready)
Uhh, uhh Yes, I'm ready
Suicidal, I'm ready!
So die motherfuckers, die motherfuckers, die
Yes, I'm ready
So die motherfuckers, die motherfuckers, die

[Outro: Puff Daddy]

Now I lay me down to sleep (Yeah)
Pray the Lord my soul to keep
If I should die before I wake
I pray the Lord my soul to take
'Cause I'm ready to die
(I'm ready, I'm ready)
All y'all motherfuckers come with me if you want to
(I'm ready, I'm ready, I'm ready)
Biggie Smalls the biggest man
(I'm Ready)
Rocking on and on in '93, Easy Mo Bee
Third Eye and the rest of the Bad Boy fam
I don't wanna see no crying at my funeral

7. One More Chance

[Intro]

All you hoes calling here for my daddy, get off his dick
Like that, mommy?
Beep
Hi, daddy, how you doing? This is Tyiest
I was thinking about you last night, mm
You actin' like you can't call me no more 'cause you busy and all of that
But you trying to tell me it wasn't good?
Beep
That shit is real fucked up what you did

*I hooked you up with my girl and shit
You fucked her every time you see her
You don't even say shit to her, you know what I'm saying?
And all that bitch do is call me all day talking about you
"Why the fuck B.I.G. don't want me?"*

Beep

*Yo, B.I.G., this is Quita
Kenya told me she saw you and Shanie at the mall and I know you ain't fucking her
You fucked with me last night
That's my best friend and we don't get down like that*

Beep

*Yeah, motherfucker, this is Stephanie
I was waiting outside for your ass for like a fucking hour
I don't know what's going on, motherfuckers trying to rob me
You be disappearing and shit, I'm waiting in the cold
What the fuck is going on?
When you get in give me a fucking call, alright?*

[Verse 1: The Notorious B.I.G.]

When it comes to sex, I'm similar to the Thrilla in Manila
Honeys call me "Bigga the Condom Filler"
Whether it's stiff tongue or stiff dick
Biggie squeeze it to make shit fit, now check this shit
I got the pack of Rough Riders in the back of the Pathfinder
You know the epilogue by James Todd Smith
I get swift with the lyrical gift
Hit you with a dick, make your kidney shift
Here we go, here we go, but I'm not Domino
I got the funk flow to make your drawers drop slow
So recognize the dick size in these Karl Kani jeans
I wear thirteens, know what I mean?
I'll fuck around and hit you with the Hennessy dick
Mess around and go blind, don't get to see shit (See shit)
The next batter, here to shatter your bladder
It doesn't matter, skinny or fat or light-skinned or black
Baby, I drop these Boricua mamis screaming ¡Ay papi!
I love it when they call me Big Poppa
I only smoke blunts if they rolled proper
Look, I gotcha caught up with the drunk flow
Fuck tae kwon do, I tote a four-four
For niggas getting mad 'cause they bitch chose me
A big black motherfucker with G, you see
All I do is separate the game from the truth
Big bang boots from the Bronx to Bolivia
Getting physical like Olivia Newt
Tricks suck my clique dick all day with no trivia
So give me a ho, a bankroll and a bag of weed
I'm guaranteed to fuck her 'til her nose bleed

Even if your new man's a certified mack
You'll get that H-Town in ya, you want that old thing back

[Chorus: Total & *The Notorious B.I.G.*]

Oh, Biggie, give me one more chance
I got that good dick, girl, you didn't know?
Oh, Biggie, give me one more chance
I got that good dick, girl, you didn't know?
Oh, Biggie, give me one more chance
I got that good dick, girl, you didn't know?
Oh, Biggie, give me one more chance

[Verse 2: The Notorious B.I.G.]

Is my mind playing tricks, like Scarface and Bushwick
Willie D, having nightmares of girls killing me?
She mad because what we had didn't last
I'm glad because her cousin let me hit the ass
Fuck the past, let's dwell on the 500SL, the E&J and ginger ale
The way my pockets swell to the rims with Benjamins
Another honey's in the crib? Please, send her in
I fuck non-stop, lick my lips a lot
Used to lick the clits a lot, but licking clits had to stop
'Cause y'all don't know how to act when the tongue go down below
Peep the funk flow
Really, though, I got the cleanest, meanest penis
You never seen this stroke of genius
So take off your Timb boots and your body suit
I mean the spandex and hit my man next
Sex get rougher when it come to the nut buster
Pussy crusher, black nasty motherfucker
I don't chase 'em, I replace 'em
And if I'm caressing 'em I'm undressing 'em
Fuck what you heard, who's the best in New York?
Fulfilling fantasies without that nigga Mr. Roarke
Or Tattoo, I got you wrapped around my dick
And when I nut I got to split
Shit, backshots is my position
I got you wishing for an intermission, fuck the kissin'
Lickin' you down to your belly button, I ain't frontin'
They don't call me big for nuttin' all of a sudden

[Chorus: Total]

Oh, Biggie, give me one more chance
Oh, Biggie, give me one more chance
Oh, Biggie, give me one more chance
Oh, Biggie, give me one more chance

8. Fuck Me (Interlude)

[Lil Kim]
Uuh, yeah, uh, oooh, oh yeah, mmm, yeah
Oh fuck me you black mothafucka, ooohh yeah!!! MMMMMM, Aaahhh
Oh fuck me you black Kentucky Fried Chicken eatin'
Ohhh, ooohhh, yeah
You mothafuckin' gangsta killin', mutha fuckin black mafia ass
Muthafuckin, you, ohhhhh my god
You chronic smokin', Oreo cookie eatin', pickle juice drinkin'
Chicken gristle eatin', biscuit suckin', MUTHAfucka
V8 juice drinkin', slim fast, blendin' black greasy muthafucka
OOHHHHHH

[Biggie]
What's my name?

[Lil Kim]
Biggie!

[Biggie]
What's my name?

[Lil Kim]
Biggie!
Oh yeah

(Sound of Biggie and Lil Kim falling off the bed)

[Biggie] I'm sorry
[Lil Kim] Ahhhh....
[Biggie] Oh shit. Damn
[Lil Kim] (laughing) Jenny Craig eatin' muthafucka
[Biggie] (laughing) Fuck you bitch...

9. The What

[Verse 1: The Notorious B.I.G.]
I used to get feels on a bitch
Now I throw shields on the dick to stop me from that HIV shit
And niggas know they soft like a Twinkie filling
Playing the villain, prepare for this rap killing
Biggie Smalls is the illest, your style is played out
Like Arnold on that, "What you talking 'bout, Willis?"
The thrill is gone, the Black Frank White
Is here to excite and throw dick to dykes
Bitches I like 'em brainless, guns I like 'em stainless steel
I want the fucking Fortune like the Wheel
I squeeze gats 'til my clips is empty
Don't tempt me, you don't want to fuck with the M-E...

[Verse 2: Method Man & *The Notorious B.I.G.*]

...T-H-O-D Man, here I am
I'll be damned if this ain't some shit
Come to spread the butter lyrics over hominy grit
It's the low killer death trap, yes I'm a jet-black ninja
Coming where you rest at, surrender
Step inside the ring, you's the number one contender
Looking cold-booty like your pussy in December
Nigga, stop bitching, button up your lip and
From Method all you getting is a can of ass-whipping
Hey, I'll be kicking you son, you doing all the yapping
Acting as if it can't happen
Your frontin' got me mad enough to touch something
Yo, I'm from Shaolin Island and ain't afraid to bust something
So what you want nigga? You won't nigga
I got a 6-shooter and a horse named Trigger
It's real, '94 rugged-raw
Kickin' down your goddamn door
And it goes a little something like this

[Chorus: Method Man & *The Notorious B.I.G.*]

Fuck the world, don't ask me for shit
Everything you get you gotta work hard for it
(*Honeys shake your hips*) You don't stop
(*And niggas pack the clips*) Keep on, bitch

[Verse 3: Method Man & *The Notorious B.I.G.*]

Verse two, coming with that Olde E brew
Meth-tical, putting niggas back in ICU
I'm lifted, troop, you can bring your wack-ass crew
I got connections, I'll get that ass stuck like glue
Huh, no question, I be coming down and shit
Yo I gets rugged as a motherfucking carpet get
And niggas love it, not in the physical form but in the mental
I spark and they cells get warm
I'm not a gentleman, I'm a Method Man
Baby accept it, utmost respect it, and
(*Assume the position*) Stop look and listen
I spit on your grave then I grab my Charles Dickens, bitch

[Verse 4: *The Notorious B.I.G.* & *Method Man*]

Welcome to my center, honeys feel it deep in they placenta
Cold as the pole in the winter
Far from the inventor, but I got this rap shit sewed
And when my MAC unloads
I'm guaranteed another video
Ready to die, why I act that way?
Pop duke left mom duke, the faggot took the back way
So instead of making hoes suck my dick up
I used to do stick-ups, 'cause hoes is irritating like the hiccups

Excuse me, flows just grow through me
Like trees to branches, cliffs to avalanches
It's the praying mantis, deep like the mind of Farrakhan
A motherfucking rap phenomenon, plus
(*I got more Glocks and TECs than you*)
I make it hot, (*niggas won't even stand next to you*)
Nigga touch me you better bust me three times in the head
Or motherfucker's dead, you thought so

[Chorus: Method Man & *The Notorious B.I.G.*]

[Outro: Notorious B.I.G. & *Method Man*]

Junior M.A.F.I.A. clique in full effect (*Yeah, what the fuck you want, nigga?*)

Ah, yeah, hell yeah (*Biggie Smalls and Meth-tical*)

Bedford-Stuyvesant the livest one (*9-4 coming at you raw*)

My borough is thorough (*Shaolin Island, yeah*)

Recognize (*Yeah*)

10. Juicy

[Intro: The Notorious B.I.G.]

("Fuck all you hoes!" Get a grip, motherfucker!)

Yeah, this album is dedicated

To all the teachers that told me I'd never amount to nothin'

To all the people that lived above the buildings that I was hustlin' in front of

Called the police on me when I was just tryin' to make some money to feed my daughter (it's all good)

And all the niggas in the struggle

You know what I'm sayin'? It's all good, baby baby

[Verse 1: The Notorious B.I.G.]

It was all a dream, I used to read *Word Up!* magazine

Salt-n-Pepa and Heavy D up in the limousine

Hangin' pictures on my wall

Every Saturday *Rap Attack*, Mr. Magic, Marley Marl

I let my tape rock 'til my tape popped

Smokin' weed in Bambú, sippin' on Private Stock

Way back, when I had the red and black lumberjack

With the hat to match

Remember Rappin' Duke? Duh-ha, duh-ha

You never thought that hip-hop would take it this far

Now I'm in the limelight 'cause I rhyme tight

Time to get paid, blow up like the World Trade

Born sinner, the opposite of a winner

Remember when I used to eat sardines for dinner

Peace to Ron G, Brucie B, Kid Capri

Funkmaster Flex, Lovebug Starski

I'm blowin' up like you thought I would

Call the crib, same number, same hood, it's all good

And if you don't know, now you know, nigga

[Chorus: Total & Puff Daddy]

You know very well (*Yeah*)
Who you are (*Money, hoes and clothes*)
Don't let 'em hold you down (*Bankrolls, yeah, haha*)
Reach for the stars (*It's all good*)
You had a goal (*C'mon*)
But not that many (*It's all good*)
'Cause you're the only one
I'll give you good and plenty (*Check it*)

[Verse 2: The Notorious B.I.G.]

I made the change from a common thief
To up close and personal with Robin Leach
And I'm far from cheap, I smoke skunk with my peeps all day
Spread love, it's the Brooklyn way
The Moët and Alizé keep me pissy, girls used to diss me
Now they write letters 'cause they miss me
I never thought it could happen, this rapping stuff
I was too used to packing gats and stuff
Now honeys play me close like butter play toast
From the Mississippi down to the East Coast
Condos in Queens, indo for weeks
Sold out seats to hear Biggie Smalls speak
Living life without fear
Puttin' five karats in my baby girl ear
Lunches, brunches, interviews by the pool
Considered a fool 'cause I dropped out of high school
Stereotypes of a black male misunderstood
And it's still all good
And if you don't know, now you know, nigga

[Chorus: Total & Puff Daddy]

You know very well (*C'mon*)
Who you are (*Bankrolls*)
Don't let 'em hold you down (*Clothes*)
Reach for the stars (*Mansions*)
You had a goal
But not that many (*It's all good*)
'Cause you're the only one
I'll give you good and plenty (*'94*)

[Verse 3: The Notorious B.I.G.]

Super Nintendo, Sega Genesis
When I was dead broke, man, I couldn't picture this
50-inch screen, money-green leather sofa
Got two rides, a limousine with a chauffeur
Phone bill about two G's flat
No need to worry, my accountant handles that

And my whole crew is loungin'
Celebrating every day, no more public housin'
Thinkin' back on my one-room shack
Now my mom pimps an Ac' with minks on her back
And she loves to show me off of course
Smiles every time my face is up in *The Source*
We used to fuss when the landlord dissed us
No heat, wonder why Christmas missed us
Birthdays was the worst days
Now we sip Champagne when we thirsty
Uh, damn right I like the life I live
'Cause I went from negative to positive and it's all (It's all good, nigga)
And if you don't know, now you know, nigga

[Chorus: Total, *The Notorious B.I.G.* & Puff Daddy]
You know very well (Money)
Who you are (Hoes and clothes)
Don't let 'em hold you down (Bankrolls)
And if you don't know, now you know, nigga
Reach for the stars (That's right)
You had a goal (It's all good)
But not that many (All good)
'Cause you're the only one (East coast, represent)
I'll give you good and plenty (C'mon)
And if you don't know, now you know, nigga

[Post-Chorus: The Notorious B.I.G. & Puff Daddy]
Representin' B-Town in the house (Biggie Smalls)
Junior Mafia, mad flavor (Bad Boy)
Uh, uh, yeah, aight (I see you, Cooch)

[Chorus: Total]
You know very well
Who you are
Don't let 'em hold you down
Reach for the stars
You had a goal
But not that many
'Cause you're the only one
I'll give you good and plenty

[Outro: Puff Daddy & Total]
Biggie Smalls, it's all good, nigga
Junior Mafia, it's all good, nigga
Bad Boy, it's all good, nigga
It's all good
That's right, '94
And on and on, and on and on
You know very well

It's all good
Who you are
Yeah
Don't let 'em hold you down
Reach for the stars

11. Everyday Struggle

[Chorus]

I don't wanna live no more
Sometimes I hear death knockin' at my front door
I'm livin' every day like a hustle, another drug to juggle
Another day, another struggle (Right)
I don't wanna live no more
Sometimes I hear death knockin' at my front door
I'm livin' every day like a hustle, another drug to juggle
Another day, another struggle (Right)

[Verse 1]

I know how it feel to wake up fucked up
Pockets broke as hell, another rock to sell
People look at you like you's the user
Sellin' drugs to all the losers, mad buddha abuser
But they don't know about your stress-filled day
Baby on the way, mad bills to pay
That's why you drink Tanqueray, so you can reminisce
And wish you wasn't livin' so devilish, shit
I remember I was just like you
Smokin' blunts with my crew, flippin' over 62's
'Cause G-E-D wasn't B-I-G
I got P-A-I-D, that's why my moms hate me
She was forced to kick me out, no doubt
Then I figured out nicks went for 20s down South
Packed up my tools for my raw power move
Glock 19 for casket and flower moves
For chumps tryin' to stop my flow
And what they don't know will show on the autopsy
Went to see Papi to cop me a brick
Asked for some consignment, he wasn't tryin' to hear it
Smokin' mad Newports 'cause I'm due in court
For an assault that I caught in Bridgeport, New York
Catch me if you can like the Gingerbread Man
You better have your gat in hand, 'cause man

[Chorus]

[Verse 2]

I had the master plan, I'm in the caravan on my way to Maryland
With my man Two-TECs to take over this projects

They call him Two-TECs, he tote two TECs
And when he start to bust, he like to ask, "Who's next?"
I got my honey on the Amtrak with the crack
In the crack of her ass, two pounds of hash in the stash
I wait for hon to make some quick cash
I told her she could be lieutenant, bitch got gassed
At last, I'm literally loungin', black
Sittin' back, countin' double digit thousand stacks
Had to re-up, see what's up with my peeps
Toyota deal-athon had it cheap on the Jeeps
See who got smoked, what rumors was spread
Last I heard I was dead, with six to the head
Then I got the phone call, it couldn't hit me harder
We got infiltrated, like Nino at the Carter
Heard TEC got murdered in a town I never heard of
By some bitch named Alberta over nickel-plated burners
And my bitch swear to God she won't snitch
I told her when she hit the bricks I'll make the hooker rich
Conspiracy, she'll be home in three
Until then I looks out for the whole family
A true G, that's me, blowin' like a bubble
In the everyday struggle

[Chorus]

[Verse 3]

I'm seein' body after body and our mayor Giuliani
Ain't tryin' to see no black man turn to John Gotti
My daughter use a potty so she's older now
Educated street knowledge, I'ma mold her now
Trick a little dough buyin' young girls fringes
Dealin' with the dope fiend binges, seein' syringes
In the veins, hard to explain how I maintain
The crack smoke make my brain feel so strange
Breakin' days on the set, no sweat
Drunk off Moët, can't bag yet because it's still wet
But when that dry, baggin' five at a time
I can clock about nine on the check cashin' line
I had the first and the third, rehearse, that's my word
Thick in the game, D's knew my first name
Should I quit? Shit no, even though they had me scared
Yo, they got a eight, I got a TEC with air holes

[Interlude: The Notorious B.I.G. & Puff Daddy]

And that's just how the shit go in the struggle, motherfucker
Hah, come on, what you say?

[Chorus]

[Outro: The Notorious B.I.G. & Puff Daddy]

Junior M.A.F.I.A. right
Yeah, rock on, woo!
Biggie Smalls, right
Junior M.A.F.I.A

12. Me & My Bitch

[Intro: Notorious B.I.G., *Puff Daddy & Girl*]
Yo let— let— let me ask you a question, yo
Yo, would you kill for me?
Hmm, yeah
Uh, the act of making love— (Haa)
What took you so long to answer motherfucker?
I don't know
The fuck wrong with you, bitch?

[Verse 1: The Notorious B.I.G.]
When I met you, I admit, my first thoughts was to trick
You look so good, huh, I suck on your daddy's dick
I never felt that way in my life
It didn't take long before I made you my wife
Got no rings and shit, just my main squeeze
Comin' to the crib, even had a set a keys
During the days you helped me bag up my nickels
In the process, I admit, I tricked a little
But you was my bitch, the one who'd never snitch
Love me when I'm broke or when I'm filthy fuckin' rich
And I admit, when the time is right, the wine is right
I treat you right, you talk slick, I beat you right

[Chorus: The Notorious B.I.G., *Puff Daddy & Girl*]
Just me and my bitch, me and my bitch
(But you know you love that ass, don't you?)
Just me and my bitch, yeah, just me and my bitch
(*Yeah, no question, no question*)
Just me and my bitch, yeah, just me and my bitch, yeah
(*Yo, let me ask you another question*)
Just me and my bitch, just me and my bitch, yeah
(What?)
Just me and my bitch, yeah, just me and my bitch, yeah
(*You been fuckin' 'round on me?*)
Just me and my bitch, just me and my bitch
(Why would I do that?)
Just me and my bitch, me and my bitch, yeah
(*Yo, don't lie to me, motherfucker*)
Just me and my bitch

[Verse 2: The Notorious B.I.G.]
Moonlight strolls with the hoes, oh, no, that's not my steelo

I wanna bitch that like to play ceelo and craps
Packin' gats in a Coach bag, steamin' dime bags
A real bitch is all I want, all I ever had
With a bop just as strong as me
Totin' guns just as long as me, the bitch belongs with me
Any plans with another bitch, my bitch'll spoil it
One day, she used my toothbrush to clean the toilet
Throwin' my clothes out the windows, so when the wind blows
I see my Polos and Timbos
Hide my car keys so I can't leave
A real slick bitch, keep a trick up her sleeve
And if I deceive, she won't take it lightly
She'll invite me, politely, to fight, G
And then we lie together, cry together
I swear to God I hope we fuckin' die together

[Chorus: The Notorious B.I.G., *Puff Daddy & Girl*]

[Verse 3: The Notorious B.I.G.]

She helped me plan out my robberies on my enemies

Didn't hesitate to squeeze to get my life out of danger

One day, she put 911 on the pager

Had to call back, whether it's minor or major

No response, the phone just rung

Grab my vest, grab my gun, to find out the problem

When I pulled up, police was on the scene

Had to make the U-turn, make sure my shit was clean

Drove down the block, stashed the burner in the bushes

Stepped to police with the shoves and the pushes

It didn't take long before the tears start

I saw my bitch dead with the gunshot to the heart

And I know it was meant for me

I guess the niggas felt they had to kill the closest one to me

And when I find 'em your life is to an end

They killed my best friend, me and my bitch

[Chorus: The Notorious B.I.G.]

[Skit: The Notorious B.I.G. & *Girl*]

Let's get started then

So when did you first start rappin'?

Um, I was like about 18 years old. Yeah, about 18

So how did you first get started? Who influenced you?

Ain't nobody really influenced me, you know what I'm saying?

I was just tired of being on the streets, you know what I'm saying? Had to get up off that, you know

I see. So where you from?

Brooklyn

13. Big Poppa

[Intro: The Notorious B.I.G. & *Puff Daddy*]

Uh, uh, check it out (*Yeah*), uh

Junior M.A.F.I.A., uh (*He-he*)

Uh (*I like this*) yeah, yeah

Nine-fo' (*Keep bangin'*)

[Verse 1: The Notorious B.I.G.]

To all the ladies in the place with style and grace

Allow me to lace these lyrical douches in your bushes

Who rock grooves and make moves with all the mamsis?

The back of the club, sippin' Moët is where you'll find me

The back of the club, mackin' hoes, my crew's behind me

Mad question askin', blunt passin'

Music blastin', but I just can't quit

Because one of these honeys Biggie got to creep with

Sleep with, keep the ep a secret, why not?

Why blow up my spot 'cause we both got hot?

Now check it: I got more mack than Craig, and in the bed

Believe me, sweetie, I got enough to feed the needy

No need to be greedy, I got mad friends with Benzes

C-notes by the layers, true fuckin' players

Jump in the Rover and come over

Tell your friends jump in the GS3, I got the chronic by the tree

[Chorus: The Notorious B.I.G.]

I love it when you call me Big Poppa

Throw your hands in the air if you's a true player

I love it when you call me Big Poppa

To the honies getting money

Playing niggas like dummies

I love it when you call me Big Poppa

If you got a gun up in your waist

Please don't shoot up the place!

'Cause I see some ladies tonight

That should be having my baby, baby

[Verse 2: The Notorious B.I.G.]

Straight up, honey, really I'm askin'

Most of these niggas think they be mackin', but they be actin'

Who they attractin' with that line

"What's your name? What's your sign?"

Soon as he buy that wine, I just creep up from behind

And ask you what your interests are, who you be with

Things that make you smile, what numbers to dial

You gon' be here for a while?

I'm gon' go call my crew, you go call your crew

We can rendezvous at the bar around 2

Plans to leave, throw the keys to Lil Cease
Pull the truck up front, and roll up the next blunt
So we can steam on the way to the telly, go fill my belly
A T-bone steak, cheese eggs and Welch's grape
Conversate for a few, 'cause in a few we gon' do
What we came to do, ain't that right, boo? (true)
Forget the telly, we just go to the crib
And watch a movie in the jacuzzi, smoke L's while you do me

[Chorus: The Notorious B.I.G.]

[Verse 3: The Notorious B.I.G.]

(How you living, Biggie Smalls?) In mansions and Benzes

Givin' M's to my friends, and it feels stupendous
Tremendous cream: fuck a dollar and a dream
Still tote gats strapped with infrared beams
Choppin' Os, smokin' la in Optimos
Money, hoes and clothes: all a nigga knows
A foolish pleasure? Whatever
I had to find the buried treasure, so grams I had to measure
However, living better now, Gucci sweater now
Drop top BM's, I'm the man, girlfriend

[Interlude: Puff Daddy]

Yeah, honey, check it—
Tell your friends to get with my friends
And we can be friends
Shit, we can do this every weekend, aight?
Is that aight with you?
Yeah... keep bangin'

[Chorus: The Notorious B.I.G.]

[Outro: Notorious B.I.G.]

Uh, check it out
Nine-fo' shit for that ass, uh
Puff Daddy, Biggie Smalls, Junior M.A.F.I.A
Represent—baby, baby, uh

14. Respect

[Intro: Diana King & *The Notorious B.I.G.*]

No big up our gun men, seen? (*Big up, big up*)
Cuh dis ah '94 when ah RAA fi kill people and kyaan dun
Nuh waan pussy hole hold di kaanah
Watch this, lawd

[Chorus: Diana King]

Me holla respect, to all the gun men dem

Gun men alone, keep gun men friend
Fire bun, fi all the informer dem
Informer lone keep informer friend

[Verse 1: The Notorious B.I.G.]

1970 something, nigga I don't sweat the date
My moms is late so I had to plan my escape
Out the skins, in this world of fly girls
Tanqueray and Hennessy until I call hurl
Ten months in this gut, what the fuck?
I wish moms would hurry up so I could get buck
Wild juvenile ripping mics and shit
New York, New York, ready for the likes of this
Then came the worst date, May 21st
2:19, that's when my mama water burst
No spouse in the house so she rode for self
To the hospital, to see if she could get a little help
Umbilical cord's wrapped around my neck
I'm seeing my death and I ain't even took my first step
I made it out, I'm bringing mad joy
The doctor looked and said, "He's going to be a bad boy"

[Chorus: Diana King]

[Verse 2: The Notorious B.I.G.]

Now I'm thirteen, smoking blunts, making cream
On the drug scene, fuck a football team
Risking ruptured spleens by the age of sixteen
Hearing the coach scream ain't my lifetime dream
I mean, I want to blow up, stack my dough up
So school I didn't show up, it fucked my flow up
Mom said that I should grow up and check myself
Before I wreck myself, disrespect myself
Put the drugs on the shelf? Nah, couldn't see it
Scarface, King of New York, I want to be it
Rap was secondary, money was necessary
Until I got incarcerated, kinda scary
C74-Mark 8 set me straight
Not able to move behind the great steel gate
Time to contemplate, damn, where did I fail?
All the money I stacked was all the money for bail

[Chorus: Diana King]

[Verse 3: The Notorious B.I.G.]

Ninety-four, now I explore new horizons
Mama smile when she see me, that's surprising
Honeys is tantalizing, they freak all night
Keep ducking cops on the creep all night
As I open my eyes and realizing I changed

Not the same deranged child stuck up in the game
And to my niggas living street life
Learn to treat life to the best, put stress to rest
Still tote your vest man, niggas be tripping
In the streets without a gat? Nah, nigga you're slipping
If I'm dipping on The F with weed on my breath
Original hustler with the muffler on the TEC
Respect to the macks in the Ac's
To the freaks in the Jeeps, lick shots to my peeps

[Chorus: Diana King]

[Post-Chorus: Diana King]
Now this is Diana King doing a Yankee thing
In a Biggie Small's thing, do it, Ja
Have mercy!
The gunman in all de party
And everybody feel irie
And everybody just follow me, follow me, follow me
Have mercy
The wul ah we in ah de party
And everybody look irie
Now di man them sexy, sexy, sexy
Do it

[Outro: Diana King]
No mercy fuh nuh big up unnu self
Cuh we nuh watch [?][4:15] seen?
Hardcore thing we ah deal with
Oh yes, we are the best
No other guy can test

[Skit: The Notorious B.I.G. & Faith Evans]
Shit, mami, damn, why you actin like that, man?
'Cause I don't be doin' this
I'm sayin', you know it ain't nothin'
It's just part of sex, ya know'm saying
But you know I don't do this
I don't even know how to do this
I'm just sayin', jus— just a little peck mami, for daddy
Just a little peck
Like that?
That's what I'm sayin', yeah
You know I don't be doin' this though though
You know that
Whatever bitch, God damn it

15. Friend of Mine

[Intro: The Notorious B.I.G.]

No, fuck the bitches, fuck all the stank-ass hoes
All my niggas know
Junior M.A.F.I.A. clique, Gucci Don, you know how we play
Fuckin' scandalous-ass bitches
You know how it go, Gooch
I meet a bitch, fuck a bitch
Next thing you know, you fuckin' a bitch
You just pass around shit, pass the shit like a cold and shit
Fuck 'em

[Verse 1: The Notorious B.I.G. & Lil' Kim]

Now when I'm fucking off gin I'm invincible
Don't love no ho, that's my principle
'Cause, uh, bitches come (And uh) bitches go (Uh)
That's why I get my nut and I be out the fucking door (You know)
They might be the one to set me up
Want to get they little brother to wet me up
That's why I tote TECs and stuff, to get them off my case
Just in case the little fucker ends up misplaced
I don't give a bitch enough to catch the bus
And when I see the semen I'm leaving
Bitches be scheming, I kid you not
That's why I keep my windows locked and my Glock cocked
One ho said, *Big, why you so hard on us?*
Why you swear all bitches are so scandalous?
Thug nigga 'til the end, tell a friend, bitch
'Cause when I like you, then you go and fuck my friend, bitch
And you know that ain't right

[Chorus]

You know that ain't right with a friend of mine
You know that ain't right with a friend of mine
You know that ain't right with a friend of mine
You know that ain't right with a friend of mine

[Verse 2: The Notorious B.I.G. & Lil' Kim]

You see, I don't sweat these hoes
I keep them in flavors like Timbos and Girbauds
Bitches just like to play the merry-go
Yeah we know, drop the scenario
It was me, Dee, the MPV
The blunts and brew thang, knocking some Wu-tang
M-E-T-H-Oh shit, look at them lips and them hips on that bitch
Dee hit the dip, so I can drop my mackadocious shit
Light the blunt clip and recognize a pimp
Needless to speak, the G's obsolete
Don't sleep, banged the skins in a week
On the creep up the avenue
I seen her on the block, who she rapping to?

That's my nigga Dee, damn he got G
Now she fucking him and fucking me, see
You know that ain't right

[Chorus]

[Verse 3: The Notorious B.I.G.]

Now I play her far like a moon play a star

She still sweat me hard 'cause I'm a rap star

I be cruising up the block, I be passing her

Pimping hard with a female passenger

And the only time I call her to hang

Is when me and Dee blunted up, pissy, scheming on a gangbang

She should have used her intuition

Then she wouldn't be classified in that position, listen

She's saying I dissed her 'cause I'm fucking her sister

A message to the fellas, that really gets 'em pissed, uh

But she started that fucking family

She fucked my man Dee, so why she mad at me? (True)

Plus your sister look better than you

Give head better than you, pussy get wetter than you

So break the fuck out like a rash

I'm glad I ain't spend no cash to hit your nasty ass

[Chorus]

16. Unbelievable

[Intro]

Biggie Smalls is the illest (Uh)

What? Uh

Biggie— Biggie— Biggie Smalls is the illest

Uh

Biggie Smalls, Biggie— Biggie— Biggie Smalls

Biggie— Biggie— Biggie Smalls is the illest

Uh, yeah

Biggie— Biggie— Biggie Smalls is the illest

[Verse 1]

Live from Bedford-Stuyvesant, the livest one

Representing BK to the fullest

Gats, I pull it

Bastards ducking when B.I.G. be bucking

Chickenheads be clucking, in my back room fucking

It ain't nothing

They know B.I.G. be handling

With the MAC in the Ac' door paneling

Bandaging MC's, oxygen, they can't breathe

Mad tricks up the sleeve

Wear boxers so my dick can breathe
Breeze through in the Q
Forty-five by my side, lyrical high
And those that rushes my clutches get put on crutches
Get smoked like Dutches from the master
Hate to blast ya but I have to
You see I smoke a lot
Your life is played out like Kwame
And them fucking polka dots
Who rock the spot? Biggie
You know how the weed go, unbelievable

[Chorus]

It's unbelievable

Biggie Smalls is the illest

It's unbelievable

Biggie— Biggie— Biggie Smalls is the illest

It's unbelievable

Biggie— Biggie— Biggie Smalls is the illest

It's unbelievable

Biggie— Biggie— Biggie Smalls is the illest

[Verse 2]

B-I-G, G-I-E

A-K-A., B-I-G

Get it? Biggie

Also known as the bon appétit

Rappers can't sleep need sleeping

B.I.G. keep creeping

Bullets heat-seeking, casualties need treating

Dumb rappers need teaching

Lesson A: Don't fuck with B-I

That's that "Oh I, thought he was wack"

Oh, come, come now, why y'all so dumb now

Hunt me or be hunted

I got three hundred and fifty-seven ways

To simmer sauté, I'm the winner all day

Lights get dimmer down Biggie's hallway

My forte causes Caucasians to say

"He sounds demented"

Car weed scented, if I said it, I meant it

Bite my tongue for no one

Call me evil, or unbelievable

[Chorus]

[Verse 3]

Buck shots out the sun roof of Lexus coupes

Leave no witnesses, what you think this is?

Ain't no amateurs here

I damage and tear, MC's fear me
They too near not to hear me
Clearly, I'm the triple beam dream
One thousand grams of uncut to the gut
It seems fucked up, the way I touched up the grill
Trying to play gorilla when you ain't no killer
The gat's by your liver, your upper lip quiver
Get ready to die, tell God I said hi
And throw down some ice for the nicest MC
Niggas know the steelo, unbelievable

[Chorus]

It's unbelievable

Biggie Smalls is the illest

It's unbelievable

Biggie— Biggie— Biggie Smalls is the illest

It's unbelievable

Biggie— Biggie— Biggie Smalls is the illest

It's unbelievable

Biggie— Biggie— Biggie Smalls is the illest

[Outro]

It's unbelievable

Biggie— Biggie— Biggie Smalls is the illest

'Believable

Biggie— Biggie— Biggie Smalls is the illest

'Believable

Biggie— Biggie— Biggie Smalls is the illest

Biggie Smalls— Biggie— Biggie— Biggie Smalls

Biggie— Biggie— Biggie Smalls is the illest

17. Suicidal Thoughts

[Intro: Puff Daddy]

Hello?

Aw shit, nigga! The fuck time is it, man?

Oh, God damn

Nigga, do you know what time it is?

Aw shit, what the fuck's goin' on?

You aight?

Ah, nigga, what the fuck is wrong with you?

[Verse: The Notorious B.I.G. & Puff Daddy]

When I die, fuck it, I wanna go to hell

'Cause I'm a piece of shit, it ain't hard to fuckin' tell (*What you talkin' 'bout, man?*)

It don't make sense, goin' to heaven with the goodie-goodies

Dressed in white, I like black Timbs and black hoodies (*Aw, man*)

God'll probably have me on some real strict shit

No sleepin' all day, no gettin' my dick licked

Hangin' with the goodie-goodies, loungin' in paradise
 Fuck that shit, I wanna tote guns and shoot dice (*You talkin' some crazy shit now, nigga*)
 All my life I been considered as the worst
 Lyin' to my mother, even stealin' out her purse (*Ah*)
 Crime after crime, from drugs to extortion
 I know my mother wish she got a fuckin' abortion
 She don't even love me like she did when I was younger (*Yo, get a hold of yourself, nigga*)
 Suckin' on her chest just to stop my fuckin' hunger
 I wonder; if I died, would tears come to her eyes?
 Forgive me for my disrespect, forgive me for my lies (*You're buggin', B*)
 My baby mother's eight months, her little sister's two
 Who's to blame for both of them? (*Nah, nigga, not you*)
 I swear to God I want to just slit my wrists and end this bullshit
 Throw the Magnum to my head, threaten to pull shit (*Nigga, what the fuck?*)
 And squeeze until the bed's completely red (*It's too late for this shit, man*)
 I'm glad I'm dead, a worthless fuckin' buddha head
 The stress is buildin' up, I can't—I can't believe (*Ayo, I'm on my way over there, man*)
 Suicide's on my fuckin' mind, I wanna leave
 I swear to God I feel like death is fuckin' callin' me
 But nah, you wouldn't understand
Nigga, talk to me please, man!
 You see, it's kinda like the crack did to Pookie in *New Jack*
 Except when I cross over, there ain't no comin' back (*Ayo, ayo, man, I'm out*)
 Should I die on the train track like Ramo in *Beat Street*? (*I'ma call you when I get in the car*)
 People at the funeral frontin' like they miss me (*Ayo, where your girl at, man?*)
 My baby mama kiss me, but she glad I'm gone (*Yo, put your girl on the phone, nigga!*)
 She know me and her sister had somethin' goin' on
 I reach my peak, I can't speak (*Ayo, you listenin' to me, motherfucker?*)
 Call my nigga Chic, tell him that my will is weak (*Ayo, c'mon, nigga*)
 I'm sick of niggas lyin' (*Cut that*), I'm sick of bitches hawkin' (*Ayo*)
 Matter of fact, I'm sick of talkin' (*Nigga, yo, yo, Big! Ayo, chill!*)
 Gunshot
Ayo, Big! Ayo, Big!

[Outro]
 Please hang up and try your call again
 Please hang up— Is a recording

18. Who Shot Ya?

[Intro: Puffy & *The Notorious B.I.G.*]
 As we proceed to give you what you need (*Uh*)
 9-5, motherfuckers
 Get live, motherfuckers
 As we proceed to give you what you need
 9-5, motherfuckers

Get live, motherfuckers (*Now turn the mics up*)
As we proceed to give you what you need (*Turn that mic up*)
(*Yeah, that beat is knocking, I need that mic up, though*)
(*Turn that shit the fuck up*)

East Coast, motherfuckers (*Uh, what?*)

Bad Boy, motherfuckers (*Turn it up louder, yeah, uh*)
As we proceed to give you what you need
J.M., motherfuckers
J.M., motherfuckers (*Uh*)
9-5, motherfuckers (*Uh*)

[Verse 1: The Notorious B.I.G.]

Who shot ya? Separate the weak from the obsolete

Hard to creep them Brooklyn streets

It's on, nigga, fuck all that bickerin' beef
I can hear sweat tricklin' down your cheek
Your heartbeat sound like Sasquatch feet
Thunderin', shakin' the concrete
Then the shit stop when I foil the plot
Neighbors call the cops, said they heard mad shots
Saw me in the drop, three and a quarter
Slaughter, electrical tape around your daughter
Old school, new school need to learn though
I burn, baby, burn, like "Disco Inferno"
Burn slow like blunts with yayo
Peel more skins than Idaho Potato
Niggas know; the lyrical molesting is taking place
Fucking with B.I.G., it ain't safe
I make your skin chafe, rashes on them asses
Bumps and bruises, blunts and Land Cruisers
Big Poppa smash fools, bash fools
Niggas mad because I know that cash rules
Everything around me, two Glock nines
Any motherfucker whispering about mines (And I'm)
And I'm Crooklyn's finest (Crooklyn's finest)
You rewind this, Bad Boy's behind this (Bad Boy's behind this)

[Interlude: Puffy & The Notorious B.I.G.]

As we proceed to give you what you need (*What?*)
9-5, motherfuckers (*What?*)
Get live, motherfuckers
As we proceed to give you what you need (*What?*)
East Coast, motherfuckers
Bad Boy, motherfuckers
Get high, motherfuckers
Get high, motherfuckers (*Uh, uh*)
Smoke blunts, motherfuckers (*Uh*)
Get high, motherfuckers (*9-5, uh*)
Ready to die, motherfuckers (*Uh*)
9-5, motherfuckers (*Uh*)

[Verse 2: The Notorious B.I.G.]

I seen the light excite all the freaks
Stack mad chips, spread love with my peeps
Niggas wanna creep, gotta watch my back
Think the Cognac and indo sack make me slack?
I switches all that, cocksucker, G's up
One false move, get Swiss cheesed up
Clip to TEC, respect, I demand it
Slip and break the 11th Commandment
Thou shalt not fuck with nor see Poppa
Feel a thousand deaths when I drop you
I feel for you, like Chaka Khan, I'm the don
Pussy when I want, Rolex on the arm
You'll die slow but calm
Recognize my face so there won't be no mistake
So you know where to tell Jake, lame nigga
Brave nigga, turned front page nigga
Puff Daddy flips daily
I smoke the blunts he sips on the Baileys
On the rocks, tote Glocks at christenings
Hammer cock, in the fire position and—

[Interlude: The Notorious B.I.G.]

Come here, come here (*It ain't gotta be like that, B.I.G.*)
Open your fucking mouth, open your—
Didn't I tell you don't fuck with me? (*Come on, man*) Huh?
Didn't I tell you not to fuck with me? (*Come on, man*) Huh?
(*Come on, man*) Look at you now, huh? (*Come on, man*)
Can't talk with a gun in your mouth, huh?
Bitch-ass nigga, what?
Who shot you?

[Outro: Puffy & The Notorious B.I.G.]

To give you what you need
9-5, motherfuckers
Get live, motherfuckers
Get high, motherfuckers (*Who shot ya?*)
Ready to die, motherfuckers, hah!
As we proceed (*Who shot ya?*)
To give you what you need
9-5, motherfuckers
East Coast, motherfucker (*Who shot ya?*)
West Coast, motherfuckers (*Uh*)
West Coast, motherfuckers, hah!
As we proceed to give you what you need
As we proceed to give you what you need (As we proceed to give you what you need)
Get live, motherfuckers
Get live, motherfuckers (Get live, motherfuckers)
9-5, motherfuckers (9-5, motherfuckers)

Get money, motherfuckers
As we proceed to give you what you need (As we proceed to give you what you need)
Get live, motherfuckers (Get live, motherfuckers)
9-5, motherfuckers
J.M., motherfuckers
J.M., motherfuckers
As we proceed
To give you what you need
9-5

19. Just Playing (Dreams)

[Verse 1]
As I sit back relax, steam a blunt, sip a Becks
Think about the sexy singers that I wanna sex
I'd probably go to jail for fucking Patti LaBelle
Ooh, Regina Belle, she'd probably do me swell
Jasmine Guy was fly, Mariah Carey's kinda scary
Wait a minute, what about my honey Mary?
Them jeans, they fitting like a glove
I had a crush on you since Real Love, huh
Hold your horses
I'ma show you who the boss of intercourse is
Sex, I'm taking no losses
Even groups like SWV and TLC can't see B.I.G. with telepathy
The recipe, a pinch of hardcore with a gun
Pimpin' ain't easy, but it sure is fun
When I bust my nuts I bust 'em one by one
So what's the 4-1-1, hun?

[Chorus]
Dreams of fuckin' an R&B bitch (I'm just playin', but I'm sayin')
Dreams of fuckin' an R&B bitch (I'm just playin', I'm sayin')
Dreams of fuckin' an R&B bitch (I'm just playin', but I'm sayin')
Dreams of fuckin' an R&B bitch (I'm just playin', I'm sayin')

[Verse 2]
I'll put Chanté Moore pussy in stitches
I'll fuck RuPaul before I fuck them ugly-ass Xscape bitches
You can 76 the 69, try 68
Make Raven-Symoné call date rape
Only 'cause I'm paid, I'm fucking all of Jade
And my DJ Zhané, she likes it when they say
"Everybody move your body"
Got Whitney Houston boosting from Bobby
As I bust the cherry of Monica and Terry
Back shots to Chaka, I know that pussy hairy
Sade, ooh, I know that pussy tight
Smack Tina Turner give her flashbacks of Ike

Smoke a stoge, fuckin' En Vogue because it's four of them
Jimmy hats for Patra, I'm using all of them
(What about Toni Braxton?)
If that bitch give me action, guaranteed satisfaction

[Chorus]

[Outro]

You know what I'm sayin', Tim, man?
I ain't tryna diss the honeys
You know what I'm sayin'? (I'm just playin', I'm sayin')
I just be buggin', you know what I'm sayin'?
I ain't tryna disrespect nobody, you know?
I'm just buggin' out, you know? (I'm just playin', but I'm sayin')
You know the flavor of the Junior M.A.F.I.A. clique
Know what I'm sayin'?
Buttnaked Tim Dawg in the motherfuckin' house
I'm just playin' (I'm just playin', but I'm sayin')
We're just havin' a little fun
Ain't no harm done, B (I'm just playin', I'm sayin')
But I would hit all of y'all

Nas – Illmatic

Korte inhoud album:

Illmatic geldt als een van de beste albums uit de geschiedenis van rapmuziek. Dit komt omdat Nas in dit album heel beschrijvend is over de situatie waarin hij opgroeide en woonde toentertijd. Door zijn levendige beschrijving van voornamelijk Queensbridge, krijgt de toehoorder een goede indruk over hoe het leven daar is. Er zijn in dit album daardoor ook veel verwijzingen te vinden naar de manieren waarop een persoon geld kon verdienen in het getto. Daarnaast krijgt de toehoorder een *mental map* van Nas voorgeschoteld waar zijn leven zich specifiek afspeelt in Queensbridge zelf. In dit album plaats Nas zich soms in de rol van het illegale straatleven. Dit doet hij om een beeld te schetsen hoe sommige mensen in het getto leven. In andere nummers spreekt hij ook als toeschouwer over de situatie in het getto. Hij neemt gebeurtenissen waar en verteld daarover in zijn rapteksten.

1. The Genesis

[Nas]

Street's disciple, my raps are trifle
I shoot slugs from my brain just like a rifle
Stampede the stage, I leave the microphone split

Play Mr. Tuffyy while I'm on some Pretty Tone shit
Verbal assassin, my architect pleases
When I was 12, I went to...

[Hector]
And you're sitting at home doing this shit
I should be earning a medal for this
Stop fuckin' around and be a man
There ain't nothin' out here for you

[Zoro]
Oh yes, there is... This

[Jungle]
Yo, Nas, yo, what the fuck is this bullshit on the radio, son?

[Nas]
Chill, chill! That's the shit, God, chill

[AZ]
Ayo, yo, pull down the shade, man
Let's count this money, nigga
Ayo, Nas, put the Jacksons and the Grants over there!
You know what I'm sayin'?
'Cause we spendin' the Jacksons
You know how we get down, baby

[Nas]
True, true

[Jungle]
Nas, yo, Nas, man
Shit is mad real right now in the projects
For a nigga, yo, word to mother
All them crab-ass rappers be comin' up to me
Man, word to mother, man
I think we need to let them niggas know it's real, man

[Nas]
True indeed, knamsayin'?
But when it's real you doin' this
Even without a record contract, knamsayin'?

[AZ]
No question

[Nas]
Been doing this since back then

[AZ]

I'm sayin' regardless how it go down we gon' keep it real
We tryin' to see many mansions and Coupes, kid

[Nas]
No doubt, we gon' keep it real, true, true

[Jungle]
Ayo, where's Grand Wizard and Mayo at, man?
Takin' niggas a long time, man

[Nas]
Who got the Phillies? Take this Hennessy

[AZ]
Ayo, dunn
C'mon, c'mon, man, stop wavin' that, man!
Stop pointin' that at me, dunn, take the clip out!

[Nas]
Nigga, alright, but take this Hennessy, man!

[AZ]
I'm sayin' take the clip, man, c'mon, take it out!

[Nas]
Light them Phillies up, man!
Niggas stop fuckin' burnin' Phillies, man
Light some Phillies up then!

[Jungle]
Pass that henrock, pass that henrock!
Nigga, act like you know!

[AZ]
Yo, we drinkin' this straight up with no chaser
I ain't fuckin' with you, nigga

[Nas]
I'm saying though, man

[AZ]
What is it, what is it, baby?

[Jungle]
What is it, son, what is it?

[AZ]
You know what time it is

[Nas]

I'm saying, man, you know what I'm saying?
Niggas don't listen, man
Representin', it's *Illmatic*

2. N.Y. State of Mind

[Intro]

Yeah, yeah
Ayo, Black—it's time, word (Word, it's time, man)
It's time, man (Aight, man, begin)
Yeah—straight out the fuckin' dungeons of rap
Where fake niggas don't make it back
I don't know how to start this shit, yo—now;

[Verse 1]

Rappers; I monkey flip 'em with the funky rhythm I be kickin'
Musician, inflictin' composition, of pain
I'm like Scarface sniffin' cocaine
Holdin' an M16, see, with the pen I'm extreme
Now, bullet holes left in my peepholes
I'm suited up in street clothes, hand me a 9 and I'll defeat foes
Y'all know my steelo, with or without the airplay
I keep some E&J, sittin' bent up in the stairway
Or either on the corner bettin' Grants with the cee-lo champs
Laughin' at base-heads, tryna sell some broken amps
G-packs get off quick, forever niggas talk shit
Reminisclin' about the last time the task force flipped
Niggas be runnin' through the block shootin'
Time to start the revolution, catch a body, head for Houston
Once they caught us off-guard, the MAC-10 was in the grass, and
I ran like a cheetah, with thoughts of an assassin
Picked the MAC up, told brothers "Back up!" — the MAC spit
Lead was hittin' niggas, one ran, I made him back-flip
Heard a few chicks scream, my arm shook, couldn't look
Gave another squeeze, heard it click, "Yo, my shit is stuck!"
Tried to cock it, it wouldn't shoot, now I'm in danger
Finally pulled it back
And saw three bullets caught up in the chamber
So, now I'm jettin' through the buildin' lobby
And it was full of children, prob'ly couldn't see as high as I be
(So, what you sayin'?)
It's like the game ain't the same
Got younger niggas pullin' the triggers, bringin' fame to their name
And claim some corners, crews without guns are goners
In broad daylight, stick-up kids, they run up on us
.45's and gauges, MAC's in fact
Same niggas will catch you back-to-back, snatchin' your cracks
And black, there was a snitch on the block gettin' niggas knocked
So hold your stash 'til the coke price drop

I know this crackhead who said she got to smoke nice rock
And if it's good, she'll bring you customers and measuring pots
But yo, you gotta slide on a vacation
Inside information keeps large niggas erasin' and their wives basin'
It drops deep as it does in my breath
I never sleep, 'cause sleep is the cousin of death
Beyond the walls of intelligence, life is defined
I think of crime when I'm in the New York State of Mind

[Chorus]

New York state of mind
New York state of mind
New York state of mind
New York state of mind

[Verse 2]

Be havin' dreams that I'm a gangsta, drinkin' Moët's, holdin' TEC's
Makin' sure the cash came correct, then I stepped
Investments in stocks, sewin' up the blocks to sell rocks
Winnin' gunfights with mega-cops
But just a nigga walkin' with his finger on the trigger
Make enough figures until my pockets get bigger
I ain't the type of brother made for you to start testin'
Give me a Smith & Wesson, I'll have niggas undressin'
Thinkin' of cash flow, Buddha and shelter
Whenever frustrated, I'ma hijack Delta
In the PJ's, my blend tape plays, bullets are strays
Young bitches is grazed, each block is like a maze
Full of black rats trapped, plus the Island is packed
From what I hear in all the stories when my peoples come back
Black, I'm livin' where the nights is jet-black
The fiends fight to get crack, I just max, I dream I can sit back
And lamp like Capone, with drug scripts sewn
Or the legal luxury life, rings flooded with stones, homes
I got so many rhymes, I don't think I'm too sane
Life is parallel to Hell, but I must maintain
And be prosperous, though we live dangerous
Cops could just arrest me, blamin' us; we're held like hostages
It's only right that I was born to use mics
And the stuff that I write is even tougher than dykes
I'm takin' rappers to a new plateau, through rap slow
My rhyming is a vitamin held without a capsule
The smooth criminal on beat breaks
Never put me in your box if your shit eats tapes
The city never sleeps, full of villains and creeps
That's where I learned to do my hustle, had to scuffle with freaks
I'm a addict for sneakers, 20's of Buddha and bitches with beepers
In the streets I can greet ya, about blunts I teach ya
Inhale deep like the words of my breath
I never sleep, 'cause sleep is the cousin of death

I lay puzzled as I backtrack to earlier times
Nothing's equivalent to the New York state of mind

[Chorus]
New York state of mind
New York state of mind
New York state of mind
New York state of mind

[Outro: Sample]
"Nasty Nas—"

3. Life's a Bitch

[Intro: AZ and Nas]
Ayo, what's up, what's up?
Let's keep it real, son, count this money
You know what I'm sayin'? *Yeah, yeah*
Ayo, put the Grants over there in the safe
You know what I'm sayin'?
'Cause we spendin' these Jacksons
The Washingtons go to wifey, you know how that go
I'm sayin' that's what this is all about, right?
Clothes, bankrolls, and hoes
You know what I'm sayin'?
Yo, then what, man, what?!

[Verse 1: AZ]
Visualizin' the realism of life in actuality
Fuck who's the baddest, a person's status depends on salary
And my mentality is money-orientated
I'm destined to live the dream for all my peeps who never made it
'Cause yeah, we were beginners in the hood as Five Percenters
But somethin' must've got in us, 'cause all of us turned to sinners
Now some restin' in peace and some are sittin' in San Quentin
Others, such as myself, are tryin' to carry on tradition
Keepin' this Schweppervescent street ghetto essence inside us
Cause it provides us with the proper insight to guide us
Even though we know, somehow we all gotta go
But as long as we leavin' thievin'
We'll be leavin' with some kind of dough
So, until that day we expire and turn to vapors
Me and my capers will be somewhere stackin' plenty papers
Keepin' it real, packin' steel, gettin' high
'Cause life's a bitch and then you die

[Chorus: AZ]

Life's a bitch and then you die, that's why we get high
'Cause you never know when you're gonna go
Life's a bitch and then you die, that's why we puff lye
'Cause you never know when you're gonna go
Life's a bitch and then you die, that's why we get high
'Cause you never know when you're gonna go
Life's a bitch and then you die, that's why we puff lye

[Verse 2: Nas]

I woke up early on my born day; I'm 20, it's a blessin'
The essence of adolescence leaves my body, now I'm fresh and
My physical frame is celebrated 'cause I made it
One quarter through life, some godly-like thing created
Got rhymes 365 days annual, plus some
Load up the mic and bust one, cuss while I pus from
My skull, 'cause it's pain in my brain vein, money maintain
Don't go against the grain, simple and plain
When I was young at this I used to do my thing hard
Robbin' foreigners, take they wallets, they jewels and rip they green cards
Dipped to the projects, flashin' my quick cash
And got my first piece of ass, smokin' blunts with hash
Now it's all about cash in abundance
Niggas I used to run with is rich or doin' years in the hundreds
I switched my motto; instead of sayin', "Fuck tomorrow!"
That buck that bought a bottle could've struck the lotto
Once I stood on the block, loose cracks produce stacks
I cooked up and cut small pieces to get my loot back
Time is illmatic, keep static like wool fabric
Pack a 4-matic to crack your whole cabbage

[Chorus: AZ]

4. The World is Yours

[Chorus: Pete Rock + Nas]

(It's yours)
Whose world is this?
The world is yours, the world is yours
It's mine, it's mine, it's mine—whose world is this?
(It's yours)
It's mine, it's mine, it's mine—whose world is this?
The world is yours, the world is yours
It's mine, it's mine, it's mine—whose world is this?

[Verse 1: Nas]

I sip the Dom P, watchin' *Gandhi* 'til I'm charged, then
Writin' in my book of rhymes, all the words past the margin
To hold the mic I'm throbbin', mechanical movement
Understandable smooth shit that murderers move with

The thief's theme, play me at night, they won't act right
The fiend of hip-hop has got me stuck like a crack pipe
The mind activation, react like I'm facin'
Time like Pappy Mason, with pens I'm embracin'
Wipe the sweat off my dome, spit the phlegm on the streets
Suede Timbs on my feet makes my cipher complete
Whether cruisin' in a Sikh's cab or Montero Jeep
I can't call it, the beats make me fallin' asleep
I keep fallin', but never fallin' six feet deep
I'm out for presidents to represent me (Say what?)
I'm out for presidents to represent me (Say what?)
I'm out for dead presidents to represent me⁷⁴

[Chorus: Pete Rock + Nas]

[Verse 2: Nas]

To my man Ill Will

God bless your life

To my peoples throughout Queens

God bless your life

I trip, we box up crazy bitches

Aimin' guns in all my baby pictures

Beef with housing police, release scriptures that's maybe Hitler's

Yet I'm the mild, money-gettin' style, rollin' foul

The versatile, honey-stickin', wild, golden child

Dwellin' in the Rotten Apple, you get tackled

Or caught by the devil's lasso, shit is a hassle

There's no days for broke days

We sell it, smoke pays, while all the old folks pray

To Jesús, soakin' their sins in trays of holy water

Odds against Nas are slaughter

Thinkin' a word best describin' my life to name my daughter

My strength, my son, the star will be my resurrection

Born in correction, all the wrong shit I did

He'll lead a right direction

How you livin'? Large, a broker charge, cards are mediocre

You flippin' coke or playin' spit, spades, and strip poker?

[Chorus: Pete Rock + Nas]

[Bridge]

Break it down

It's yours, it's yours

It's yours, it's yours

[Verse 3: Nas]

I'm the young city bandit, hold myself down single-handed

For murder raps, I kick my thoughts alone, get remanded

⁷⁴ Op dollarbiljetten staan vroegere presidenten afgebeeld. *Dead presidents* zijn in dit geval dollarbiljetten met diverse waarde.

Born alone, die alone, no crew to keep my crown or throne
I'm deep by sound alone, caved inside, 1,000 miles from home
I need a new nigga for this black cloud to follow
'Cause while it's over me it's too dark to see tomorrow
Tryin' to maintain, I flip, fill the clip to the tip
Picturin' my peeps not eatin' can make my heartbeat skip
And I'm amped up, they locked the champ up
Even my brain's in handcuffs
Headed for Indiana, stabbin' women like the Phantom
The crew is lampin', Big Willie style
Check the chip-toothed smile, plus I profile wild
Stash loot in fly clothes, burnin' dollars to light my stoge
Walk the blocks with a bop, checkin' dames
Plus the games people play bust the problems of the world today

[Chorus: Pete Rock + Nas]

Yeah, the world is yours, the world is yours
It's mine, it's mine, it's mine—whose world is this?
(It's yours)

[Outro: Nas]

Yeah, a'ight?
To everybody in Queens, the foundation (It's yours!)
The world is yours
To everybody uptown, yo, the world is yours (It's yours!)
The world is yours
To everybody in Brooklyn
Y'all know the world is yours (It's yours!)
The world is yours
Everybody in Mount Vernon, the world is yours (It's yours!)
Long Island, yo the world is yours (It's yours!)
Staten Island, yeah, the world is yours (It's yours!)
South Bronx, the world is yours (It's yours!)
Aight

5. Halftime

[Intro]

(Right... Right...)
Check me out y'all
Nasty Nas in your area
About to cause mass hysteria

[Verse 1]

Before a blunt, I take out my fronts
Then I start to front, matter of fact I be on a manhunt

You couldn't catch me in the streets without a ton of reefer⁷⁵

That's like Malcolm X catchin' the Jungle Fever
King poetic, too much flavor, I'm major
Atlanta ain't Brave-r, I'll pull a number like a pager
'Cause I'm an ace when I face the bass
40-side is the place that is givin' me grace
Now wait, another dose and you might be dead
And I'm a Nike-head, I wear chains that excite the feds
And ain't a damn thing gonna change, I'm a performer, strange
So the mic warmer was born to gain
Nas, why did you do it?
You know you got the mad-phat fluid when you rhyme
It's halftime

[Chorus]

(Right...) It's halftime
(Right...) Ayo it's halftime
(Right...) It's halftime
(Right...) Yeah, it's about halftime
This is how it feel, check it out, how it feel

[Verse 2]

It's like that, you know it's like that
I got it hemmed, now you never get the mic back
When I attack, there ain't a army that could strike back
So I react never calmly on a hype track
I set it off with my own rhyme
'Cause I'm as ill as a convict who kills for phone time
I'm max like cassettes, I flex like sex
In your stereo sets, Nas'll catch wreck
I used to hustle, now all I do is relax and strive
When I was young I was a fan of the Jackson 5
I drop jewels, wear jewels, hope to never run it
With more kicks than a baby in a mother's stomach
Nasty Nas has to rise 'cause I'm wise
This is exercise 'til the microphone dies
Back in '83 I was an MC sparkin'
But I was too scared to grab the mics in the parks and
Kick my little raps 'cause I thought niggas wouldn't understand
And now in every jam I'm the fuckin' man
I rap in front of more niggas than in the slave ships
I used to watch "CHiPs", now I load Glock clips
I got to have it, I miss Mr. Magic
Versatile, my style switches like a faggot
But not bisexual, I'm an intellectual
Of rap I'm a professional, and that's no question yo
These are the lyrics of the man, you can't hear it, understand?

⁷⁵ Reefer is slang voor marihuana. Nas impliceert met deze zinsnede dat hij geen dealer is.

'Cause in the streets I'm well-known like the number man

Am I in place with the bass and format?
Explore rap and tell me, "Nas ain't all that"
And next time I rhyme, I be foul
Whenever I freestyle I see trial, niggas say I'm wild
I hate a rhyme-biter's rhyme
Stay tuned, I assume, the real rap comes at halftime

[Chorus]

[Verse 3]

I got it goin' on, even flip a morning song
Every afternoon, I kick half the tune
And in the darkness I'm heartless like when the NARC's hit
Word to Marcus Garvey, I hardly sparked it
'Cause when I blast the herb, that's my word
I be slayin' them fast, doin' this that and the third
But chill, pass the Andre, and let's slay
I bag bitches up at John Jay and hit a matinee
Puttin' hits on 5-0
'Cause when it's my time to go, I wait for God with the .44
And biters can't come near
And yo, go to hell to the foul cop who shot Garcia
I won't plant seeds, don't need an extra mouth I can't feed
That's extra Phillie change, more cash for damp weed
This goes out to Manhattan, the island of Staten
Brooklyn and Queens is livin' fat and
The Boogie Down, enough props, enough clout
Ill Will, rest in peace, yo I'm out

[Outro]

(Right...) It's still halftime
(Right...) To the Queensbridge crew
To the Queensbridge crew, you know it's halftime
(Right...) '92, it's halftime
(Right...) Yo police, police man, yo let's get ghost
Halftime...

6. Memory Lane (Sittin' in da Park)

[Intro]

Aight, fuck that shit! Word, word
Fuck that other shit, y'know what I'm sayin'?
We gonna do a lil somethin' like this
Y'know what I'm sayin'?
(Y'all doin' that other shit)
Keep it on and on and on and on and
Know'm sayin'? Big Nas, Grand Wizard, God, what is it?
(It's like...) Haha, you know what I'm sayin'?

Yo, go ahead and rip that shit, dun!

[Verse 1]

I rap for listeners, bluntheads, fly ladies, and prisoners
Hennessy-holders and old-school niggas, then I be dissin' a
Unofficial that smoke Woolie Thai
I dropped out of Cooley High, gassed up by a cokehead cutie pie
Jungle survivor, fuck who's the live-er
My man put the battery in my back, a difference from Energizer
Sentence begins indented with formality
My duration's infinite, moneywise or physiology
Poetry, that's a part of me, retardedly bop
I drop the ancient manifested hip-hop straight off the block
I reminisce on park jams, my man was shot for his sheep coat
Choco blunts'll make me see him drop in my weed smoke
It's real, grew up in trife life, the times of white lines, the high pipes
Murderous night times and knife fights invite crimes
Chill on the block with Cognac, cold strap
With my peeps that's into drug money market interact
No sign of the beast in the blue Chrysler
I guess that means peace
For niggas, no sheisty vice to just snipe ya
Start off the dice-rollin' mats for craps to cee-lo
With side-bets, I roll a deuce, nothin' below
(Peace God!) Peace God – now the shit is explained
I'm takin' niggas on a trip straight through memory lane
It's like that, y'all...

[Chorus]

"Now let me take a trip down memory lane"
"Comin' outta Queensbridge"
"Now let me take a trip down memory lane"
"Comin' outta Queensbridge"
"Now let me take a trip down memory lane"
"Comin' outta Queensbridge"
"Now let me take a trip down memory lane"
"Comin' outta Queensbridge"

[Verse 2]

One for the money, two for pussy and foreign cars
Three for Alizé, niggas deceased or behind bars
I rap divine, God, check the prognosis: Is it real or showbiz?
My window faces shootouts, drug overdoses
Live amongst no roses, only the drama
For real, a nickel-plate is my fate, my medicine is the ganja
Here's my basis, my razor embraces many faces
You're telephone blown, black, stitches or fat shoelaces
Peoples are petro, dramatic automatic .44 I let blow
And back down po-po when I'm vexed, so
My pen taps the paper, then my brain's blank

I see dark streets, hustlin' brothers who keep the same rank
Pumpin' for somethin', some'll prosper, some fail

Judges hangin' niggas, uncorrect bails for direct sales
My intellect prevails from a hangin' cross with nails
I reinforce the frail with lyrics that's real

Word to Christ, a disciple of streets, trifle on beats

I decipher prophecies through a mic and say "Peace"
I hung around the older crews while they sling smack to dingbats
They spoke of Fat Cat; that nigga's name made bell rings, black
Some fiends scream about Supreme Team, a Jamaica Queens thing
Uptown was Alpo, son, heard he was kingpin
Yo, fuck, rap is real! Watch the herbs stand still
Never talkin' to snakes, 'cause the words of man kill
True in the game, as long as blood is blue in my vein
I pour my Heineken brew to my deceased crew on memory lane

[Chorus]

[Outro: DJ Premier scratching]

"Comin' out of Queensbridge"

"Comin' out of Queensbridge"

"Comin' out of Queensbridge"

"Comin' out of Queensbridge"

"The most dangerous MC is..."

"Comin' out of Queensbridge"

"The most dangerous MC is..."

"Comin' out of Queensbridge"

"The most dangerous MC is..."

"Comin' out of Queensbridge"

"The most dangerous MC is..."

"Me number one, and you know where me from"

7. One Love

[Verse 1: Nas]

What up, kid? I know shit is rough doin' your bid
When the cops came you shoulda slid to my crib
Fuck it, black, no time for lookin' back, it's done
Plus, congratulations, you know you got a son
I heard he looks like ya, why don't your lady write ya?
Told her she should visit, that's when she got hyper
Flippin', talkin' about he acts too rough
He didn't listen, he be riffin' while I'm tellin' him stuff
I was like, "Yeah," shorty don't care, she a snake too
Fuckin' with them niggas from that fake crew that hate you
But yo, guess who got shot in the dome-piece?
Jerome's niece, on her way home from Jones Beach
It's bugged, plus little Rob is sellin' drugs on the dime
Hangin' out with young thugs that all carry 9's

And night time is more trife than ever

What up with Cormega? Did you see him? Are y'all together?

If so, then hold the fort down, represent to the fullest

Say what's up to Herb, Ice and Bullet

I left a half a hundred in your commissary

You was my nigga when push came to shove

(One what?) One love!

[Hook: Q-Tip]

One love, one love, one love, one love

One love, one love, one love, one love

One love, one love, one love, one love

One love, one love, one love, one love

[Verse 2: Nas]

Dear Born, you'll be out soon, stay strong

Out in New York the same shit is goin' on

The crackheads stalkin', loudmouths is talkin'

Hold, check out the story yesterday when I was walkin'

That nigga you shot last year tried to appear

Like he hurtin' somethin'

Word to mother, I heard him frontin'

And he be pumpin' on your block

Your man gave him your Glock

And now they run together — what up, son? Whatever

Since I'm on the streets I'ma put it to a cease

But I heard you blew a nigga with a ox for the phone piece

Wildin' on the Island, but now in Elmira

Better chill, 'cause them niggas will put that ass on fire

Last time you wrote you said they tried you in the showers

But maintain, when you come home the corner's ours

On the reals, all these crab niggas know the deal

When we start the revolution all they probably do is squeal

But chill, see you on the next V-I

I gave your mom dukes loot for kicks, plus sent you flicks

Your brother's buckwildin' in 4-Main, he wrote me

He might beat his case, 'til he come home I'll play it lowkey

So stay civilized, time flies

Though incarcerated your mind dies

I hate it when your moms cries

It kinda makes me want to murder, for reala

I even got a mask and gloves to bust slugs, but one love

[Hook: Q-Tip]

[Verse 3: Nas]

Sometimes I sit back with a Buddha sack

Mind's in another world, thinkin'

"How can we exist through the facts?"

Written in school text books, bibles, et cetera

Fuck a school lecture, the lies get me vexed-er
So I be ghost from my projects
I take my pen and pad for the weekend
Hittin' L's while I'm sleepin'
A two-day stay, you may say I need the time alone
To relax my dome, no phone, left the 9 at home
You see the streets had me stressed somethin' terrible
Fuckin' with the corners have a nigga up in Bellevue
Or HDM, hit with numbers from eight to 10
A future in a maximum state pen is grim
So I comes back home, nobody's out but Shorty Doo-Wop
Rollin' two phillies together: in the Bridge we call 'em oo-wops
He said: "Nas, niggas caught me bustin' off the roof
So I wear a bulletproof and pack a black tre-deuce."
He inhaled so deep, shut his eyes like he was sleep
Started coughin', one eye peeked to watch me speak
I sat back like The Mack, my army suit was black
We was chillin' on these benches
Where he pumped his loose cracks
I took the L when he passed it, this little bastard
Keeps me blasted and starts talkin' mad shit
I had to school him, told him don't let niggas fool him
'Cause when the pistol blows
The one that's murdered be the cool one
Tough luck when niggas are struck, families fucked up
Coulda caught your man, but didn't look when you bucked up
Mistakes happen, so take heed, never bust up
At the crowd, catch him solo, make the right man bleed
Shorty's laugh was cold-blooded as he spoke so foul
Only 12, tryin' to tell me that he liked my style
Then I rose, wipin' the blunt's ash from my clothes
Then froze, only to blow the herb smoke through my nose
And told my little man I'ma ghost, I broze
Left some jewels in his skull that he can sell if he chose
Words of wisdom from Nas: try to rise up above
Keep an eye out for Jake, Shorty Wop, one love

[Hook: Q-Tip]

[Outro: Nas]

To all my niggas locked up
From Queensbridge and all over
To my man [Goon?], one love
To my man Herb, one love
To my man [Lake Gucciano?], one love
Can't forget my motherfuckin' heart, Big [Bo?], one love
To [Oogie?], yeah, one love

8. One Time for 4 Your Mind

[Chorus 1: Grand Wizard + Nas]

One time for your mind, one time

Yeah, whatever

One time for your mind, one time

Yo, whatever

One time for your mind, one time

Hey yo, Nas? Kick that fuckin' rhyme!

[Verse 1: Nas]

Check it out, when I'm chilling, I grab the buddha

Get my crew to buy beers

And watch a flick, illin' and root for the villain, huh

Plus every morning, I go out and love it sort of chilly

Then I send a shorty from my block to the store for Phillies

After being blessed by the herb's essence

I'm back to my rest, ten minutes, some odd seconds

That's where I got the honey at, spends the night for sexin'

Keep lubrication, Lifestyle protection

Picking up my stereo's remote control quickly

Ron G's in the cassette deck, rocking the shit, G

I try to stay mellow, rock, well a cappella rhymes'll

Make me richer than a slipper made Cinderella, fella

Go get your crew, Hobbes, I'm prepared to bomb troops

Y'all niggas was born, I shot my way out my mom dukes

When I was ten I was a hip-hoppin' shorty wop

Known for rocking microphones and twisting off a 40 top

[Chorus 2: Grand Wizard + Nas]

One time for your mind, one time

Yeah, whatever

One time for your mind, one time

It sounds clever

Hey yo, Nas? Fuck that, man, that shit was phat

But kick that for them gangstas, man fuck all that!

Right, right

[Verse 2: Nas]

What up, niggas, how y'all? It's Nasty, the villain

I'm still writing rhymes, but besides that I'm chillin'

I'm tryin' to get this money, God

You know the hard times, kid

Shit, cold, be starving make you wanna do crimes kid

But I'm a lamp, 'cause a crime couldn't beat a rhyme

Niggas catching 3 to 9's, Muslims yelling "Free the mind"

And I'm from Queensbridge, been to many places

As a kid when I would say that out of town, niggas chased us

But now I know the time, got a older mind

Plus control a 9, fine, see now I represent mine
I'm new on the rap scene, brothers never heard of me
Yet I'm a menace, yo, police wanna murder me
Heini Dark drinker, represent the thinker
My pen rides the paper, it even has blinkers
Think I'll dim the lights, then inhale, it stimulates
Floating like I'm on the North 95 Interstate
Never plan to stop, when I write my hand is hot
And expand a lot from the Wiz to Camelot
The parlayer, I'll make your heads bop, pa
I shine a light on perpetrators, like a cop's car
From day to night, I play the mic and you'll thank God
I wreck shit so much, the microphone'll need a paint job
My brain is incarcerated
Live at any jam, I couldn't count all the parks I've raided
I hold a MAC-11, and attack a reverend
I contact eleven L's and max in heaven

[Chorus 3: Grand Wizard + Nas]

[Outro]

Yeah, that shit was crazy fat, pa
Know what I'm sayin'?
But check it, you got another verse for me
I want you to kick it, you know what I'm sayin'?
Kick that shit for the projects

9. Represent

[Chorus]

Represent, represent
Represent, represent
Represent, represent
Represent, represent

[Verse 1]

Straight up, shit is real
And any day could be your last in the jungle
Get murdered on a humble, guns'll blast, niggas tumble
The corners is the hot spot, full of mad criminals
Who don't care, guzzling beers, we all stare
At the out-of-towners
(Ay, yo, yo, who that?), they better break North
Before we get the four pounders and take their face off
The streets is filled with undercovers
Homicide chasing brothers
The D's on the roof tryin' to watch us and knock us
And killer coppers even come through in helicopters
I drink a little vodka, spark a L and hold a Glock

For the frontiers, wannabe ill niggas and spot runners
Thinking it can't happen 'til I trap 'em and clap 'em
And leave 'em done, won't even run about gods
I don't believe in none of that shit, your facts are backwards
Nas is a rebel of the street corner
Pulling a TEC out the dresser; police got me under pressure

[Chorus]

[Verse 2]

Yo, they call me Nas, I'm not your legal type of fella
Moët drinking, marijuana smoking street dweller
Who's always on the corner, rolling up blessed
When I dress, it's never nothing less than Guess
Cold be walking with a bop and my hat turned back
Love committing sins and my friends sell crack
This nigga raps with a razor, keep it under my tongue
The school drop-out, never liked the shit from day one
'Cause life ain't shit but stress, fake niggas, and crab stunts
So I guzzle my Hennessy while pulling on mad blunts
The brutalizer, crew de-sizer, accelerator
The type of nigga who be pissing in your elevator
Somehow the rap game reminds me of the crack game
Used to sport Bally's and Cazals with black frames
Now I'm into fat chains, sex and TECs
Fly new chicks and new kicks, Heines and Beck's

[Chorus]

[Verse 3]

No doubt, see my stacks are fat, this is what it's about
Before the BDP conflict with MC Shan
Around the time when Shante dissed the Real Roxanne
I used to wake up every morning, see my crew on the block
Every day's a different plan that had us running from cops
If it wasn't hanging out in front of cocaine spots
We was at the candy factory, breaking the locks
Nowadays, I need the green in a flash just like the next man
Fuck a yard, God, let me see a hundred grand
Could use a gun, son, but fuck being the wanted man
But if I hit rock bottom then I'ma be the Son of Sam
Then call the crew to get live too, with Swoop
Bokeem, my brother Jungle, Big Bo cooks up the blow
Mike'll chop it; Mayo, you count the profit
My shit is on the streets, this way the Jakes'll never stop it
It's your brain on drugs, to all fly bitches and thugs
Nuff respect to the projects, I'm ghost, one love

[Chorus]

[Outro]

One time for your mothafuckin' mind
This goes out to everybody in New York
That's living the real fucking life and every projects, all over
To my man Big Will, he's still here
The 40 side of Vernon, my man Big L.E.S
Big Cee-Lo from the Don, Shawn Penn, the 40 busters
My crew the shorty busters, the 41st side of Vernon posse
The Goodfellas, my man Cormega, Lakey the Kid
Can't forget Draws, the Hillbillies
My man Slate, Wallethead, Black Jay, Big Oogie
Crazy barrio spot, (Big Dove), we rock shit a lot, PHD
And my man Premo from Gang Starr
'94 real shit y'all (word up Harry O)
Fuck y'all crab-ass niggas though!

[Nas' posse]
Bitch ass niggas! Bitch ass niggas!
Young bitch ass motherfuckers!
Come to Queensbridge, motherfucker!
Yeah, yeah, let's bring it back
That's just a warm up
'Cause I can— on anybody, anybody

10. It Ain't Hard To Tell

[Verse 1]
It ain't hard to tell, I excel, then prevail
The mic is contacted, I attract clientele
My mic check is life or death, breathin' a sniper's breath
I exhale the yellow smoke of buddha through righteous steps
Deep like *The Shining*, sparkle like a diamond
Sneak a Uzi on the island in my army jacket linin'
Hit the Earth like a comet—invasion!
Nas is like the Afrocentric Asian: half-man, half-amazin'
'Cause in my physical I can express through song
Delete stress like Motrin, then extend strong
I drink Moët with Medusa, give her shotguns in Hell
From the spliff that I lift and inhale; it ain't hard to tell

[Verse 2]
The buddha monk's in your trunk, turn the bass up
Not stories by Aesop
Place your loot up, parties I shoot up
Nas, I analyze, drop a jew-el, inhale from the L
School a fool well, you feel it like Braille
It ain't hard to tell, I kick a skill, like Shaquille holds a pill
Vocabulary spills, I'm Ill plus Matic
I freak beats, slam it, like Iron Sheik
Jam like a TEC with correct techniques

So analyze me, surprise me, but can't magmatize me
Scannin' while you're plannin' ways to sabotage me
I leave 'em froze, like heroin in your nose
Nas will rock well; it ain't hard to tell

[Verse 3]
This rhythmic explosion
Is what your frame of mind has chosen
I'll leave your brain stimulated, niggas is frozen
Speak with criminal slang, begin like a violin
End like Leviathan, it's deep? Well, let me try again
Wisdom be leakin' out my grapefruit, troop
I dominate break loops, givin' mics men-e-strual cycles
Street's disciple, I rock beats that's mega trifle
And groove even smoother than moves by Villanova
You're still a soldier, I'm like Sly Stone in *Cobra*
Packin' like a Rasta in the weed spot
Vocals will squeeze Glocks
MCs eavesdrop, though they need not to sneak
My poetry's deep, I never fell
Nas' raps should be locked in a cell; it ain't hard to tell

Big L – Lifestylez ov da Poor and Dangerous

Korte inhoud album:

Big L's album is een goed voorbeeld van gangster/horrorcore rap. Met vooral gewelddadige thema's die besproken worden wil hij de duistere kant van het getto benadrukken. In andere nummers reflecteert hij weer op een directe manier op het leven in het getto. Volgens hem zit dit vol gevaren. Een positieve boodschap over het getto is hier daarom ook niet uit te halen. Het nummer 'Street Struck' beschrijft hier goed het thema van het album, namelijk de dagelijkse *struggle* en de destructieve manier van leven in specifiek Harlem, New York.

1. Put it On

[Intro: Kid Capri]
Hey, hey, hey
Come on, come on, come on, come on
Come on, come on, come on, come on

[Verse 1: Big L]
Ayo, you better flee hops, or get your head flown three blocks
L keep rappers' hearts pumpin' like Reeboks
And every year I gain clout and my name sprouts
Some brothers'd still be virgins if crack never came out
I got the wild style, always been a foul child
My guns go "BOOM BOOM!" and yo' guns go "pow pow"
I'm known to have a hottie open

I keep the shotty smokin'
Front, and get half the bones in your body broken
And when it comes to gettin' nookie I'm not a rookie
I got girls that make that chick Toni Braxton look like Whoopi
I run with sturdy cliques
I'm never hittin' dirty chicks
Got thirty-five bodies, buddy, don't make it thirty-six
Step to this, you're good as gone
Word is bond, I leave mics torn when I put it on

[Chorus: Kid Capri]

So put it on, Big L, put it on!
C'mon, put it onnn, and onnn, and onnn!
C'mon, put it on, Big L, put it on!
C'mon, put it on, represent, put it on, C'MON!

[Verse 2: Big L]

Nobody can take nothin' from Big L but a loss, chief
The last punk who fronted got a mouth full of false teeth
I'm known to gas a hottie and blast a shotty
Got more cash than Gotti
(You don't know?) you better ask somebody
Big L is a crazy brother, and I'm a lady lover
A smooth kid that'll run up in your baby mother
I push a slick Benz, I'm known to hit skins
And get ends and commit sins with sick friends
'Cause I'm a money getter, also a honey hitter
You think you nice as me? Haha, you's a funny nigga
I flows, so one of my shows wouldn't be clever to miss
I'm leavin' competitors pissed
To tell you the truth, it gets no better than this
I'm catchin' wreck to the break of dawn
In this song, yo, it's a must that I put it on

[Chorus: Kid Capri]

[Bridge: Patois Chatta]

Some boys see me gun nozzle and take a we fi joke
Boy, you gwan dead before you see me gun smoke
See me gun nozzle and take me fi joke
You gwan dead from a me you provoke

[Verse 3: Big L]

I drink Moët, not Beck's beer, I stay dressed in slick gear
Peace to my homies in the gangsta lean, I see you when I get there
And it's a fact I keep a gat in my arm reach
I charm freaks and bomb geeks from here to Palm Beach
I'm puttin' rappers in the wheelchair
Big L is the villain you still fear
'Cause I be hangin' in Harlem and shit is for real here

If you battle L you picked the wrong head
I smash mics like cornbread
You can't kill me, I was born dead
And I'm known to pull steel trigs and kill pigs
I run with ill kids and real nigs who peel wigs
My rap's steady slammin', I keep a heavy cannon
It's a new sheriff in town and it ain't Reggie Hammond
Peace to my peoples, the Children of the Corn
'Cause we put it on, adiós, ghost, I'm gone

[Chorus: Kid Capri]

[Outro: Big L (Kid Capri)]
Lord Finesse (He be puttin' it on)
My man Buckwild (He be puttin' it on and on)
My man Fat Joe (He be puttin' it on)
Showbiz and A.G. (Yeah, they be puttin' it on and on)
I can't forget Diamond D (He be puttin' it on)
The whole D.I.T.C. (Yeah, they be puttin' it on and on)
And of course Kid Capri (Yeah, I be puttin' it on)
The whole N.Y.C. (Yeah, we be puttin' it on and on)
And I'm out

2. M.V.P.

[Verse 1]
Ayo, spark up the phillies and pass the stout
Make it quick money grip or your ass is out
In a street brawl, I strike men quicker than lightning
You seen what happened in my last fight, friend? A'ight, then
L's a clever threat, a lyricist who never sweat
Comparing yourself to me is like a Benz to a Chevrolette
And clown rappers I'm bound to slay
I'm saying hi to all the cuties from around the way
Yeah 'cause I got all of them sprung, Jack
My girls are like boomerangs
No matter how far I throw them, they come back
I'm coming straight out the N.Y.C.
I'm down with Diggin In The Crates and I'm MVP

[Hook]
If rap was a game I'll be M.V.P
The most valuable poet on the M.I.C
Yo if rap was a game I'll be M.V.P
The most valuable poet on the M.I.C

[Verse 2]
Yo it's a must that I get papes
Peace to all the DJ's who gave me love on they mixtapes

And once again the man's back with a dance track
So here's your chance, Jack, to get loose and let your hands clap
I got juice like Boku, mad crews I broke through
Brothers be mad cause I hit more chicks than they spoke to
And everytime I'm jammed I always find a loophole
I got a crime record longer than Manute Bol
And my raps are unbelievable like aliens and flying saucers
No more iron horses 'cause I'm buying Porsches
Coming straight out the NYC
Peace to the Kid Capri, I'm MVP

[Hook]

[Verse 3]
Battles, I lose none, I make crews run
I get fools done, got ten fingers but only use one
I run up like Machine Gun Kelly with a black skully
Put one in your belly, leave you smelly, then take your Pelle Pelle
I'm the neighborhood lamper, punani vamper
Mess around you'll find my silk boxers in your Mommy's hamper
And nowadays girls want you for your money
I'm like Hev, I got nothing but love for you honey
And since I'm looking slick and my pockets are thick
I need surgery to get chicks removed from my (chill)
I'm coming straight out the NYC
Rap's my J-O-B, and I'm MVP

[Hook]

3. No Endz, No Skinz

[Verse 1: Big L]
Let me get to the point real quick
When your pockets are thick, mad chicks be on a brother's tip
When ya sporting jewels and driving in a groovy car
All the ho's gonna sweat you like a movie star
To get in your pockets that's what them girls wanna do
But if you not rich them chicks gonna front on you
No matter how strong your rap
You only knock boots when you got loot and you on the map
'Cause if you broke you'll get a whack slut
If you got dough you get a ho with a fat butt
With fresh gear, long hair and a cute face
And if you live alone she's gonna pack her suit case and move in
Then you start losing all your bucks
Soon you broke as a joke and out of luck
Then she takes off and breaks off, your ho's gone, so long dear
I'm outta here a good relationships been torn
'Cause when you on top everything's okay

But when you broke you gets no play

[Chorus: Showbiz]

If you don't got ends, you won't be getting no skins
And if you don't got money, you won't scoop a honey
If you don't got cash, you won't be getting no ass
And if you're not clocking loot you won't be knocking no boots

[Verse 2: Big L]

Girls of the nineties ain't nothing but crooks
It's all about what's in your pockets not how you look
That's why you can't talk to just any whore
Leaving brothers for the next man 'cause he's got a penny more
They want a drug dealer, not a scholar
Some girls barely speak but always asking for a dollar
And if you pushing a fresh Benz, they'll be your best friends
Yeah, as long as you collect ends
You think she's all yours, but as soon as your dough go
Your ho go, now you solo
But when you was makin' papes selling jumbos
You bought dumb clothes for all of them bum ho's
And you was taking 'em to the movies every weekend
Now that you dead broke, the girls stopped speaking
'Cause nowadays girls want you to trip
The only thing they can get from Big L is a big...
'Cause when you on top everything's okay
But when you broke you gets no play

[Chorus: Showbiz]

[Verse 3: Big L]

I tell it how it is 'cause I'm a bold figure
And I hate a money hungry girl a.k.a. gold digger
It ain't even funny
Some girls don't even know me asking me can they get some money
I'm looking nothing like your poppa
I wouldn't give a chick ten cent to put cheese on a Whopper
They wanna know why I'm so fly
A girl ask me for a ring and I put one around her whole eye
Chicks used to diss, but now they wanna kiss
Yo Showbiz, I'ma break it down like this

[Chorus: Showbiz]

[Outro]

It's like that y'all and that's a fact y'all
I hit hoes from the back and don't give a jack y'all
It's Big L y'all, I'm living swell, y'all
I do my thing, that's why my name ring bells, y'all
If you don't got ends, girls be fronting

If you don't got ends, they ain't giving up nothing
If you don't got ends, all the girls ignore you
If you don't got ends, they act like they never saw you
If you don't got ends⁷⁶

4. 8 iz Enuff

[Intro: Big L]

Yo, my crew is in the house
Terra, Herb McGruff, Buddah Bless
Big Twan, Killa Cam, Trooper J, and Mike Boogie
And I'mma set it like this

[Verse 1: Big L]

Aiyo, folks who quote what I wrote get choked
You better surrender before you get smoked
You niggas be thinkin' this kid is a joke?
I put chumps to rest fast, when my Smith-Wes' blast
So just dash or trespass and get your chest smashed
Rap New York rules, I sport jewels and extort crews
Don't get me pissed, I got a short fuse
I go berserk when I put in work or do dirt, jerk
So stay alert, no smirk, 'cause these knuckles hurt
I'm from the alley, not the valley
I'm hotter than Cali, wicked like Harry
And fuck Sally, I rather marry Halle
I revive crowds with live styles
Don't hang with jive pals
Adios, ghost, I'm 5 thous'

[Verse 2: Terra]

Well, I'm flave, and I was down with the crime wave
Now it's time saved, yo, 'cause now I'm a rhyme slave
In '87 I sold cracks, collected some dough stacks
Hold gats, a joker got his soul taxed
Innovated, rappers you know who made it
Tell the Terra to rotate it, his raps are gold-plated
This nigga Terra is past butter, sharp like a glass cutter
Ass brother, I leave your rhyme trash gutter
I'm more rare, the MC in this warfare
Put you in a morgue where it's too late for that Lord prayer
Power struck, Terra drops the follow-up
Sour luck, niggas gotten props to swallow nuts

[Verse 3: Herb McGruff]

For those that don't know, yo, I'm Herb McGruff

⁷⁶ 'Ends' betekent hier geld.

I'm on some murder stuff and when I talk every verb is rough
Front on this and get beat bad
With big bats that bruise
Break bones, then wind up bloody in a bodybag
MC's are live, but I'm mad liver
Aiyo, my rhymes are more funky than a African cab driver
Step to this and get sliced with ease, ate up like rice and peas
(Herb, can you fight?) Yo, I'm nice with these
Ask the nigga in my last bout
He thought I just was on some gun shit, I had to knock his ass out
Microphones I gotta tear
Peace to Big L, straight from Hell, I'm the fuck up outta here

[Verse 4: Buddah Bless]

Aiyo, it's time to get drastic, but God bless the fantastic
Herb passed it, now I melt the mic like it's plastic
I rag crews 'cause I'm bad news
In a mad mood, I'm servin' brothers quicker than fast food
Step to this and get your body blown
'Cause I'm no maricón, for poems I slide the hotties home
Here's some advice, I'm mad nice
Aiyo, I'm quick to lick the mag twice and cold take a fag's life
My swellin' melon got niggas jealin'
Aiyo, fuck bribes, I'm takin' niggas lives like a felon

[Verse 5: Big Twan]

Yo, I'm bustin' chumps like a Glock 10
When I drops in, the top ten is rocked when it's locked in
I just abuse the flow, don't need a fuse to blow
Bruise the groove slow, when I rhyme I just kill your show
I got lines that's deeper than a jail bid
No frail, kids get nailed and read braille when they fail, dig
Yeah, and I'm nasty, too nasty to trash me, bash me
Aiyo, that's dead, so don't ask me
You'd get bumped off if beef ever jumped off
I never come soft, I gotta pump that's sawed-off
But when I let slugs out, you will get rubbed out
You dissin', you'll come up missin' like a cub scout

[Verse 6: Killa Kam - Cam'Ron]

Rappers be funny like Fletch
'Cause they sections say they slaughter, son
Talk about nines and TECs, and never shot a watergun
But Killa Kam, I get erratic when it comes to static
There you have it, a trigger fanatic with a automatic
Increase the peace that cease 'cause once I release
My crew from the East, we leavin' at least 20 police deceased
It's the beast on attack, so make tracks, I break backs
I jack with def gats and black MACs
On Lenox Ave., ain't no light looks, you fight crooks

Left and right hooks, if you front, get your life took

[Verse 7: Trooper J]

I'm havin' nail-sharp pains in my brain like a Hellraiser
I'm blazin' trails from jail cells, so a trailblazer
Who find crime and fill the nine with nothin' but lead
Boom-bye-bye, dem find another batty bwoy dead
In backyard alleys, but I call 'em crackyard valleys
And I pack more rallies than riots back in Cali
And people wanna know the reason why I blow my fuse
I'm in a daze and I'm so confused
From seein' heads shake so many times the lead make
And Mike Boogie's next up, and keep my head straight

[Verse 8: Mike Boogie]

I should never rhyme 'cause every time I step into a contest
Kids evacuate the premises like it's a bomb threat
'Cause they know when I start droppin' poems
That I be knockin' domes, poppin' bones
And sendin' niggas hoppin' home
Word to God, it's kinda hard for a fag to touch this
So if you're comin' to see me, nigga, bring a cast and crutches
And niggas, I don't need a gun for you, none of you
'Cause I can kill you dead with the lead from my Number 2
And it's death in every paragraph
And niggas learn when I burn their motherfuckin' ass to ash
No need to question am I nice 'cause it's a fact, friend
I shoot the gift like Santa Claus with a MAC-10
And niggas ain't half as nice, so they get sacrificed
And sent to the afterlife, they ain't no match for Mike
Now I'm 'bout to skate in a rush, just finished makin' it tough
Peace to Big L, aiyo, 8 is enough

[Outro: Big L]

True, true and before I get up outta here
I gotta say peace to D-Whiz and Short Man
Brothers that was there since the beginning
What's up to Rock-N-Will from the Hard Pack Crew
Peace to Mase Murder and the B.B.O. Crew
The Best Out Crew, the M&M Crew
And all the other crews that's representin' in Harlem
You know what I'm sayin?
And last but not least
I gotta say peace to the 139th Street NFL Crew
My crew, word up

5. All Black

[Verse 1]

Yo, once again, it's the Big L, that kid who got much props
From killin' corrupt cops with motherfuckin' buck shots
So don't step to this, 'cause I got a live crew
You might be kinda big, but they make coffins yo' size, too
I was taught wise, I'm known to extort guys
This ain't Cali, it's Harlem nigga, we do walk-by's
No one can match me, tax me, or wax me
If you want me to write you some raps, G, just ask me
Cause on the shelf is where your LP cold stood
Because it was no good, that shit ain't even go wood
I'm not the type to take sluts out, I just fuck they guts out
Get my nuts out, then break the fuck out
Me being a virgin? That's idiotic
Cause if Big L got the AIDS, every cutie in the city got it
Once a nigga tried to stick me for six G's
And I put more holes in his ass than Swiss cheese

[Chorus]

(Ducks better scat when the gat goes click-clack)
Or I'ma have your family dressed in all black
(Ducks better scat when the gat goes click-clack)
Or I'ma have your family dressed in all black

[Verse 2]

I steal lives like a stone thief, so leave me alone, chief
Or catch a buck shot to your dome piece
I must warn, I got it goin' on, word is bond
Ducks be gettin' thrown off platforms like PM Dawn
I'm catchin' bodies like a villain's supposed to
And I squeeze triggers, not just on niggas, but hoes too
So don't try to test me, 'cause I can't stand testers
Fuck around, I'll introduce you to your ancestors
Step to this and get left with a face full of tears, pal
But man, you've been rappin' for years now
And ain't made a hit yet, you flop in a split sec
In the shower's the only time you get your dick wet
I roll with scary crews, I come out of wars barely bruised
I'm puttin' motherfuckers on the Daily News
I was a gangsta from the get-go
Leavin' fags in bodybags with tags on they big toe

[Chorus]

[Verse 3]

Yo, ever since I was young, I ripped mics and I killed beats
And I'm known to milk freaks and hit 'em on silk sheets

No dame can give me a bad name, I got mad fame
I'm quick to put a slug in a fag brain
I be placin' snitches inside lakes and ditches
And if I catch AIDS, then I'ma start rapin' bitches
I'm all about makin' papes kid
I killed my mother with a shovel just like Norman Bates did
My old man in the past, stuck me up without a mask
Then his ass cold dashed with my cash fast
Fifty G's is what the creep stole
So the next day, knocked on his door, and shot his granny through the peephole
That's the type of shit I'm on, word is bond
Got it goin' on, from the break of dawns to the early morn'
You know my style, I'm wild, comin' straight out of Harlem, pal
It's Big L, the motherfucking problem child

[Chorus]

[Outro]

This goes out to all y'all bitch-ass niggas
So if your mother ain't ready for a funeral, don't fuck with me!
Cause I know a good way to get your family together
And I ain't talkin' bout a reunion, motherfucker!
Yo, I'm bout to sign out, but before I go
I gotta say peace to the NFL crew, you know who you are
And all y'all niggas talkin' that gun shit
And won't bust a rhyme, stop fakin' the funk!
Word, I'm bout to get up out of here
Yo I'm out B, yo peace man
I gotta get this money
So all y'all niggas on my hit list get your suits ready
Hahahaha!

6. Danger Zone

[Intro: Malcolm X]

"Stealing runs rampant in Harlem, gambling runs rampant in Harlem—all types of evils and vices that tear apart our community run rampant in Harlem."

[Verse 1: Big L]

The microphone is through when this rap legend grab it
Sendin' poems to have them faggots
Diggin' hoes like Reverend Swaggart
L's the nigga that crime follows
I'm hittin' fine models and stabbin' punks with broken wine bottles
I beat chumps 'til they head splits
Then break 'em like bread sticks
I sex chicks, I'll even fuck a dead bitch
Always sprayin' TEC's, because I be stayin' vexed
Some nigga named Dex was in the projects layin' threats

I jumped out the Lincoln, left him stinkin'
Put his brains in the street
Now you can see what he was just thinkin'
I'm chokin' enemies 'til they start turnin' pale
Satan said I'm learnin' well, Big L's gonna burn in Hell
Front and get scarred 'cause your rap style ain't even hard
I run with a heathen squad, and none of us believe in God

[Hook: McGruff + Big L]

(McGruff:) 'Cause one-three-nine and Lennox is the Danger Zone
(Big L:) Where no man can withstand or hold his own
(Big L:) 'Cause one-three-nine and Lennox is the Danger Zone
(McGruff:) Where no man can withstand or hold his own

[Verse 2: Big L]

I got styles you can't copy, bitch
It's the triple six in the mix, straight from H-E-double-hockey sticks
Every Sunday, a nun lay from my gun spray
Fuck Carlito, we doin' shit the Devil Son's way
Every minute, my style switches up
They said a real man won't hit a girl
Well, I ain't real, 'cause I beat bitches up
I use words that's ill, L got nerves of steel
I'm cool, but every now and then I get a urge to kill
I'm takin' lives for a great price
I'm the type to snap in Heaven with a MAC-11 and rape Christ
And I'm fast to put a cap in a fag chest
The Big L's mad stressed, 'cause Hell is my address
I'm on some satanic shit strictly
Little kids be wakin' up cryin'
Yellin', "Mommy, Big L is comin' to get me!"

[Hook: McGruff + Big L]

[Verse 3: Big L]

I keep a cutie with a soft booty
Hoes be runnin' up, "Can I get your autograph, L?"
No, bitch, I'm off duty
I'm breakin' hottie hearts, niggas drop when my shotty sparks
It ain't no food in my fridge, just body parts
I keep the gear fresh, I keep the braids rugged
I never wear rubbers, bitch – if I get AIDS, fuck it!
A beef with me, you better prevent it 'cause in a minute
I'll jump out a tinted rented, and leave a nigga body dented
And my swoll knob your main girl cold-slobbered
And gave a blow job to my whole mob, with no prob'
Ayo, crazy bitches slept with L
Then they niggas got mad and tried to step to L
But I'm sicker than a nigga that's in special ed
So I suggest you spread, pretzelhead

'Fore I turn your white sweatsuit red

[Hook: McGruff + Big L]

7. Street Struck

[Intro]

Yeah, it's the Big L
Coming at you once again, in nine-five
And I dedicate this one
To all my peoples from Uptown, and everywhere
Check it

[Verse 1]

Yo, where I'm from it ain't cookies and cream
There's a lot of peer pressure growin' up as a young teen
You never know when you gonna get wet
'Cause mad clowns be catchin' wreck with a Tec just to get a rep
Instead of cool friends, they'd rather hang with male thugs
Instead of goin' to school, they'd rather sell drugs
It's best to go the right route and not the wrong one
Because it's gonna catch up with you in the long run
Brothers be on the corners, actin' stupid, gettin' lifted
Their life is twisted, and most of them are quite gifted
In other words, they got talent
But they'd rather sell cracks, and bust gats, and run the streets actin' violent
To them, it's all about hittin' skins and makin' some easy green
'Cause that's all they show you on the TV screen
All they care about is a buck or bustin' a sweet nut
They don't give a (What?) 'cause they're street struck

[Chorus]

You better listen when L rhyme
'Cause being street struck'll get you nothin' but a bullet or jail time
So pay attention when L rhyme
'Cause being street struck'll get you nothin' but a bullet or jail time

[Verse 2]

Before the rap contract, I was sellin' crack
Stay strapped with a Mac, I was into all of that
I started rappin' and got nice as hell
If it wasn't for this, I might be doin' life in jail
And some of my peeps are still in the game selling 'caine
If that's what you gotta do to maintain, go 'head, do your thing
But with the cash profit, make an investment
And try not to go to the grave like the rest went
'Cause you can be rich with crazy loot, own a house and nine cars
What good is that if you're dead or behind bars?
And yo, it's not even funny

I've seen a lot of my peers give up their careers for some fast money
They could've been boxers, ballplayers, or rap singers
Instead they bank robbers and crack slingers
Ayo, they used to be legit kids, now they corrupt
They had dreams, but gave 'em up 'cause they street struck

[Chorus]

[Verse 3]

I still chill with my peeps in the streets
But most of the time, I'm in the crib writing rhymes to some dope beats
Or either calling up some freaks to bone
But word up, I try to leave the streets alone
But it's crazy hard kid, in other words, it's spooky
The streets be callin' me, like the crack be callin' Pookie
It ain't a dumb joke, listen to this young folk
'Cause where I'm from, you can choke from the gun smoke
Stay off the corners, that might be your best plan
Before you catch a bullet that was meant for the next man
Or end up with a deep cut
Or relaxin' on a hospital bed from bein' street struck

[Chorus]

[Outro]

Word up
Ayo take it from me, the Big L
'Cause I been through it all, you know what I'm sayin'?
Stay off them corners you'll stay out of trouble
And I gotta say rest in peace to all the casualties of the streets
I'm outta here

8. Da Graveyard

[Intro]

It's the number one crew in the area

[Verse 1: Big L]

The Big L be lightin' niggas like incense
Gettin' men lynched, and when tensed, I'm killin' infants for ten cents
'Cause I'm a street genius with a unique penis
Got fly chicks on my dick that don't even speak English
I'm makin' ducks shed much tears, I buck queers
I don't have it all upstairs but who the fuck cares?
I'm grabbin' brews takin' fast swiggas
I get cash and stash figures and harass them bitch ass niggas
After you your man'll get scarred next

And if your squad flex I'm lettin' off like Bernard Goetz
A TEC-9 is my utensil
Fillin' niggas with so much lead they can use they dick for a pencil
I'm known for snatchin' purses and bombin' churches
I get more pussy by accident than most niggas get on purpose
I got drug spots from New York to Canada
'Cause Big L be fuckin' with more keys than a janitor

[Verse 2: Lord Finesse]

Now it's the dictator who's style is greater
It's the man with more wild flavors than motherfuckin' Now & Laters
And rappers I hit 'em well
They automatically go to heaven fuckin' with me 'cause I give 'em hell
So don't try to front troop
When your style is played out just like an Oshkosh jumpsuit
I'm out to collect figures
I'm on some Wu-Tang shit so protect your fucking neck nigga
Not a role model I'm a bad figure
When it comes to rap I got skills out the ass nigga
I got it locked like a warden
Rap without Finesse is like the NBA without Jordan
So all ya new jacks kickin' wack raps
It's a fact that I'll be on your fuckin' back like a knapsack
It ain't shit you can tell me
Because bitches still gel me without a motherfuckin' LP

[Hook]

It's the number one crew in the area

"Known for sendin' garbage MC's to the graveyard"

[Verse 3: Microphone Nut]

Yo I got a death wish
That's why I talk so much fuckin' shit
I want these bitch motherfuckers to try to flip
So I can fill up this clip
And stick the gun between they lips like a cigarette
And let 'em smoke the four fifth
Ah fool, ah goodbye no need to try to lie or cry
It's time for motherfuckers to die
Because to me death is like sex
And if my brain was a deck of cards I'd be missing a whole deck
Strap up a Mac clack clack motherfuckers are runnin' like rats
The blind bats are fuckin' crazed cats
'Cause the Microphone Nut's loose
And you're wonderin' how the fuck did this madman get cut loose
From 25 consecutive 25 to life bids
For murderin' up some fuckin' white kids
These were the kids of the prison guards
Then I startin' killin' squads of prison guards in the prison yard
One two everybody's through

The Microphone Nut flew over the prison walls without a clue
And now I'm back to haunt shit and talk shit
Whoever flaunt shit I leave 'em unconscious
I run through ya with a maneuver and German luger
Wreck like Das EFX straight out the fuckin' sewer
Please show me where the crack is at
While they quarter crack the sack I crack they backs like Cracker Jacks
So I'm the one you should run from
Because the Microphone Nut is like a motherfuckin' stun gun

[Verse 4: Jay-Z]

The way I rock no way you could stop
I shock pop and drop when Jay gets hot
When I'm in the zone better hold ya own
'Cause I like to break when I finish a poem
Pound for p-p-pound the best around
No way you can get up when I get down
I shake rattle and roll and wreck shit like none
And beat a nigga ass half silly on the one
Fuckin' A fuckin' Jay ill with skill
So ladies step up I get around like a wheel
I'm never chokin' off chronic skills are bionic
Bitches are screaming like Onyx
Respect that I'll peel a punk's cap back and sign it
Creep through your block fuck a Glock I step
Through your neighborhood armed with nothing but a rep
I'm giving these ladies something they can feel 'cause I'm real
Ya man get outta line and it's kill kill kill kill

[Hook]

[Verse 5: Party Arty of Ghetto Dwellaz]

Yo you step up and you'll get played like the small fry
I'm throwin' niggas off the roof said you wanna be the Fall Guy
So mess around you'll be a dead man
I get hype tonight's the night like Redman
Nuff respect to Big L who get wreck
Chiggidy check yourself 'cause I ain't workin' with a full deck
I'm lethal, eatin' people
Not Jeffrey Dahmer I'm the sequel, head or gut like Illegal
So what'cha want?
Yo I'm strapped with the gats step up plap plap
I'm leavin' caps in your back fool
I rip tracks wanna say peace to Hip Hop
A nigga disagree bring it on and get dropped
I get wreck I'm Party Arty so hit the deck
The kid with the Tec smokin' niggas like cigarettes
Now some ask me how I'm gettin' jewels
I tell em' big up big up it's a stick up stick up
I stick and move

[Big L]

And that's how we do. So I.U. grab the gat and let loose

[Verse 6 Grand Daddy I.U.]

Yo rat tat tat I got the gat cocked

Nigga we ghost man a punk?

I let it roast and leave your pussy ass comatose

I'm shootin' up like the west is

Fuck suggestions

I'll blow out a niggas intestines

Better dip fast quick fast or you won't last

One blast will put your ass in a body cast

And I be killin' for rep get ill in a sec

Nine mil on your neck blood spill is still in effect

Constantly comittin' grand larceny

Arsony niggas don't want no parts of me

Never passed up a fast buck ask the last duck

His jewels was truck he got his ass stuck

So what the fuck is you sayin' hops?

I'm wanted for slayin' cops

Who's ever around when I be sprayin' drops

But I ain't givin' a fuck who gets hit

Niggas coppin' pleas but I ain't tryin' to hear shit

I'll burn you faggot niggas like toast

If you die and come back I shoot your spirit

Now your ass is just a holy ghost

You tried to play me to the left

You better put a target on your head

'Cause you're marked for death

9. Lifestylez ov da Poor And Dangerous

[Intro]

(Everybody everywhere is scratching for what they can get

Did you think anybody in this town is any different?

They don't give a damn who gets killed

Just as long as "the dice keep rollin

The hoes keep hoeing and the money keeps flowin")

[Verse]

My name is L, and I'm from a part of town where clowns

Get beat down and all you hear is gunshot sounds

On 139 and Lenox Ave. there's a big park

And if you're soft, don't go through it when it gets dark

'Cause at nighttime niggas try to tax

They're sneakier than alley cats

That's why I carry gats

Yo, I'm a muthafuckin' fugitive

Buckwild and foul is the lifestyle that I choose to live

Because to me it's all about a buck

I used to have a partner in crime by the name of Chuck

We stormed the city, shooting shit up like Frank Nitti

We robbed kids and split the dough 50/50

One day we stuck a dice game on the ave. and split the cash

Then I murdered his ass and took his half

Because I'm all about ends and skins

When you got those, you don't need no muthafuckin' friends

If I catch you on a late night, black, you're getting stuck, jack

My moms told me to get a job, fuck that

Ayo, picture me getting a job

Taking orders from Bob, selling corn on the cob

Yo, how the hell I'mma make ends meet

Making about 120 dollars a week

Man, I'd rather do another hit

I want clean clothes, mean hoes and all that other shit

Yo, I admit, I'm a sucker

A low down, dirty, sneaky, double-crossin' connivin' muthafucka

Breaking in cribs with a crowbar

I wasn't poor, I was po' - I couldn't afford the 'o-r'

I used to wait until it gets dark

And tell a nigga to strip, I wanna see some birthmarks

Like a ninja, dressed in black with a ski mask

I take all the funds, then I run down the street fast

I vicked this nigga named Eugene, took his brand new ring

'Cause sticking up's an everyday routine

Once I was cruising in a beat-up ride

Saw this nigga named Clyde

And snuck up on him from the blind side

I told him, "Give up the dough, before you get smoked

Oh you're broke? *gunshots*

Now you're dead broke"

The Big L was cold crazy

A top-notch crook snatching pocketbooks from old ladies

I don't care, I'll do anything to get a buck

Even rob a Miller truck, 'cause I don't give a fuck

Some say I'm ruthless, some say I'm grim

Once a burglar broke into my house and I robbed him

Plenty and many brains I bust

'Cause I was livin' the lifestyle of the poor and dangerous

[Outro]

Word

All of us from Harlem

139

That's living the lifestyle of the poor and dangerous

Knawhatlmsayin?

This goes out

To my brothers

Big Lee and Don Ice
Reggie Reg, T.C., Todd, Lou, Black Tone
Whitey, Ty Speeder, Ru Dog, Herb McGruff
E-Jet, G Love, Doc Ring, Slice and Rich Dice
I can't forget the 1-4-0, Lennox Ave. crew
And I gotta say rest in peace to Mate the Skate, Dog
And my man Kerry, peace

Now what kinda life is that for a child?
Now what kinda life is that for a child?
Now what kinda life is that for a child?
Now what kinda life is that for a fucking child?
Word to mother, fuck all that stupid shit
Controversial, not commercial, nigga

10. I Don't Understand It

[Verse 1]
There are too many MC's who are overrated
You ask me, they wasn't even supposed to make it
In the rap biz, they don't know what rap is
So give it up, become a actor or a actress
Or a producer, cause you fail to use the
Mic right, so take flight before I bruise ya
For sayin those bull crap wack raps on wax
You need to get smacked, sit back and rip that contract
Hey yo, I'm serious, Big L ain't playin games
I should get foul and buck wild and start sayin names
But deep down inside you know who you are
Your rhymes are not up to par, you fake superstar
And that really gets on my nerve
When a rapper gets the credit that he don't deserve
Goin platinum and don't have no soul
Some rappers are mad nice and don't even go gold
I don't like the way it's goin down
Because it should be the other way around

[Hook]
I don't understand it (I don't understand it)
I don't understand it (I don't understand it)
I don't understand it (I don't understand it)
How MC's take this rap game for granted

[Verse 2]
MC's - what's goin on?

I don't understand, man, how rappers cold transform
One minute you're hardcore and raw
That's what you was known for, but not no more
You changed, you rearranged
You're not the same, your raps are plain
That explain why you lost your fame
Used to be on top, then you fell like rain drops
You turned pop, now you no longer gain props
Who's fault is that? Nobody's but your own, black
Used to make fat tracks, jack, but now you're stone wack
So MC's, don't ever step out your range
Remain the same
And only change with the time
Unless you get dropped like a dime
Go for yours like I'm goin for mine
But if you're rough, stay rough, if you're dap, stay dapper
And never try to look or even sound like another rapper
Just fulfill your own needs
Some rappers wore gold chains, and now they're wearin beads?

[Hook]

[Verse 3]

This is how it should be done
I'm not the one, and my raps is strong like rum
But some MC's grab the mic and sound dumb
Plus slum (How come?) Rap skills they have none
And I wonder how the hell they records sell
They raps are stale and frail
They're false like fairy tales
Your technique and everything you speak's weak
You got a little airplay because of your beats
Your fame and your name, but your lyrics are lame, black
Step to this and get ran over like train tracks
Your raps border wack, and you went on tour with that
Crap, don't understand it, cause rhyme skills you lack
I got more soul than Nike Airs, givin MC's nightmares
Rappers be frontin hard, and rhymes they don't write theirs
But still call themselves MC's
Please, how could that be?

[Hook]

11. Fed Up With the Bullshit

[Verse 1]

Yo, on the scene is the brother that's big, I'm not a little kid
I'm a nig who don't dig a muthafuckin pig
Cause to me they ain't nothin but harassers

That misuse they badges to whip niggas' asses
Then one day they slow rolled through the hood
With the .38s cocked, 2 deep, up to no good
They say that my skin was black so they attacked
Threw me on the back and stuck a gat to my fuckin cap
One murdered my man like it was okay
For the life he ended he got suspended with no pay
But if a man woulda took the cop life, he woulda got life
And never again see the street lights, and that's trife
Around my way they shot many teens
And them cops better stop, or I'mma stop em, by any means
The Big L won't hesitate to cold diss em
And if you ask me, muthafuck the whole system
There are too many young black brothers doin life bids
Cause justice means 'just us white kids'
So take heed to the rhymes I kick
I'm about to flip, cause I'm fed up with that bullshit

[Hook]

I'm fed up with that bullshit (bullshit)
I'm fed up with that bullshit (bullshit)
I'm fed up with that bullshit (bullshit)
I'm fed up (Aw, shit)

[Verse 2]

Whether it's the hot, warm, cool or the cold season
Pigs be fuckin with a nigga for no reason
You're just gettin home from work
And gotta get searched and treated like dirt by a fuckin jerk
Niggas in the streets got tough luck
First they get cuffed up
Then get roughed up, and that's fucked up
This every day, not every other week
Listen when this brother speak
Muthafuck turnin the other cheek
Or you'll be layin' in a pine box
Bad enough they got .38s, now them clowns gettin nine Glocks
I'm not only fed up with the cops
I'm also fed up with them punk-ass cab drivers who don't stop
They don't care if it's snowin
First they slow down, then they see your skin is brown, then they keep goin
Cause I wasn't white, the cab took flight
But I caught him at the light
And put a bullet right through his windpipe
I keep a tool with a full clip, the trigger I pull quick
Cause I'm fed up with that bullshit

12. Let 'Em Have it "L"

[Hook]

Settin' it off lettin' it off (whatever) (x4)

(Let 'em have it L) What?

(Give it to 'em L) Yeah (x3)

(Let 'em have it L) What?

(Let 'em have it)

[Verse 1: Big L]

Ayo, I'm serious, I'm not the type to joke a lot

Dressed in all black, never seen in polka dots

No other write rhymes like these

I'm cool as a light breeze, I'm playin' rappers out like striped Lees

I'm smoother than velvet, my lyrics are well-writ

You sayin', "L's this," and, "L's that"—get off L' dick

I don't roll with punks I only roll with live guys

And we do drivebys in 325is

I had beef with this thief named Randolph

Now he's in a casket dressed up with his hands crossed

So you better leave L alone

Before I reach out and touch you but not with a telephone

Yo I'm the brother that you never even thought of beatin'

Black white or Puerto Rican, I'm gonna slaughter each and

Every crab MC that runs up

When a battle comes up, give me two thumbs up

[Hook]

[Verse 2: Big L]

I damage all opponents as soon as the bell rings

It's all about me, yo it's a B. I. G. L thing

The crown is still mine cause I drop ill rhymes

A lot of rappers talk that murder shit and couldn't kill time

One two one two crews I run through

Fuck karate, Big L practice Gun Fu

Cause I'm a MC assassinator

I grab the mag and leave a nag leakin' like activator

Step to this and get shanked up

I knocked out so many teeth the tooth fairy went bankrupt

And I entertain well because of my brain cells

I'm naughty and stop callin' me shorty my name's L

My raps are hotter than the Bahamas

MC's be talkin' about breakin' jaws when they couldn't break a promise

With Big L you can't swing long

So get behind me and sing, cause every hero got a theme song

[Hook]

[Verse 3: Big L]

The Big L's back to attack with a phat rap

Matter of fact, black, I'm puttin' Harlem on the map

Wassup cause I'm a stiggy star
Breakin' 'em up and then takin' they heart
You better believe that Big L is the man that be rippin' the microphones apart
I'm undefeated that's the stone truth
Cause battlin' me is like fightin' a gorilla in a phone booth
I take lives with no pride, I just committed a homicide
A punk brother died cause he tried
To take my cash but he didn't last, I pulled out fast
He tried to bash then I blast on his monkey ass (boom)
I make a lot of dough, I'm quick to spot a foe
Even if my grandma violate, she gotta go!
When I was young I played with guns, not a kiddy toy
Cause I'm a rough, rugged gangsta, not a pretty boy
Facts on tracks I recite well
Everybody wanna be like Mike, but Mike wanna be like L

[Hook]

Outro [Ma\$e]:

A-yo, big shots to all them niggas on the corner
Doin' something they ain't
Got no business doin'
I gotta say what's up to S&S, Doo Wop, and the Bounce Squad
Can't forget my peeps from Brooklyn, you know what I'm sayin'?
Like Box and Herb and Big Sid
A-yo, L, you must be buggin', B
You didn't even let me say what's up to my hoes, B

[Big L]

Oh yeah, we gotta say what's up to the hoes, man

Word up let's go see our P.O

Wu-Tang Clan – Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)

Korte inhoud album:

Met dit album wil Wu-Tang Clan Staten-Island op de kaart zetten. Ook al zijn niet alle rapartiesten van deze *borough*, dit was wel de plek die zij vertegenwoordigden. Hierdoor is het gehalte van *braggadocio* rap erg hoog. Economische mogelijkheden worden niet heel nadrukkelijk besproken, behalve in het nummer C.R.E.A.M. Als er al over gesproken wordt, dan is dat meestal in de vorm van *blight hustling*.

1. Bring da Ruckus

[Intro: Sample from *Shaolin vs. Wu Tang*]

“Shaolin shadowboxing and the Wu-Tang sword style.”

“If what you say is true, the Shaolin and the Wu-Tang could be dangerous. Do you think your Wu-Tang sword can defeat me?”

“En garde, I’ll let you try my Wu-Tang style.”

[Chorus: RZA]

Bring da motherfuckin' ruckus!

Bring da motherfuckin' ruckus!

Bring da mother, bring da motherfuckin' ruckus!

Bring da motherfuckin' ruckus!

[Verse 1: Ghostface Killah]

Ghostface catch the blast of a hype verse

My Glock burst, leave in a hearse, I did worse

I come rough, tough like an elephant tusk

Your head rush, fly like Egyptian musk

Aww shit, Wu-Tang Clan spark the wicks, an'

However I master the trick just like Nixon

Causin' terror, quick damage your whole era

Hard rocks is locked the fuck up, or found shot

P.L.O. style, hazardous, 'cause I wreck this dangerous

I blow sparks like Waco, Texas

[Verse 2: Raekwon]

I watch my back like I'm locked down

Hardcore-hittin' sound

Watch me act bugged and tear down

Illiterate-type asshole, songs goin' gold

No doubt, and you watch a corny nigga fold

Yeah, they fake and all that, carryin' gats

But yo, my Clan rollin' like forty macks

Now you act convinced, I guess it makes sense

Wu-Tang, yo, soooo represent!

I wait for one to act up, now I got him backed up
Gun to his neck now, react what?
And that's one in the chamber, Wu-Tang banger
36 styles of danger

[Chorus: RZA]

[Verse 3: Inspectah Deck]

I rip it, hardcore like porno-flick bitches
I roll with groups of ghetto bastards with biscuits
Check it, my method on the microphone's bangin'
Wu-Tang slang'll leave your headpiece hangin'
Bust this, I'm kickin' like Seagal: *Out for Justice*
The roughness, yes, the rudeness, ruckus
Redrum, I verbally assault with the tongue
Murder One, my style shocks your knot like a stun gun
I'm hectic, I wreck it with the quickness
Set it on the microphone, and competition get blown
By this nasty-ass nigga with my nigga, the RZA
Charged like a bull and got pulled like a trigga
So bad, stabbin' up the pad with the vocab, crab
I scream on your ass like your dad, bring it on...

[Chorus: RZA]

[Verse 4: GZA]

Yo, I'm more rugged than slave man boots
New recruits, I'm fuckin' up MC troops
I break loose, and trample shit, while I stomp
A mudhole in that ass 'cause I'm straight out the swamp
Creepin' up on site, now it's *Fright Night*
My Wu-Tang slang is mad fuckin' dangerous
And more deadly than the stroke of an axe
Choppin' through your back *swish*
Givin' bystanders heart attacks
Niggas try to flip, tell me, who is him?
I blow up his fuckin' prism, make it a vicious act of terrorism
You wanna bring it, so fuck it, come on and bring the ruckus!
And I provoke niggas to kick buckets
I'm wettin' cream, I ain't wettin' fame
Who sellin' 'caine? I'm givin' out a deadly game
It's not the Russian, it's the Wu-Tang crushin' roulette
Slip up and get fucked like Suzette
Bring da fuckin' ruckus!

[Chorus: RZA]

[Outro]

“En garde, I'll let you try my Wu-Tang style.”

So, bring it on!
So, bring it on!
So, bring it on!
So, bring it on!
So, bring it on!
So, bring it on!
So, bring it on, nigga!

2. Shame On A Nigga

[Chorus: Ol' Dirty Bastard]
Shame on a nigga who try to run game on a nigga
Wu buck wild with the trigger
Shame on a nigga who try to run game on a nigga
Wu buck... I'll fuck your ass up!

[Verse 1: Ol' Dirty Bastard & Raekwon]
Yo, hut one, hut two, hut three, hut!
Ol' Dirty Bastard, live and uncut
Styles unbreakable, shatterproof
To the young youth, you wanna get gun? Shoot!
Blaow! How you like me now?
Don't fuck the style, ruthless wild
Do you wanna get your teeth knocked the fuck out?
Wanna get on it like that? Well, then shout!

[Verse 2: Method Man]
Yo RZA, yo razor, hit me with the major
The damage, my clan understand it, be flavor
Gunnin', hummin', comin' at ya
First I'm gonna get ya, once I got ya, I gat ya
You could never capture the Method Man's stature
For rhyme and for rapture, got niggas resignin', now master
My style? Never!
I put the fuckin' buck in the wild, kid, I'm terror, razor-sharp
I sever, the head from the shoulders, I'm better than my competta
You mean competitor, whatever, let's get together

[Chorus: Ol' Dirty Bastard]

[Verse 3: Raekwon]
I react so thick, I'm phat, and yo
Rae came blowin' and blew off your headphones, black
Rap from, yo, Cali to Texas
Smoother than a Lexus, now's my turn to wreck this
Brothers approach and half step
But ain't heard half of it yet and I bet you're not a fuckin' vet
So, when you see me on the real
Formin' like Voltron, remember I got deep like a Navy Seal

[Chorus: Ol' Dirty Bastard]

[Verse 4: Ol' Dirty Bastard]

Yo! I come with that ol' loco style from my vocal
Couldn't peep it with a pair of bifocals
I'm no joker, play me as a joker
Be on you like a house on fire, smoke ya
Crews be actin' like they gangs, anyway
Be like, "Warriors, come out and play!"
Burn me, I get into shit, I let it out like diarrhea
Got burnt once but that was only gonorrhea
Dirty, I keep shit stains in my drawers
So I can get fizza-funky for ya
Murder, taste the flame of the Wu-Tang
Rah! Here comes the Tiger vs. Crane
I'll be like wild with my style
Punk, you play me, chump, you get jumped
Wu is comin' through at a theater near you
And get funk like a shoe, what?

3. Clan in Da Front

[Intro: RZA]

Up from the 36 Chambers
Heheh, it's the Ghost Face Killah
Heheheh, Wu-Tang!
Wu-Tang Killa Beez, we on a swarm
Wu-Tang Killa Beez, we on a swarm
Wu-Tang Killa Beez, we on a swarm
Wu-Tang Killa Beez, we on a swarm
The RZA, the GZA, Ol' Dirty Bastard, Inspectah Deck, U-God
Ghostface Killah, the Method Man, Raekwon the Chef, the Masta Killa, Raw Desire,
LeVon, Power Cipher
12 O'Clock, 60 Second Assassin
The 4th Disciple, the Brown Hornet
K.D. the Down Low Recka
Shyheim a.k.a. The Rugged Child
Du-Du-Lilz, Mr. Hezekiah
Better known as the Yin and the Yang, the True Master
Isham, DJ Skane, the True Robocop comin' through
Scientific Shabazz, my motherfuckin' man Wise the Civilized
The Shaolin Soldiers, Daddy-O and Popa Ron
Comin' down from the motherfuckin' South end of things
Killa Beez all over your fuckin' planet
Thirty-six chambers of death
Three-hundred and sixty degrees of perfected styles
Choppin' off your motherfuckin' dome
-piece, and every fuckin' borough

Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Queens, Staten Island
The motherfuckin' Bronx, Killa Beez

[Sample from *Shaolin and Wu-Tang*]
The sword? C'mon, give him the sword!

[Chorus: GZA]
Clan in da front, let your feet stomp
Niggas on the left, brag shit to death (*Wu, wu, wu, wu*)
Hoods on the right, wild for the night (*Wu, wu, wu, wu*)
Punks in the back, c'mon and attract to what? (*Wu, wu, wu, wu*)

[Verse 1: GZA]
The Wu is comin' through, the outcome is critical
Fuckin' with my style is sort of like a miracle
On 34th Street, in the Square of Herald
I gamed Ella, the bitch caught a Fitz like Gerald-
-ine Ferraro, who's full of sorrow
'Cause the ho didn't win, but the sun will still come out tomorrow
And shine shine shine like gold mine
Here comes the drunk monk, with a quart of Ballantine
Pass the bone, kid, pass the bone!
Let's get on this mission like Indiana Jones
The GZA, one who just represent the Wu-Tang clique
With the game and soul of an old school flick
Like the Mack and Dolemite, who both did bids
Claudine went to Cooley High and had mad kids
So stop, the life you save may be your motherfuckin' own
I'll hang your ass with this microphone
Make way for the merge of traffic
Wu-Tang's comin' through with full metal jackets
God squad that's mad hard to serve
Come frontin' hard, then Bernhard Goetz what he deserves

[Chorus: GZA]

[Verse 2: GZA]
No response while I bomb that ass
You ain't shit, your wack-ass town had you gassed
Egos is somethin' the Wu-Tang crush
Souped-up niggas on a stage get rushed
I don't give a goddamn on the shows you did
How many rhymes you got or who knows you, kid
'Cause I don't know you, therefore show me what you know
I come sharp as a blade and I cut you slow
You become so Pat as my style increases
What's that in your pants? Ahh, human feces!
Throw your shitty drawers in the hamper
Next time, come strapped with a fuckin' Pamper
How you sound, B? You're better off a quitter

I'm on the mound, G, and it's a no-hitter
And my DJ, the catcher, he's my man
In a way he's the one who devised the plan
He throws the signs, I hook up the beats with clout
I throw the rhymes to the mic and I strike 'em out
So it really doesn't matter on how you intrigue
You can't fuck with those in the major leagues

[Chorus: GZA]

[Outro: GZA]

Hoods on the right
Punks in the back... to what
Niggas on the left
Hoods on the right
Punks in the back, c'mon... to what
Let your feet stomp
Brag shit to death
Wild for the night
(Wu, Wu, Wu, Wu, Wu, Wu)
(Wu, Wu, Wu, Wu, Wu, Wu, Wu, Wu)
(Wu, Wu, Wu, Wu, Wu, Wu, Wu, Wu)
Niggas on the left, brag shit to death
Hoods on the right, wild for the night
Punks in the back, c'mon and attract
Clan in da front, let your feet stomp

4. Wu-Tang: 7th Chamber

[Skit]

[Raekwon]

Yo, Meth, hold up, hold up
Yo, Meth, where my Killer tape at, God?
First of all, where my
Where the fuck is my tape at?

[Method Man]

Yo, son, I ain't got that piece, son

[Raekwon]

How you ain't got my shit when I let you hold it, man?

[Method Man]

Yo, niggas came over to have 40s and blunts, kid
The shit just came up missin', son

[Raekwon]

Come on, man, that don't got nothin' to do with my shit, man
Come on, man, go head with that shit, man

[Method Man]

Come on, man, I'll buy you four more fuckin' Killer tapes, man

[U-God]

[banging on the door] Aiyo! Aiyo!

[Raekwon]

Open the door, man! What the fuck, man?

Yo, what? What's up?

[Ghostface Killah]

Yo, yo, God, word is bond, yo

Shameek just got bust in his head two times, God!

[U-God]

Word to mother!

[Ghostface Killah]

Word life, God

You know Shameek from fuckin' 212, God?

The nigga just got bucked

Niggas in a black Land, God, word is bond

Came through, God, from out of nowhere, God

Word is bond I'm comin' to get my Culture Cipher, God

And they just... word is bond

Crazy shots just went the fuck off, God

[U-God]

Niggas let off crazy shots, kid

[Ghost]

The nigga layin' there like a fuckin' newborn fuckin' baby, God

[U-God]

Word up!

[Meth]

Is he dead?

[Ghost]

Is he fuckin' dead?

What the fuck you mean is he fuckin' dead, God?

[U-God]

What the fuck kind of question is that, B? Fuck you think?

[RZA]

Easy, easy

[Ghost]

The nigga layin' there with his fuckin'...
All types of fuckin' blood comin' out of his fuckin'...

[U-God]

(sarcastically) Is he is he is he dead?

[Ghost]

Yo, God, what's up, God? It's the God, God, word is bond
Yo, what's up? I'm ready to fuckin' lay...
I'm ready to get busy, God, what's up?

[Rae]

Yo, let's go do what we got...

[U-God]

What's up, yo?

[Rae]

Yo let's go do what we gotta do, man, fuck it

[U-God]

Yo, we out or what, man?

[Ghost]

It's the God, God, fuck that, man

[U-God]

You sayin' we out?

[Meth]

They probably took the tape

[Ghost]

What the fuck?

[Rae]

Nigga still sweatin' the tape, man

[Ghost]

What the fuck is you talkin' about? Get the fuck outta here!

[Rae]

Fuckin' corn!

[Intro: Wu-Tang Clan]

Good Morning Vietnam!⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Met Vietnam wordt hier Staten Island bedoeld. Wu-Tang Clan wilde hiermee aangeven dat het ook een oorlogsgebied was in hun *borough*, net zoals in Vietnam.

Yeah, good morning
To all you motherfuckin' knotty-headed niggas
Word to the camouflage large niggas
Bitch, where the fuck is my bottle?
Bring that fuckin' meth in here!
Yo, yo, yo
Now we gonna drink some good Night train
Yo, yo, yo, yo!

[Verse 1: Raekwon]

Champion gear that I rock, you get your boots knocked
Then attack you like a pit, then lock shit down
As I come and freaks the sound
Hardcore, but givin' you more and more like "Ding!"
Nah, shorty, get you open like six packs
Killa Beez attack, flippin' what?
Murder one phat tracks, aight?
I kick it like a Nike Flight
Word life, I get that ass robbed on spite
Check the method from Bedrock, 'cause I rock your head to bed
Just like rockin' what? Twin Glocks!
Shake the ground while my beats just break you down
Raw sound, goin' to war right now
So, yo, bombin', We Usually Take All Niggas Garments
Save your breath before I vomit

[Verse 2: Method Man]

I be that insane nigga from the psycho ward
I'm on the trigger, plus I got the Wu-Tang sword
So how you figure, that you can even fuck with mine?
Hey, yo, RZA! Hit me with that shit one time!
And pull a foul, niggas, save the beef for the cow
I'm milkin' this ho, this is my show, Tical!
The fuck you wanna do on this mic piece, duke?
I'm like a sniper, hyper off the ginseng root
PLO Style, buddha monks with the owls
Now who's the fuckin' man? Meth-Tical

[Break: Method Man]

On the chessbox
"Wu-Tang style"

[Verse 3: Inspectah Deck]

Yo, yeah, yo
I leave the mic in body bags, my rap style has the force
To leave you lost like the Tribe of Shabazz
Murderous material made by a madman
It's the mic wrecker, Inspectah, bad man
From the bad lands of the Killa
Rap fanatic representin' with the skill that's iller

Dare to compare, get pierced just like your ear
The Shooby Doo-Wop pop, strictly hardware
Armed and geared, 'cause I just broke out the prison
Charged by the system for murderin' the rhythm
Now, lo and behold another deadly episode
Bound to catch another fuckin' charge when I explode

[Verse 4: Ghostface Killah]

Slammin' a hype-ass verse 'til your head burst
I ramshack dead in the track, and that's that
Rap assassin, fast and quick to blast and hardrock
I ran up in spots like Fort Knox
I'm hot, top notch, Ghost thinks with logic
Flashbacks how I attacked your whole project
I'm raw, I'm rugged and raw, I repeat
If I die, my seed'll be ill like me
Approachin' me, yo, out of respect, chops to neck
I get vexed, like crashin' up a phat-ass Lex
So, clear the way! Make way! Yo, open the cage!
Peace, I'm out, jettin' like a runaway slave

[Verse 5: RZA]

You gettin' stripped from your garments, boy, run your jewels

All the meth got me open like fallopian tubes
I bring death to a snake when he least expect
Ain't a damn thing changed, boy, Protect Ya Neck!
Ruler Zig-Zag-Zig Allah, jam is fatal
Quick to stick my Wu-Tang sword right through your navel
Suspenseful force bein' brought through my utensil
The pencil, I bring strong winds up against you
Havoc, then run up through your county like the Maverick
Caps through the tablets, I gots to make the fabrics

[Verse 6: Ol' Dirty Bastard]

A-a-a-ah-ah, are you a warrior, killer? Slicin' shit like a samurai?
The Ol' Dirty Bastard from the bar!
Ol' Dirty clan of terrorists
Comin' at your ass like a sorceress, shootin' that piss
Niggas be gettin' on my fuckin' nerves
Rhymes they be kickin'
Make me wanna kick their fuckin' ass to the curb
Boy got funky fresh like the Old Specialist
A carrier, messenger, bury ya
This experience is for the whole experience
Let it be applied, Unique drop that science

[Verse 7: GZA]

My- My- My- My clan is thick like plaster, bust ya, slash ya
Slit a nigga back like a Dutch Master
Killer, style jumped off in Killa Hilla

I was the thriller in the Ali-Frazier Manila
I came down with phat tracks that combine and interlock
Like gettin' smashed by a cinder block
Pow! Now it's all over;
Niggas seein' pink hearts, yellow moons
Orange stars, and green clovers

5. Can It All Be So Simple / Intermission

[Skit]

[RZA]: Fuck yo, we gotta get this fucking loot baby
We gotta get this loot

Yo back, remember back in the days
When shit, everything was all smooth and calm and shit was like
[GFK]: Smoke that bone, nigga
[RZA]: Yo man, yo I'm doing it God, I'm doing it man
I'm saying, back in like in '70, fucking '79
[Mef]: Everybody was on your line man
[RZA]: Nah, '87, that was my favorite shit God
Polo shit, everything, everything was lovely
Yo get the fuck out the rain nigga
Oh shit, who the fuck is that? Fuck
Ayo Ghost, ayo Rae, what's up with y'all niggas?
Man, what the fuck you nigga, ah

[Intro: Gladys Knight]

Hey, you know, everybody's talking about the "good old days," right? Everybody! The good old days
Well, let's talk about the good old days!

[Raekwon]

Know what I'm sayin'?
Take you on this lyrical high real quick
1993 exoticness, know what I'm sayin'?
Let's get technical; where's your bone at?
Get up on that shit, a'ight? Yo!

[Verse 1: Raekwon]

Started off on the island, aka Shaolin
Niggas wilin', gun shots thrown, the phone diallin'
Back in the days, I'm 8 now
Makin' a tape now, Rae gotta get a plate now
Ignorant and mad young, wanted to be the one
'Til I got (Blaow! Blaow! Blaow!) felt one
Yeah, my pops was a fiend since 16
Shootin' that "that's that shit!" in his blood stream
That's the life of a grimy, real-life crimey
And niggas know that habit's behind me
Day one, yo, growin' all up in the ghetto

Now I'm a weed fiend jettin' to Palmetto
In Medina, yo, no doubt, the god got crazy clout
Pushin' the big joint from down South
So if you're filthy stacked up, better watch your back and duck
'Cause these fiends, they got it cracked up
Now my man from up North, now he got the loft
It's solid as a rock and crazy salt
No jokes, I'm not playin', get his folks
Desert Eagle his dick and put him in a yoke
And to know for sure, I got reck and rip shop
I pointed a gat at his mother's knot
(Yo, Rae, don't do that shit, man! Don't do that shit!)
Fuck that!

[Hook: Raekwon + (Ghostface Killah)]
Dedicated to the winners and the losers
(Dedicated to all Jeeps and Land Cruisers)
Can it be that it was all so simple then?
Dedicated to the 5's, 850i's
(Dedicated to niggas who do drive-by's)
Can it be that it was all so simple then?
Dedicated to the Lexus and the Ac's
(Dedicated to MPV's: phat!)

[Verse 2: Ghostface Killah (Raekwon)]
Kickin' the fly clichés, doin' duets with Rae and A
Happens to make my day
Though I'm tired of bustin' off shots, havin' to rock knots
Runnin' up in spots and makin' shit hot
I'd rather flip shows instead of those
Hangin' on my livin' room wall, my first joint and it went gold!
I want to lamp, I want to be in the shade
Plus the spotlight, gettin' my dick rode all night
I want to have me a phat yacht
And enough land to go and plant my own sess crops
But for now it's just a big dream
'Cause I find myself in a place where I'm last seen
My thoughts must be relaxed, be able to maintain
'Cause times is changed and life is strange
The glorious days is gone and everybody's doin' bad
Yo, mad lives is up for grabs
Brothers passin' away, I gotta make wakes
Receivevin' all types of calls from Upstate
Yo, I can't cope with the pressure, settlin' for lesser
The God left lessons on my dresser
So I can bloom and blossom, find a new way
To continue to make more hits with Rae and A
Sunshine plays a major part in the daytime
(Peace to mankind, Ghostface carry a black 9, nigga)
Word up, it's all like that... yeah

[Outro: Intermission]

[Method Man]

It's like this, I'ma start from the top
Inspectah Deck, he's like
He's like that dude that'll sit back and watch you
Play yourself and all that, right?
And see you sit there and know you lyin'
And he'll take you to court after that
'Cause he the Inspectah, that's why he the and
And also he the Rebel I.N.S
You know what I'm sayin'?
And Shallah Raekwon, he the Chef
He cookin' up some marvelous shit to get your mouth waterin'
On some "oh shit"
Then, then it's, then it's the Method Man
It's like mad different methods to the way I do my shit

[Raekwon]

You gotta smoke a bean in here, anyhow

[Method Man]

And I'm tellin' you, mine
Basically Method Man is like
Roll that shit, light that shit, smoke it
And then Baby U, he a psychopathic
He a psychopathic thinker
And and, then we got, then we got the Ol' Dirty Bastard
'Cause there ain't no father to his style
That's why he the Ol' Dirty Bastard
Ghostface Killah, you know what I'm sayin'?
He on some "now you see me, now you don't"
Know what I'm sayin'? And and, the RZA
He the sharpest motherfucka in the whole Clan
He always on point, razor sharp
With the beats, with the rhymes, whatever, any DJ

[Raekwon]

And the GZA, the G is just the Genius
He, he's the backbone of the whole shit

[RZA]

It's self-explanatory, Genius, word

[Method Man]

He the head, let's put it that way
We form like Voltron, and GZA happen to be the head
You know what I'm sayin'?

[Interviewer]

Yeah, yeah, that's cool

So what's like, I mean what's like

Your ultimate goal against in this in this industry?

[Method Man]

Domination, baby, fuck that

[Raekwon]

Can I say this one? Can I say this one?

Right now, right now, we still, we still

Feel like we ain't get what we want yet

When we get, when we get, when we get a little props

And really really get the way we gotta go

That's when you know it's on

You know what I'm sayin'?

'Cause right about now, I ain't braggin' or nothin'

But yo, the Wu, the Wu got somethin'

That I know that everybody wanna hear

'Cause I know I've been waitin' to hear

You know what I'm sayin'?

But straight up and down, 'til we get the goal

We gon' keep goin'

[Method Man]

Yeah, 'cause we tryin' to do all this

We tryin' to make a business outta this, man

We ain't tryin' to-- know what I'm sayin'?

Affiliate ourselves with them fake-ass A&Rs and all that

We tryin' to make our own shit

So that when our children, word

So that when our children, all our seeds and whatever

They got somethin' for theyselves right there

[Ghostface Killah]

We ain't tryin' to hop in and hop out right quick

Know what I'm sayin'?

We out for the Gusto, and we gon' keep it raw

You know what I'm sayin'? (Word)

6. Da Mystery of Chessboxin'

[Intro: "Shaolin vs. Wu-Tang" + "Five Deadly Venoms"]

A game of chess is like a swordfight:

You must think first before you move

Toad style is immensely strong

And immune to nearly any weapon

When it's properly used it's almost invincible

[Verse 1: U-God]

Raw I'ma give it to ya, with no trivia
Raw like cocaine straight from Bolivia
My hip-hop will rock and shock the nation
Like the Emancipation Proclamation
Weak MCs approach with slang that's dead
You might as well run into the wall and bang your head
I'm pushin' force, my force you're doubtin'
I'm makin' devils cower to the Caucasus Mountains

[Verse 2: Inspectah Deck]

Well, I'm a sire, I set the microphone on fire
Rap styles vary and carry like Mariah
I come from the Shaolin slum, and the isle I'm from
Is comin' through with nuff niggas and nuff guns
So if you wanna come sweatin', stressin', contestin'
You'll catch a sharp sword to the midsection
Don't talk the talk if you can't walk the walk
Phony niggas are outlined in chalk
I'm mad vexed, it's what the projects made me
Rebel to the grain, there's no way to barricade me
Steamrollin' niggas like an 18 wheeler
With a drunk driver drivin', there's no survivin'

[Verse 3: Raekwon the Chef]

Rough like Timberland wear, yeah
Me and the Clan in 'Yota Landcruisers out there
Peace to all the crooks, all the niggas with bad looks
Bald heads, braids, blow this hook
We pack chrome TEC's, nickel-plated MAC's
Black AC's, drug-dealin' styles in phat stacks
I only been a good nigga for a minute though
'Cause I got to get my props and win it, yo
I got beef with commercial-ass niggas with gold teeth
Lampin' in a Lexus, eatin' beef
Straight up and down, don't even bother
I got 40 niggas up in here now who kill niggas' fathers

[Chorus: Method Man]

My peoples, are you with me? Where you at?
In the front, in the back, Killa Bees on attack
My peoples, are you with me? Where you at?
Smokin' meth, hittin' cats on the block with the gats

[Verse 4: Ol' Dirty Bastard]

Here I go, deep type flow
Jacques Cousteau could never get this low
I'm cherry bombin' shits... BOOM!
Just warmin' up a little bit, vroom vroom
Rappinin' is what's happenin'

Keep the pockets stacked and then, hands clap and then
At the party when I move my body
Gotta get up and be somebody!
Grab the microphone, put strength to the bone
DUH DUH DUH... enter the Wu-Tang zone
Sure enough when I rock that stuff
Huff? Puff? I'm gonna catch your bluff tuff
Rough, kickin' rhymes like Jim Kelly
Or Alex Haley, I'm a Mi...Beetle Bailey rhymes
Comin' raw style, hardcore
Niggas be comin' to the hip-hop store
Comin' to buy grocery from me
Tryin' to be a hip-hop MC
The law, in order to enter the Wu-Tang
You must bring the Ol' Dirty Bastard type slang
Represent the GZA, Abbot
RZA, Shaquan, Inspectah Deck
Dirty Ho gettin' low with his flow
Introducin' the Ghostface Killah
No one could get iller

[Chorus: Method Man]

[Verse 5: Ghostface Killah]

Speakin' of the Devil, psych!
No, it's the God, get the shit right
Mega trife, and yo, I killed you in a past life
On the mic while you was kickin' that fast shit
You reneged, tried again and got blasted
Half-mastered-ass style, mad ruff task
When I struck I had on Timbs and a black mask
Remember that shit? I know you don't remember jack
That night, yo, I was hittin' like a spiked bat
And then you thought I was bugged out, and crazy
Strapped for nonsense, after me became lazy
Yo, nobody budge while I shot slugs
Never shot thugs, I'm runnin' with thugs that flood mugs
So, grab your eight plus one
Start flippin' and trippin', niggas is jettin', I'm lickin' off, son

[All]

Wu! Tang! Wu! Tang!
Wu! Tang! Wu! Ta-a-ang!

[Verse 6: Masta Killa]

Homicide's illegal and death is the penalty
What justifies the homicide, when he dies in his own iniquity?
It's the master of the Mantis Rapture comin' at ya
We have an APB on an MC Killer
Looks like the work of a master

Evidence indicates that his stature
Merciless like a terrorist hard to capture
The flow changes like a chameleon
Plays like a friend and stabs you like a dagger
This technique attacks the immune system
Disguised like a lie, paralyzin' the victim
You scream as it enters your bloodstream
Erupts your brain from the pain these thoughts contain
Movin' on a nigga with the speed of a centipede
And injure any motherfuckin' contender

[Chorus: Method Man]

[Outro: "Five Deadly Venoms"]
And immune to nearly any weapon
When it's properly used it's almost invincible
Toad style is immensely strong
And immune to nearly any weapon
When it's properly used it's almost invincible
When it's properly used

7. Wu-Tang Clan Ain't Nuthin ta Fuck Wit

[Intro: Sample from *Executioners from Shaolin* (RZA)]
Tiger Style!
Tiger Style! (Tiger style!)

[Hook: RZA]
Wu-Tang Clan ain't nuthin ta fuck wit
Wu-Tang Clan ain't nuthin ta fuck wit
Wu-Tang Clan ain't nuthin ta fuck wit

[Verse 1: RZA]
Yo, there's no place to hide once I step inside the room
Dr. Doom, prepare for the boom
Bam! Aw, man! I slam, jam, now scream like Tarzan
I be tossin', enforcin', my style is awesome
I'm causin' more family feud than Richard Dawson
And the survey said you're dead
Fatal Flying Guillotine chops off your fuckin' head
Mister, who is that? Ayo, the Wu is back
Makin' niggas go Bo! Bo! like I'm Super Cat
Me fear no one, oh no, here come
The Wu-Tang shogun, killer to my eardrum

[Verse 2: Inspectah Deck]
Put the needle to the groove, I gets rude
And I'm forced to fuck it up
My style carries like a pick-up truck

Cross the clear blue yonder, sea to shinin' sea
I slam tracks like quarterback sacks from L.T
Now why try and test the Rebel INS?
Blessed since the birth, I earth-slam your best
'Cause I bake the cake, then take the cake
And eat it, too, with my crew while we head state to state

[Chorus: All]

And if you want beef, then bring the ruckus!
Wu-Tang Clan ain't nuthing ta fuck wit
Straight from the motherfuckin' slums that's busted
Wu-Tang Clan ain't nuthing ta fuck wit

[Interlude: RZA]

Hah! Lebonon, step up, boy!
Represent! Chop his head off, kid!

[Verse 3: Method Man]

The Meth will come out tomorrow
Styles, conditions, bizarre, bizarro
Flow, with more afro than Rollo
Comin' to a fork in the road, which way to go? Just follow
Meth is the legend, niggas is sleepy hollow
In fact I'm a hard act to follow
I dealt for dolo, Bogart comin' on through
Niggas is like, "Oh my God, not you!"
Yes, I come to get a slice of the punk and the pie
Rather do than die, check my flavor
Comin' from the RZA, which is short for The Razor
Who make me reminisce true
Like déjà vu, I'm rubber, niggas is like glue
Whatever you say rubs off me sticks to you

[Hook: RZA]

[Outro: RZA]

Ahh-hah! Yeah! Representin' Brooklyn, Queens
Long Island, Manhattan, Bronx
The Rugged Lands of Shaolin
Niggas from Virginia, Atlanta, our boys in Ohio
Comin' through with the crazy Y-O Y-O
Yo, niggas from *The Source*
My man Kelly Woo from the Gavin
Will Strickland, Jason Staton, yeah
True, true, my nigga Crown, what's goin' down, boy?
We ain't nuthing ta fuck wit
The whole Texas mob, the Chicago mob
Niggas from Detroit, fuckin' California squadron
Comin' through, you know what I'm sayin'?
The whole fuckin' West Coast to the whole East

Niggas from D.C., down in Maryland
All the way over there in Morgan State
Wu-Tang Clan ain't nuthin ta fuck wit
All over the whole fuckin' globe, comin' through, boy
Peace to the fuckin' Zulu Nation
Peace to all the Gods and the Earths, word is bond
Wu-Tang slang, choppin' heads, boy
It ain't safe no more, peace!

8. C.R.E.A.M.

[Intro: Raekwon & *Method Man*]

What that nigga want, God?
Word up, look out for the cops though
Wu-Tang five finger shit
Cash rules-
Word up, two for fives over here, baby
Word up, two for fives, niggas got garbage down the way
Word up, know what I'm sayin'?
Cash rules everything around me, CREAM get-
Yeah, check this old fly shit out, word up
Cash rules everything around me
CREAM get the money, dollar dollar bill, y'all
Take you on a natural joint
Here we here we go, check this shit, yo

[Verse 1: Raekwon]

I grew up on the crime side, the New York Times side
Stayin' alive was no jive
Had secondhands, Mom's bounced on old man
So then we moved to Shaolin land
A young youth, yo, rockin' the gold tooth, 'Lo goose
Only way I begin the G off was drug loot
And let's start it like this, son
Rollin' with this one and that one
Pullin' out gats for fun
But it was just a dream for the teen who was a fiend
Started smokin' woolies at 16
And runnin' up in gates and doin' hits for high stakes
Makin' my way on fire escapes
No question I would speed for cracks and weed
The combination made my eyes bleed
No question I would flow off and try to get the dough all
Stickin' up white boys in ball courts
My life got no better, same damn 'Lo sweater
Times is rough and tough like leather
Figured out I went the wrong route
So I got with a sick-ass clique and went all out

Catchin' keys from 'cross seas
Rollin' in MPV's, every week we made forty G's
Yo, nigga, respect mine, or here go the TEC-9
Ch-chick-POW! Move from the gate now!

[Chorus: Method Man]

Cash rules everything around me
CREAM, get the money
Dollar dollar bill, y'all
Cash rules everything around me
CREAM, get the money
Dollar dollar bill, y'all

[Verse 2: Inspectah Deck]

It's been twenty-two long hard years, I'm still strugglin'
Survival got me buggin', but I'm alive on arrival

I peep at the shape of the streets
And stay awake to the ways of the world 'cause shit is deep
A man with a dream with plans to make cream
Which failed; I went to jail at the age of fifteen
A young buck sellin' drugs and such, who never had much
Tryin' to get a clutch at what I could not touch

The court played me short, now I face incarceration
Pacin', goin' upstate's my destination
Handcuffed in the back of a bus, forty of us
Life as a shorty shouldn't be so rough
But as the world turned I learned life is hell
Livin' in the world no different from a cell
Every day I escape from Jakes givin' chase
Sellin' base, smokin' bones in the staircase
Though I don't know why I chose to smoke sess
I guess that's the time when I'm not depressed
But I'm still depressed, and I ask: what's it worth?
Ready to give up so I seek the old Earth
Who explained workin' hard may help you maintain
To learn to overcome the heartaches and pain
We got stick-up kids, corrupt cops, and crack rocks
And stray shots, all on the block that stays hot
Leave it up to me while I be livin' proof
To kick the truth to the young black youth
But shorty's runnin' wild, smokin' sess, drinkin' beer
And ain't tryin' to hear what I'm kickin' in his ear
Neglected for now, but yo, it gots to be accepted
That what? That life is hectic

[Chorus: Method Man]

[Bridge: Inspectah Deck]

Niggas got to do what they got to do
To get through, know what I'm sayin'?

Because you can't just get by no more
Word up, you gotta get over, straight up and down

[Chorus: Method Man]

9. Method Man

[Skit: Method Man & Raekwon]

Yeahhh, torture, motherfucker, what?

Torture, nigga, what?

What? I'll fuckin', I'll fuckin' tie you to a fuckin' bedpost

With your ass cheeks spread out and shit, right?

Put a hanger on a fuckin' stove and let that shit sit there for like a half hour, take it off and stick it in your ass slow like tss

Yeah, I'll fuckin', yeah, I'll fuckin' lay your nuts on a fuckin' dresser, just your nuts layin' on a fuckin' dresser, and bang them shits with a spiked fuckin' bat

Ooh whassup? Blaow!

I'll fuckin', I'll fuckin', pull your fuckin' tongue out your fuckin'

Mouth and stab the shit with a rusty screwdriver, blaoww!

I'll fuckin', I'll fuckin', I'll fuckin' hang you by your fuckin' dick off A fuckin' 12 sto-story building out this motherfucker

I'll fuckin', I'll fuckin', sew your asshole closed, and keep feedin' you And feedin' you, and feedin' you, and feedin' you

Yo, roll the dice, yo, roll the dice

Yo, so it's goin' down like that, huh? Yeah?

Niggas is whylin', check it out, kid

[Intro: GZA]

From the slums of Shaolin, Wu-Tang Clan strikes again

The RZA, the GZA, Ol' Dirty Bastard, Inspectah Deck

Raekwon the Chef, U-God, Ghostface Killah and the Method Man

[Chorus: Method Man]

M-E-T-H-O-D Man

M-E-T-H-O-D Man

M-E-T-H-O-D Man

M-E-T-H-O-D Man

[Verse 1: Method Man]

Hey, you, get off my cloud!

You don't know me and you don't know my style

Who be gettin' flam when they come to a jam?

Here I am, here I am, the Method Man

Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake, hey! The Method Man

Don't eat Skippy, Jif or Peter Pan

Peanut butter 'cause I'm not butter

In fact, I snap back like a rubber

Band, I be Sam, Sam-I-Am

And I don't eat green eggs and ham

Style will hit ya, wham! Then goddamn
You'll be like, "*Oh shit, that's the jam!*"
Turn it up, now hear me get buck w-w-wild
I'm about to blow, light me up
Upside, downside, inside and outside
Hittin' you from every angle, there's no doubt I
Am the one and only Method Man
The master of the plan, rappin' shit like Saran
Wrap, with some of this and some of that
Hold up (what?) I tawt I taw I putty tat
Over there, but I think he best to beware
Of the diggy dog shit right here
Yippy yippy yay yippy yah yippy yo
Like Deck said, this ain't your average flow
Comin' like rah ooh ah achie kah
Tell me, how you like it so far, baby paw?
The poetry's in motion, coast to coast and
Rub it on your skin like lotion
What's the commotion? Oh my Lord
Another corn chopped by the Wu-Tang sword
"*Hey, hey, hey!*" like Fat Albert
It's the Method Man, ain't no if ands about it
It's the Method

[Break: Method Man]

All right, y'all, get your White Owls
Get your meth, get your skins
Don't forget your forty
And we gonna do it like this

[Bridge: Method Man]

I got fat bags of skunk
I got White Owl blunts
And I'm about to go get lifted
Yes, I'm about to go get lifted
I got myself a forty
I got myself a shorty
And I'm about to go and stick it
Yes, I'm about to go and stick it, uhh

[Verse 2: Method Man]

H-U-F-F, huff, and I puff
Blow like snow when the cold wind's blowin'
Zoooom, I hit the mic like **boom!**
Wrote a song about it, like to hear it? Here it goes
Question, what exactly is a panty raider?
Ill behavior, savior or major flavor
All of the above, oh yeah, plus seducer
Also, flam, I'm the man, call me super
Not an average Joe with an average flow

Doin' average things with average hoes
Yo, I'm super, I'll make a bitch squirm
For my Super Sperm (check it)
Check it, I give it to you raw butt-naked
I smell sess, pass the method
Let's get lifted as I kick ballistic
Missiles and shoot game like a pistol
Clip is loaded when I click bang (bang!)
A Wu-Tang slug hits your brain
J-U-M-P, jump, and I thump
Make girls rumps like pump and Humpty Hump
Wild, the Shaolin style is all in me
Child, the whole damn isle is callin' me
P-A-N-T-Y R-A-I-D-E-R, mad raw, I don't fry
Meaning, no one can burn or toss and turn me
Ooh, I be the super sperm
Chim chiminy chim chim cher-ee
Freak a flow and flow fancy free
Now, how many licks does it take
For me to hit the Tootsie Roll center of a break?
Peep and don't sleep, the crew's mad deep (Wu-Tang!)
Fadin' motherfuckers like bleach
So to each and every crew
You're clear like glass, I can see right through
Your whole damn posse be catchin' 'em all, 'cause you vic'd
And you didn't have friends to begin with, I'm...

[Chorus: Method Man]
The M-E-T-H-O-D Man
M-E-T-H-O-D Man
M-E-T-H-O-D Man
Here I am, here I am, the Method Man

[Outro: RZA, (Ghostface Killah) & Method Man]
Straight from the slums of Shaolin
Wu-Tang Killa Beez on a swarm
(Your soul have just been taken
Through the 36 Chambers of death, kid)
Word to mother, Method Man signin' off, peace

10. Protect Ya Neck

[Intro]
Caller: "So whassup, man?"
DJ: "Coolin', man."
C: "Chillin' chilin'? Yo, you know I had to call, you know why right?"
DJ: "Why?"
C: "Because, yo, I never ever call and ask you to play somethin', right?"
DJ: "Yeah."

C: "You know what I wanna hear, right?"

DJ: "Whatchu wanna hear?"

C: "I wanna hear that Wu-Tang joint."

DJ: "Wu-Tang again?"

C: "Ah, yeah, again and again."

[Verse 1: Inspectah Deck]

I smoke on the mic like "Smokin' Joe" Frazier
The hell-raiser, raisin' hell with the flavor
Terrorize the jam like troops in Pakistan
Swingin' through your town like your neighborhood Spider-Man
So uhh, tick-tock and keep tickin'
While I get ya flippin' off the shit that I'm kickin'
The Lone Ranger, code red, danger
Deep in the dark with the art to rip the charts apart
The vandal, too hot to handle
You battle, you're sayin' "Goodbye" like Tevin Campbell
Roughneck, Inspectah Deck's on the set
The Rebel, I make more noise than heavy metal

[Verse 2: Raekwon]

The way I make the crowd go wild, sit back, relax, won't smile
Rae got it goin' on, pal, call me the rap assassinator
Rhymes rugged and built like Schwarzenegger
And I'ma get mad deep like a threat
Blow up your project, then take all your assets
'Cause I came to shake the frame in half
With the thoughts that bomb shit like math
So if you wanna try to flip, go flip on the next man
'Cause I grab the clip and hit ya with 16 shots and more, I got
Goin' to war with the meltin' pot, akh

[Verse 3: Method Man]

It's the Method Man, for short Mr. Meth
Movin' on your left, aah!
And set it off, get it off, let it off like a gat
I wanna break full, cock me back
Small change, they puttin' shame in the game
I take aim and blow that nigga out the frame
And like *Fame* my style'll live forever
Niggas crossin' over, but they don't know no better
But I do, true, can I get a "suue"
Enough respect due to the one-six-oooh
I mean O, yo check out the flow
Like the Hudson or PCP when I'm dustin'
Niggas off, because I'm hot like sauce
The smoke from the lyrical blunt make me *cough*

[Interlude: U-God, *Ol' Dirty Bastard* & **RZA**]

Ooh, what, grab my nut, get screwed

Oww, here comes my Shaolin style

True B-A-ba-B-Y-U

To my crew with the "suuuuue"

Yeah, yeah, yeah

C'mon, baby baby, c'mon, baby baby

C'mon, baby baby, c'mon

Yo, you best protect ya neck

[Verse 4: Ol Dirty Bastard]

First things first, man, you're fuckin' with the worst

I'll be stickin' pins in your head like a fuckin' nurse

I'll attack any nigga who's slack in his mack

Come fully packed with a fat rugged stack

Shame on you when you step through to

The Ol' Dirty Bastard straight from the Brooklyn Zoo

And I'll be damned if I let any man

Come to my center, you enter the winter

Straight up and down, that shit is packed jam

You can't slam, don't let me get fool on him, man

The Ol' Dirty Bastard is dirty and stinkin'

Ason Unique rollin' with the night of the creeps

Niggas be rollin' with a stash, ain't sayin' cash

Bite my style, I'll bite your motherfuckin' ass

[Verse 5: Ghostface Killah]

For cryin' out loud, my style is wild, so book me

Not long is how long that this rhyme took me

Ejectin' styles from my lethal weapon

My pen that rocks from here to Oregon

Here's more again, catch it like a psycho flashback

I love gats, if rap was a gun, you wouldn't bust back

I come with shit in all types of shapes and sounds

And where I lounge is my stompin' grounds

I give an order to my peeps across the water

To go and snatch up props all around the border

And get far like a shootin' star

'Cause who I are is livin' the life of Pablo Escobar

Point-blank as I kick the square biz

There it is, you're fuckin' with pros, and there it goes

[Verse 6: RZA]

Yo, chill with the feedback, black, we don't need that

It's 10 o'clock, ho, where the fuck's your seed at?

Feelin' mad hostile, wearing Aeropostale

Flowin' like Christ when I speaks the gospel

Stroll with the holy roll, then attack the globe with the buckus style

The ruckus, ten times ten men committin' mad sin

Turn the other cheek and I'll break your fuckin' chin

Slayin' boom-bangs like African drums, we'll be

Comin' around the mountain when I come

Crazy flamboyant for the rap enjoyment
My clan increase like black unemployment
Yeah, another one dare, G-Gka-Genius
Take us the fuck outta here

[Verse 7: GZA]

The Wu is too slammin' for these Cold Killin' labels
Some ain't had hits since I seen Aunt Mabel
Be doin' artists in like Cain did Abel
Now they money's gettin' stuck to the gum under the table
That's what you get when you misuse what I invent
Your empire falls and you lose every cent
For tryna blow up a scrub

Now that thought was just as bright as a 20-watt light bulb
Should've pumped it when I rocked it
Niggas so stingy they got short arms and deep pockets
This goes on in some companies
With majors, they're scared to death to pump these
First of all, who's your A&R?
A mountain climber who plays an electric guitar?
But he don't know the meanin' of dope
When he's lookin' for a suit-and-tie rap
That's cleaner than a bar of soap
And I'm the dirtiest thing in sight
Matter of fact, bring out the girls, and let's have a mud fight

[Outro: RZA]

You best protect ya neck
You best protect ya neck
You best protect ya neck
You best protect ya neck

11. Tearz

[Chorus]

After laughter comes tears

[Verse 1: RZA]

Check the script, me and the gods gettin' ripped
Blunts in the dip, forty dogs in my lip
Had a box, 'boom boom' the bass would blast
We was laughin' at all the girls that passed
Conversation, brothers had began to discuss
(Hey yo, Rob, remember that kid you bust?)
Aw yeah, he ran, but he didn't get far
'Cause I dropped him, heh heh heh heh ha
Not knowin' exactly what lied ahead
My little brother, my mother sent him out for bread
Get the Wonder, it's a hot day in the summer

Didn't expect to come across a crazy gunner
"Hey, Shorty, check it, run the bag and the dough!"
But he was brave, looked him in the eye, and said "No!"
Money splattered him, BOW! Then he snatched the bag
Hit his pockets, then he jetted up the Ave
Girls screamin', the noise up and down the block
(Hey, Rakeem!) What? (Your little brother got shot!)
I ran frantically, then I dropped down to his feet
I saw the blood all over the hot concrete
I picked him up, then I held him by his head
His eyes shut, that's when I knew he was...
Aw man! How do I say goodbye?
It's always the good ones that have to die
Memories in the corner of my mind
Flashbacks, of us laughin' all the time
I taught him all about the bees and birds
But I wish I had a chance to sing these three words

[Chorus]
After laughter comes tears

[Verse 2: Ghostface Killah]
Me and my man, my ace Big Moe from the shelter
'Bout to hit the skins from this girl named Thelma
Now, Thelma had a rep that was higher than her neck
Every girl from Shaolin dissed her respect
We was stimmy, you know how it is when you're blitzed
Three o'clock in the mornin', somethin' got to give
Moe said he'll go first, I said I'll take next
Here, take this raincoat and practice safe sex!
He seemed to ignore, I said, "Be for real!"
She's not even worth it to go raw deal."
A man's gonna do what a man's gonna do
He got butt-naked and stuck the power U
Twenty minutes went by, Moe, I'm out without a doubt
I'm not pumpin' up, I am airin' out
Hey yo, he came out laughin' with glory
I'm surprised he's still livin' to tell his story
But he carried on with the same old stuff
With Stephanie, like a Whammy, he pressed his luck
Moe tried to be down with O.P.P
Ain't nothin' wrong, but he got caught with the H.I.V
Now no life to live, doc says two more years
So after the laughter I guess comes the tears

[Chorus]

12. Wu-Tang: 7th Chamber – Pt. II

[Intro: The Genius/GZA (from "Clan in Da Front")]

Niggas on the left, brag shit to death
Now hoods on the right, wild for the night
Punks in the back, c'mon and attract to what
Clan in da front, let your feet stomp
Niggas on the left, brag shit to death
Hoods on the right, wild for the night
Punks in the back, c'mon and attract to what
This goes back to nineteen..

Ahem, check it, yo

GOOD MORNING VIETNAM!!

Yeah, good morning to all you motherfuckin notty-headed niggas
Word to the camouflage large niggas
Bitch niggas fuckin my body
Bring that fuckin meth in here
Yo yo yo yo
Now we gonna drink some good Nightrain

[Verse 1: Raekwon]

Champion gear that I rock, you get your boots knocked
Then attack you like a pit that lock shit DOWN
As I come and freaks the sound, hardcore
But giving you more and more, like ding!
Nah shorty, get you open like six packs
Killer Bees attack, flippin what, murder one, phat tracks
A'ight? I kick it like a Night Flite!
Word life, I get that ass raw, I'm fulla spite!
Check the method from Bedrock, cause I rock ya head to bed
Just like rockin what? Twin Glocks!
Shake the ground while my beats just break you down
Raw sound, we going to war right now
So, yo, bombin
We Usually Take All Niggas Garments
Save ya breath before I vomit

[Verse 2: Method Man]

I be that insane nigga from the psycho ward
I'm on the trigger, plus I got the Wu-Tang sword
So how you figure that you can even fuck with mine?
Hey, yo, RZA! Hit me with that shit one time!
And pull a foul, niggas save the beef on the cow
I'm milkin this ho, this is MY show, tical
The FUCK you wanna do? More than Spike Lee's Do
I'm like a sniper, hyper off the ginseng root
PLO style, buddha monks with the owls
So who's the fucking man? Meth-Tical
On the chessbox

[Verse 3: Inspectah Deck]

Yo, yeah, yo

I leave the mic in body bags, my rap style has
The force to leave you lost, like the tribe of Shabazz
Murderous material, made by a madman
It's the mic wrecker, Inspector, bad man
From the bad lands of the killer, rap fanatic
Representing with the skill that's iller
Dare to compare, get pierced just like an ear
The zoo-we-do-wop-bop strictly hardware
Armed and geared cause I just broke out the prison
Charged by the system - for murdering the rhythm!
Now, lo and behold, another deadly episode
Bound to catch another fuckin charge when I explode

[Verse 4: Ghostface Killah]

Slammin a hype-ass verse til ya head burst
I ramshack dead in the track, and that's that
Rap assassin, fastin, quick to blast and hardrock
I ran up in spots like Fort Knox!
I'm hot, top notch, Ghost thinks with logic
Flashback's how I attacked your whole project
I'm raw, I'm rugged and raw! I repeat, if I die
My seed'll be ill like me
Approachin me, you out of respect, chops ya neck
I get vexed, like crashing up a phat-ass Lex'
So clear the way, make way, yo! Open the cage
Peace, I'm out, jettin like a runaway slave

[Verse 5: RZA]

Ya gettin stripped from ya garments, boy, run ya jewels
While the meth got me open like falopian tubes
I bring death to a snake when he least expect
Ain't a damn thing changed, boy, Protect Ya Neck
Ruler Zig Zag, Zig-Allah jam is fatal
Quick to stick my Wu-Tang sword right through ya navel
Suspenseful, plus bein bought through my utensil
The pencil, I break strong winds up against your
Abbot, that run up through your county like the Maverick
Caps through the tablets, I gots to make the fabrics

[Verse 6: Ol' Dirty Bastard]

Are uh-ah-uh Are you a warrior? Killer? Slicin shit like a samurai
The Ol' Dirty Bastard from the bar
Ol' Dirty clan of terrorists
Comin atcha ass like a sorceress, shootin' that PISS!
Niggas be gettin on my fuckin nerves
Rhymes they be kickin make me wanna kick they fuckin ass to the curb
I got funky fresh, like the old specialist
A carrier, messenger, bury ya
This experience is for the whole experience
Let it be applied, and THEN DROP THAT SCIENCE

[Verse 7: Genius/GZA]

My my my
My Clan is thick like plaster
Bust ya, slash ya
Slit a nigga back like a Dutch Master Killer
Style jumped off and Killa, Hill-er
I was the thriller in the Ali-Frazier Manilla
I came down with phat tracks that combine and interlock
Like getting smashed by a cinder block
Blaow! Now it's all over
Niggas seeing pink hearts, yellow moons
Orange stars and green clovers

13. Conclusion

[Inspectah Deck] Yo butter butter
[Method Man] Protect Ya Neck baby
[GZA] Respect due pa
[Inspectah Deck] Peace
[GZA] Peace
[Inspectah Deck] Word up Wu-Tang in the house though

[Interviewer]
I guess alot of people in ya
I guess they can feel the realness you
They could feel the vibe
And I think hip hop, that's what I be tellin a lot of people
A lot of record promoters and a lot of artists
I mean it's like, it's music that you gotta touch and feel
You know what I'm sayin'
And I think that comes across well in the video
I haven't seen you live yet, I'm waitin for the chance
But I'm pretty sure that's probably what's it like
You know you probably really get into it
I guess I hear it in your voices when you sayin the rhymes
Um, what ya say ya style is?

[Kung Fu sample]
It's a secret! Never teach the Wu-Tang
[Sounds of fighting]

[Outro: RZA]
You best protect ya neck
You best protect ya neck
You best protect ya neck
You best protect ya neck