

# Now, You’re Under Control

A Compiled Double Album by Christopher Ruiz

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#### Statement One

Music has been a powerful tool for political expression throughout history. It has the ability to communicate complex emotions and ideas in a way that words alone cannot. Even if music is not overtly political, it can still have inherent political meaning. This is because the context in which the music is created and consumed is inherently political. Music is a reflection of the society in which it is created, and as such, it often reflects the political struggles and ideologies of that society.

Throughout the early 20th century to the late 20th century, music has been used as a powerful tool for political movements. In the 1960s and 1970s, for example, music played a significant role in the Civil Rights movement and the anti-Vietnam War movement. Songs like "We Shall Overcome" and "Free the Land" became anthems for these movements, and they continue to be played and sung today as a reminder of the struggles of the past.

The elements of music that communicate political meaning can vary widely depending on the context. In some cases, the lyrics of a song may be explicitly political, calling for social change or criticizing the government. In other cases, the music itself may be used to convey political meaning. The way that music is performed can communicate political meaning itself. Often songs are used as anthems for various movements such as gospel music during the Civil Rights movement.

The 20th century was a time of significant social and political unrest in the United States, particularly in relation to issues of class, wealth, race, and policing. The songs that were selected for disc one were born from this time of great political turmoil. Many of the songs were created around the time of the L.A. riots and a larger cultural awakening to police brutality. Against this backdrop of political turmoil, a new wave of music emerged that reflected the experiences and frustrations of young people in urban areas. Many of these songs were created by hip-hop and rock artists, who used their music as a tool for political expression. Songs like “Fuck Tha Police”, “Killing in the Name”, “Which Side Are You On”, and “Rebel Without A Pause” all showcase a reflection on the social conditions of the time the songs were created. Other songs that were chosen for disc one showcase a reflection on Black excellence with songs such as “Ultra Black”, and “Fantasy”.

Although the songs selected for the disc one of this album predominantly feature Black artists and their experiences, they are not only reflective of the Black community's struggles during that time. Instead, these songs speak to a broader, shared experience of social and political movements that impacted people of many different races and ethnicities.

#### Statement Two

Each of the songs selected for disc two reflect more contemporary contexts of society and politics. Each song reflects different aspects of the political realities that were being faced (and still being faced) at the time. These songs highlight the more modern problems that are being challenged by today’s music. For example, "Workin Out" by JID is a song that speaks to the political context of today's youth culture. The song addresses the pressures and challenges faced by young people in a society that often fails to provide them with the support and opportunities they need to succeed. The song's themes of perseverance and determination in the face of adversity can be seen as a response to the political and economic realities of today's world.

These songs are just as powerful as the songs on disc one. While the themes and issues may change over time, music has always been a powerful tool for political expression and protest, and contemporary artists continue to use music to comment on the world around them. One way that contemporary music reflects the political meaning of previous generations is through the sampling of older songs. By using elements of past songs in new compositions, artists can pay homage to the past while creating something new and relevant to the present. This also allows for a conversation between generations, with contemporary artists commenting on the political issues of today while also referencing the struggles and experiences of those who came before.

An example of this sampling is Beyoncé’s sampling of Messy Mya, a New Orleans bounce artist who was murdered in 2010. By including Mya's voice in the song, Beyonce pays tribute to his life and legacy while also addressing issues of race and police brutality that are relevant today. The sample creates a bridge between the past and present and demonstrates the continued relevance of political issues across generations.

It’s worth noting that contemporary music has the power to reach a wider audience than ever before thanks to advancements in technology and social media. Social media has allowed for musicians to reach audiences all over the world, and to build a following based on their message and their values. This means that contemporary music can have a greater impact on shaping public opinion and influencing political discourse than ever before. Additionally, the rise of streaming services has made music more accessible and democratized the industry, allowing for a greater diversity of voices to be heard. The contemporary music scene is also more diverse than ever before, with artists from different backgrounds and communities using music to express their unique experiences and perspectives. This diversity is reflected in the music itself, with artists blending different genres and styles to create something entirely new. This can be seen in JPEGMAFIA's "Jesus Forgive Me, I Am A Thot," which combines elements of hip hop, punk, and electronic music to create a unique sound that reflects the artist's own experiences as a black man in America. This diversity of voices and styles allows for a greater range of political commentary and expression, and demonstrates the power of music to challenge social norms and promote greater understanding between different communities.

#### N.W.A - Fuck Tha Police

Written by: The D.O.C., Ice Cube, & MC Ren

N.W.A.'s song "Fuck Tha Police" is a powerful and provocative protest against police brutality and systemic racism in the United States. Released in 1988, the song was inspired by the experiences of many Black Americans. The song's lyrics, which directly confront police abuse of power and call for resistance, sparked controversy and condemnation from law enforcement officials and politicians. Nevertheless, the song became a rallying cry for those who felt marginalized and oppressed by the police, and it helped to inspire a wave of activism and social awareness around issues of racial injustice. Today, "Fuck Tha Police" remains a powerful anthem for the Black Lives Matter movement and a reminder of the ongoing struggle for racial equality and justice.

**Lyrics:**

[Intro: The D.O.C., Dr. Dre, and Ice Cube]

Right about now, N.W.A court is in full effect

Judge Dre presiding

In the case of N.W.A versus the Police Department

Prosecuting attorneys are MC Ren, Ice Cube

And Eazy-motherfucking-E

Order, order, order!

Ice Cube, take the motherfucking stand

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth

And nothing but the truth so help your black ass?

You goddamn right

Well, won't you tell everybody what the fuck you gotta say?

[Verse 1: Ice Cube]

Fuck the police comin' straight from the underground

A young nigga got it bad 'cause I'm brown

And not the other color, so police think

They have the authority to kill a minority

Fuck that shit, 'cause I ain't the one

For a punk motherfucker with a badge and a gun

To be beating on and thrown in jail

We can go toe-to-toe in the middle of a cell

Fuckin' with me 'cause I'm a teenager

With a little bit of gold and a pager

Searchin' my car, lookin' for the product

Thinkin' every nigga is sellin' narcotics

You'd rather see me in the pen

Than me and Lorenzo rollin' in a Benz-o

Beat a police out of shape

And when I'm finished, bring the yellow tape

To tape off the scene of the slaughter

Still getting swole off bread and water

I don't know if they fags or what

Search a nigga down and grabbing his nuts

And on the other hand, without a gun, they can't get none

But don't let it be a black and a white one

'Cause they'll slam ya down to the street top

Black police showing out for the white cop

Ice Cube will swarm

On any motherfucker in a blue uniform

Just 'cause I'm from the CPT

Punk police are afraid of me, huh

A young nigga on the warpath

And when I'm finished, it's gonna be a bloodbath

Of cops dying in L.A.

Yo, Dre, I got something to say

[Chorus]

Fuck the police, fuck— fuck—

Fuck the police, fuck— fuck—

Fuck the police, fuck the— fuck the—

Fuck the police (Example of scene one)

[Skit 1: Cop, MC Ren, & Dr. Dre]

Pull your goddamn ass over right now!

Aw shit, now what the fuck you pullin' me over for?

'Cause I feel like it!

Just sit your ass on the curb and shut the fuck up!

Man, fuck this shit

Alright, smart-ass, I'm taking your black ass to jail!

MC Ren, will you please give your testimony

To the jury about this fucked up incident?

[Verse 2: MC Ren]

Fuck the police and Ren said it with authority

Because the niggas on the street is a majority

A gang is with whoever I'm steppin'

And the motherfuckin' weapon is kept in

A stash spot for the so-called law

Wishing Ren was a nigga that they never saw

Lights start flashing behind me

But they're scared of a nigga, so they mace me to blind me

But that shit don't work, I just laugh

Because it gives them a hint not to step in my path

For police, I'm saying, "Fuck you, punk!"

Reading my rights and shit, it's all junk

Pulling out a silly club, so you stand

With a fake-ass badge and a gun in your hand

But take off the gun so you can see what's up

And we'll go at it, punk, and I'ma fuck you up

Make you think I'ma kick your ass

But drop your gat, and Ren's gonna blast

I'm sneaky as fuck when it comes to crime

But I'ma smoke 'em now and not next time

Smoke any motherfucker that sweats me

Or any asshole that threatens me

I'm a sniper with a hell of a scope

Takin' out a cop or two, they can't cope with me

The motherfuckin' villain that's mad

With potential to get bad as fuck

So I'ma turn it around

Put in my clip, yo, and this is the sound (\*Gunshots\*)

Yeah, somethin' like that

But it all depends on the size of the gat

Takin' out a police would make my day

But a nigga like Ren don't give a fuck to say

[Chorus]

Fuck the police, fuck the— fuck the—

Fuck the police, fuck the— fuck the—

Fuck the police, fuck the— fuck—

Fuck the police

[Skit 2: Cop, Eazy-E, and Dr. Dre]

\*Knocking\*

Yeah, man, what you need?

Police, open now (Aww, shit)

We have a warrant for Eazy-E's arrest (\*Battering ram\*)

Get down and put your hands right where I can see 'em! (Move, motherfucker, move now!)

What the fuck did I do, man? What did I do?

Just shut the fuck up and get your motherfucking ass on the floor! (You heard the man, shut the fuck up!)

But I didn't do shit

Man, just shut the fuck up!

Eazy-E, won't you step up to the stand

And tell the jury how you feel about this bullshit?

[Verse 3: Eazy-E & MC Ren]

I'm tired of the motherfuckin' jackin'

Sweating my gang, while I'm chillin' in the shack, and

Shining the light in my face, and for what?

Maybe it's because I kick so much butt

I kick ass, or maybe 'cause I blast

On a stupid ass nigga when I'm playing with the trigger

Of an Uzi or an AK

'Cause the police always got somethin' stupid to say

They put out my picture with silence

'Cause my identity by itself causes violence

The E with the criminal behavior

Yeah, I'm a gangsta, but still, I got flavor

Without a gun and a badge, what do you got?

A sucker in a uniform waiting to get shot

By me or another nigga

And with a gat, it don't matter if he's smaller or bigger

(Size don't mean shit, he's from the old school, fool)

And as you all know, E's here to rule

Whenever I'm rollin', keep lookin' in the mirror

And ears on cue, yo, so I can hear a

Dumb motherfucker with a gun

And if I'm rollin' off the eight, he'll be the one

That I take out, and then get away

While I'm driving off laughing, this is what I'll say

[Chorus]

Fuck the police, fuck the— fuck the—

Fuck the police, fuck—

Fuck the police, fuck— fuck—

Fuck the police (The verdict)

[Skit 3: Dr. Dre, Cop]

The jury has found you guilty of being a redneck, white bread, chicken shit motherfucker

Wait, that's a lie! That's a goddamn lie!

Get him out of here! (I want justice!)

Get him the fuck out my face! (I want justice!)

Out, right now!

Fuck you, you black motherfuckers!

[Chorus]

Fuck the police

Fuck the police

Fuck the police

#### Rage Against the Machine - Killing in the Name

Written by: Tim Commerford, Brad Wilk, Tom Morello, & Zack de la Rocha

"Killing in the Name" is a scathing indictment of police brutality, racism, and state violence. Released in 1992, the song was a response to the acquittal of the police officers who brutally beat Rodney King, a Black man, in Los Angeles. The song's lyrics condemn the police and the government for their complicity in perpetuating systemic racism and oppression, and urge listeners to resist and fight back against these injustices. The song's aggressive, uncompromising sound and message made it a rallying cry for a generation of activists and political dissidents, and it remains a powerful symbol of resistance and protest to this day. The song's refrain, "Fuck you, I won't do what you tell me," has become an iconic expression of defiance and rebellion against authority and injustice.

**Lyrics:**

[Intro]

Killing in the name of

[Verse]

Some of those that work forces

Are the same that burn crosses

Some of those that work forces

Are the same that burn crosses

Some of those that work forces

Are the same that burn crosses

Some of those that work forces

Are the same that burn crosses

Uh!

[Refrain]

Killing in the name of

Killing in the name of

[Pre-Chorus]

Now you do what they told ya

Now you do what they told ya

Now you do what they told ya

Now you do what they told ya

And now you do what they told ya

And now you do what they told ya

And now you do what they told ya

And now you do what they told ya

And now you do what they told ya

And now you do what they told ya

But now you do what they told ya!

Well, now you do what they told ya

[Chorus]

Those who died are justified

For wearing the badge, they're the chosen whites

You justify those that died

By wearing the badge, they're the chosen whites

Those who died are justified

For wearing the badge, they're the chosen whites

You justify those that died

By wearing the badge, they're the chosen whites

[Verse]

Some of those that work forces

Are the same that burn crosses

Some of those that work forces

Are the same that burn crosses

Some of those that work forces

Are the same that burn crosses

Some of those that work forces

Are the same that burn crosses

Uh!

[Refrain]

Killing in the name of

Killing in the name of

[Pre-Chorus]

Now you do what they told ya

Now you do what they told ya

Now you do what they told ya

Now you do what they told ya

And now you do what they told ya

(Now you're under control) And now you do what they told ya

(Now you're under control) And now you do what they told ya

(Now you're under control) And now you do what they told ya

(Now you're under control) And now you do what they told ya

(Now you're under control) And now you do what they told ya

(Now you're under control) And now you do what they told ya

(Now you're under control) And now you do what they told ya

[Chorus]

Those who died are justified

For wearing the badge, they're the chosen whites

You justify those that died

By wearing the badge, they're the chosen whites

Those who died are justified

For wearing the badge, they're the chosen whites

You justify those that died

By wearing the badge, they're the chosen whites

Come on!

[Guitar Solo]

Ugh!

Yeah!

Come on!

Ugh!

[Outro]

Fuck you, I won't do what you tell me

Fuck you, I won't do what you tell me

Fuck you, I won't do what you tell me

Fuck you, I won't do what you tell me

Fuck you, I won't do what you tell me

Fuck you, I won't do what you tell me

Fuck you, I won't do what you tell me

Fuck you, I won't do what you tell me

Fuck you, I won't do what you tell me

Fuck you, I won't do what you tell me

Fuck you, I won't do what you tell me

Fuck you, I won't do what you tell me

Fuck you, I won't do what you tell me

Fuck you, I won't do what you tell me

Fuck you, I won't do what you tell me

Fuck you, I won't do what you tell me

Motherfucker!

Ugh!

#### Public Enemy - Rebel Without A Pause

Written by: Chuck D, Eric Sadler, & Hank Shocklee

“Rebel Without A Pause" is a politically charged song that confronts issues of racial inequality and oppression in America. The song was released in 1988 and features a sample from James Brown's "Funky Drummer," which was used to create a powerful, driving beat that underlines the urgency and intensity of the lyrics. The song speaks to the experiences of Black Americans who have been marginalized and oppressed by systemic racism and economic injustice. It also highlights the power of resistance and solidarity in the face of these injustices. The use of the "Funky Drummer" sample in the song is significant, as it highlights the historical and cultural roots of Black music and its importance in the struggle for social and political change.

**Lyrics:**

[Intro: Rev. Jesse Jackson]

"Brothers and sisters! Brothers and sisters, I don't know what this world is coming to!"

[Verse 1: Chuck D]

Yes, the rhythm, the rebel

Without a pause, I'm lowering my level

The hard rhymer -- where you never been, I'm in

You want stylin'? You know it's time again

D, the enemy, tellin' you to hear it

They praised the music, this time they play the lyrics

Some say no to the album, The Show

Bum Rush, the sound -- I made a year ago

I guess you know, you guess I'm just a radical

Not on sabbatical, yes, to make it critical

The only party your body should be partyin' to

Panther power on the hour from the rebel to you

[Ad-lib 1: Flavor Flav]

Ay yo, Chuck, man, I don't understand this, man!

Yo, you got to slow down, man, you losin' them!

[Verse 2: Chuck D]

Radio—suckers never play me

On the mix, they just okay me

Now, known and grown, when they're clocking my zone, it's known

Snaking and taking everything that a brother owns

Hard — my calling card

Recorded and ordered, supporter of Chesimard

Loud and proud, kicking live next, poet supreme

Loop a troop, bazooka, the scheme

(Flavor) A rebel in his own mind

Supporter of my rhyme

Designed to scatter a line of suckers who claim I do crime

They on my time ticket

[Ad-lib 2: Flavor Flav]

Ay yo, Chuck, they think we takin' shorts!

Show 'em this is cold medina, man!

Come on, kick it!

[Chorus]

Terminator X, Terminator X

Terminator X, Terminator

[Ad-lib 3: Flavor Flav]

Yo, Chuck, you gettin' 'em nervous

They can't handle this, they gonna break down!

[Verse 3: Chuck D + Flavor Flav]

From a rebel, it's final on black vinyl

Soul, rock and roll coming like a rhino

Tables turn, suckers burn to learn

They can't disable the power of my label

Def Jam, tells you who I am

The enemy's public, they really give a damn

Strong Island, where I got 'em whylin'

That's the reason they're claiming that I'm violent

Never silent, no dope, getting dumb — nope

Claiming where we get our rhythm from

Number one, we hit ya, and we give ya some

No gun, and still never on the run

You wanna be an S1 -- Griff will tell you when

And then you'll come again, you'll know what time it is

Impeach the president, pulling out my ray gun

Zap the next one, I could be your Shogun

(Suckers) don't last a minute

Soft and smooth, I ain't with it

(Hardcore) raw bone like a razor

I'm like a laser, I just won't graze ya

Old enough to raise ya, so this'll faze ya

Get it right, boy, maybe I will praise ya

Playing the role, I got soul too

Voice my opinion with volume

(Smooth) Not what I am

(Rough) 'Cause I'm a man

No matter what the name, we're all the same

Pieces in one big chess game

(Yeah!) The voice of power

Is in the house — go take a shower, boy

P.E. a group, a crew — not singular

We wear black Wranglers

We're rap stranglers, you can't angle us

I know you're listening

I caught you pissin' your pants

You're scared of dissing us

The crowd is missing us

We're on a mission y'all

[Ad-lib 4: Flavor Flav]

Yo Chuck, yo! Yeah, man!

Yo, you got 'em runnin' scared!

[Chorus]

Terminator X, Terminator X

Terminator X, Terminator

[Verse 4]

Attitude, when I'm on fire

Juice on the loose, electric wire

Simple and plain, give me the lane

I'll throw it down your throat like Barkley

You see my car keys, you'll never get these

They belong to the Nine-Eight posse

You want some more, son? You wanna get some?

Bum-rush the door of the store — pick up the album

You know the rhythm, the rhyme plus the beat is designed

So I can enter your mind, boys!

Bring the noise — my time

Step aside for the flex, Terminator X

[Ad-lib 5: Flavor Flav]

Yeah, that's right

This jam is rated cold medina, boy

That's right, cold medina, that's right

We showin' up in E-F-F-E-C-T, also known as effect

You understand what I'm sayin'?

[Outro]

Yeah! Yeah, boy!

Bring that beat back

Bring that beat back one more time, Chuck

Y'all wanna hear that beat, right?

Bring that beat back

...

#### Nas - Ultra Black

Written by: Nas, & Hit-Boy

"Ultra Black" is a powerful and timely statement on Blackness, identity, and pride in the face of racism and oppression. Released in 2020, the song is a response to the ongoing Black Lives Matter movement and the social and political unrest that has gripped America in recent years. The song's lyrics celebrate the beauty and diversity of Blackness and reject the anti-Black stereotypes and prejudices that continue to be perpetuated in society. The song's title, "Ultra Black," is a nod to the Black Panther Party's slogan "Black is Beautiful," and the song's message reflects a similar sense of pride and resistance against white supremacy and systemic racism. "Ultra Black" is a powerful and inspiring anthem for a new generation of activists and changemakers who are fighting for racial justice and equality in America.

**Lyrics:**

[Intro]

Nas, Nas, Nas

Yeah

Nas, Nas

We goin' (We goin') we goin' (We goin')

Uh, uh

My pants 'posed to sag, yeah

We goin' ultra, yeah

[Chorus]

We goin' ultra black, I gotta toast to that

We don't fold or crack (We goin')

Occasion, we rose to that, fuck goin' postal (Uh)

We goin' ultra black

Watchin' the global change, hop in the coldest Range

Hit-Boy on the beat, this shit 'posed to slap

We goin' ultra black, we goin' (We goin')

We goin' (We goin') uh

[Verse 1]

Rhythm and blues, pop, rock to soul to jazz

'Til my toes are tagged (Uh)

How I look being told I'm not supposed to brag?

Nobody fault, I tell the truth, I know it's facts, we ultra black

Grace Jones skin tone, but multi that

Multiple colors, we come in all shades, mocha black

Accept where I'm at and not fight me on it (Uh)

Emotional stares like I might be wanted (Yeah)

Pitch black like the night, I'm ultra black

Sanford and Son reruns, jokes are black (Ha)

Oh yes, oh yes, God bless success

We goin' ultra black, like the Essence Fest

Talk with a mask on, the freshest breath

African black soap caress the flesh

Superfly, The Mack, sittin' fly in the 'Lac

Take the boat on the water, history talks with my daughter (Dest')

My son'll be my resurrection (Knight)

Constantly learnin' lessons, I never die, you get the message?

I hope you be better than I, life's precious (Precious)

Two steppin'

Sometimes I'm over-black, even my clothes are black

Cash Money with the white tee and the soldier rag

We goin' ultra black, unapologetically black

The opposite of Doja Cat, Michael Blackson black

[Chorus]

We goin' ultra black, I gotta toast to that

We don't fold or crack (Nas, Nas)

Occasion, we rose to that, fuck goin' postal

We goin' ultra black

Watchin' the global change, hop in the coldest Range

Hit-Boy on the beat, this shit 'posed to slap

We goin' ultra black (Yeah)

We goin' (We goin', we goin')

[Verse 2]

We goin' ultra black

Raiders, Oakland hat, I smoke to that

Pre-rolls and 'gnac, what's the results to that?

C-notes and bags (Uh)

She knows I'm classy like I'm Billy Dee Williams (Smooth)

Go ultra black (Uh), Isaac Kennedy films, Penitentiary II

Black like out in the Lou', black don't crack

It's like the fountain of youth, the culture's black

Like Iman, she beautiful, goin' ultra black

To Africa, you say, "Go back"

I stay pro-black, my Amex black (Ah)

Black like cornrows, afros

Black like Kaep' blackballed from the Super Bowl (Colin)

Hall & Oates, I can't go for that

Motown Museum, Detroit, I'm ultra black

This for New York and all the map

No matter your race, to me, we all are black

[Chorus]

We goin' ultra black, I gotta toast to that

We don't fold or crack (We don't fold or crack)

Occasion, we rose to that, fuck goin' postal (This a celebration)

We goin' ultra black

Watchin' the global change, hop in the coldest Range

Hit-Boy on the beat, this shit 'posed to slap

We goin' ultra black (Black is beautiful)

We goin' (Black is beautiful)

[Outro]

Nas, Nas (Nas)

#### Talib Kweli & 9th Wonder - Which Side Are You On

Written by: Nottz, Kendra Ross, Tef Poe, & Talib Kweli

"Which Side Are You On" by Talib Kweli and 9th Wonder is a sample/cover of a song originally written in 1931 by Florence Reece, the wife of a union organizer during the coal mining strikes in Kentucky. The original song was a rallying cry for workers fighting for better wages and working conditions, and it has since become an anthem for social justice movements around the world. The song was released in 2015, in the wake of the killing of Michael Brown, an unarmed Black teenager, by police in Ferguson, Missouri. Talib Kweli and 9th Wonder's version of the song pays homage to the original while adding their own unique perspective on the struggle for justice and equality in America. The song's message is urgent and unapologetic, and it reflects the growing sense of frustration and anger that many Black Americans feel in the face of ongoing police violence and discrimination.

**Lyrics:**

[Intro]

Which side are you on, friend? Which side are you on?

Which side are you on, friend? Which side are you on?

Justice for Mike Brown, justice for us all

Justice for Mike Brown, justice for us all

(He was a thug)

[Hook 1]

Which side are you on, boy? The silence is unappreciated

Which side are you on, my lord? I'mma go ahead and take that as disrespect

Which side are you on, boy? Silence is death, yes

Which side are you on, my lord? Get off the fence son

Get off the bench son

Which side are you on, boy? Who will stand to defend us?

Which side are you on, my lord? If you ain't with us, you against us

[Verse 1: Talib Kweli]

We drawing a line in the sand

You with us or against us? Gotta decide where you stand

There's an angel and a demon inside of every man

It's completely up to you, who getting the upper hand?

I make my music for the people

Survival guide the ruthless, be confusing it with evil

When I say "the people" I don't just mean the ones that agree with me

I'm on the side of the people regardless of who they seem to be following

[Hook 2]

Which side are you on, boy? Get off the fence son

Which side are you on, my lord Get off the bench son

Which side are you on, boy? Who will stand to defend us?

Which side are you on, my lord If you ain't with us, you against us

Which side are you on, boy? Get off the fence son

Which side are you on, my lord Get off the bench son

Which side are you on, boy? Who will stand to defend us?

Which side are you on, my lord If you ain't with us, you against us

[Verse 2: Talib Kweli]

Ain't none of these deaths making sense

Nothing is sacred when you suffering to pay your rent

Celebrities be making money off the powerless

They silence in the face of injustice is just cowardice

I roll with a crew that ain't never scared of the challenges

We don't wait for the tragedies, freedom is the catalyst

We don't call in the cavalry, we the leaders we waiting on

You standing up for justice, then trust us, this is your favorite song

They want us caught up in more legal drama than Law & Order

In the streets police is on trial and rappers is the court reporters

You won't be more then one of the lambs they fattening up for the slaughter

If you don't pull your weight and draw your water for our daughters

How a kid without a gun become a threat to cops

When they let off shots, hoping that his head will pop and that his breath will stop?

Gotta be satisfied with waiting until we get the verdict

It's just perverted, no justice for the family of the kid they murdered

[Bridge: Kendra Ross]

Today, today, who you gonna be?

Who you rollin' with?

Quit your stalling, all or nothing

Which side are you on?

Today, today, who you gonna be?

Who you rollin' with?

Pick your poison

Which side are you on?

[Verse 3: Tef Poe]

Gold choppers, [?] match my eyes if they road block us

Martin on my arm, but the struggle made me more Malcolm

Demon in the smoke, kush burnin' like Ferguson

Fuck Obama and Don Lemon, nigga, the nerve of them

CNN, CNN but they ain't seein' him

Tears of the tear gas, tears of the Elohim

P-O-E the priest, hit a pig with a prison shank

God got me, copy? I ain't scared of a fuckin' tank

Glorious struggle, shout out my brother Tory Russell

When I die die, sentimental bye bye

Don't put a bullet hole in my spleen

New millennium we past Indians, and no Zionist in my dreams

Don't kill me for that line, conceal me or flat lines

I don't believe in no laws, I don't believe in your God

It's your block for my black freedom, put a car bomb in your heart

Black child, ain't no love in this bitch

Feed your seed and get your chopper like the government did

P-O-E

[Hook 2]

Which side are you on, boy? Get off the fence son

Which side are you on, my lord Get off the bench son

Which side are you on, boy? Who will stand to defend us?

Which side are you on, my lord If you ain't with us, you against us

Which side are you on, boy? Get off the fence son

Which side are you on, my lord Get off the bench son

Which side are you on, boy? Who will stand to defend us?

Which side are you on, my lord If you ain't with us, you against us

[Outro]

Mike Brown

Eric Garner

Tamir Rice

John Crawford

Kajieme Powell

Antonio Martin

And that's just last year son

#### Fantasy - Earth, Wind, & Fire

Written by: Eddie Del Barrio, Verdine White, & Maurice White

“Fantasy” is a song that reflects on the significant cultural and political changes that were happening in the 1970’s. Released in 1977, the song was a response to racial tensions and economic struggles that were affecting communities across the community. The lyrics reflect a desire for peace and unity in the face of division and conflict. The song is upbeat and optimistic and was a popular anthem for socio-political movements of the time. The song remains a timeless classic that reminds us of the power of music.

**Lyrics:**

Every man has a place

In his heart, there's a space

And the world can't erase his fantasies

Take a ride in the sky

On our ship, Fantasii

All your dreams will come true right away

And we will live together

Until the twelfth of never

Our voices will ring forever, as one

Every thought is a dream

Rushing by in a stream

Bringing life to the kingdom of doing

Take a ride in the sky

On our ship, Fantasii

All your dreams will come true miles away

Our voices will ring together

Until the twelfth of never

We all will live, love forever, as one

Come to see victory

In the land called fantasy

Loving life, a new degree

Bring your mind to everlasting liberty

As one

Come to see victory

In a land called fantasy

Loving life for you and me

To behold, to your soul is ecstasy

You will find (You will find)

Other kind (Other kind)

That has been in search of you

Many lives has brought you to

Recognize (Recognize), it's your life now in review

See Earth, Wind & Fire Live

Get tickets as low as $62

And as you stay for the play

Fantasy has in store for you

Glowing light will see you through

It's your day, shining day

All your dreams come true

Oh-ah-oh-ah-oh-ohh

As you glide in your stride

With the wind as you fly away

Give a smile from your lips and say

"I am free. Yes, I'm free. Now, I'm on my way"

Come to see victory

In a land called fantasy

Loving life for you and me

To behold, to your soul is ecstasy

You will find other kind

That has been in search of you

Many lives has brought you to

Recognize, it's your life now in review

#### Workin Out - JID

Written by: Arthur Herzog, Carson Guidicessi, 2Thirty5, & JID

"Workin Out" is a song that reflects the political and social context of contemporary America, where economic inequality and racial injustice are ongoing issues. The song was released in 2018 and features lyrics that speak to JID's experience of growing up in poverty and struggling to make ends meet. The song's lyrics also touch on broader themes of systemic racism and social injustice, highlighting the ways in which the American dream remains out of reach for many people, particularly people of color. JID's raw and personal lyrics, combined with the song's upbeat and infectious melody, make it a powerful and resonant message that speaks to the challenges and struggles faced by millions of Americans. "Workin Out" is a testament to the power of music to reflect and respond to the social and political issues of our time.

**Lyrics:**

[Intro]

Take your heart, don't let me break it in two

I'm sure that I could possibly do nothin' for you

I'm nearly on the edge, I'm 'bout to jump in a few

I'm really not afraid of nothin'

[Verse 1]

Look, on everything

I gave everything and got nothing back

Ain't looking for no pat on backs

That ain't how we got where the fuck we at

Mama called, "Where the fuck you at?"

"On the road, and I ain't coming back

Until my hundred stacks make a hundred racks

And that hundred racks bring a bundle back"

I was blowin' gas like the Honey Badger

J.I.D, bitch, the money snatcher

C'est la vie, shit, I'm coming after everybody

Don't get the bloody splatter

I'm fly and I got my niggas fly too

Shit is like buddy passes

I wanna cry 'cause I'm numb inside (Ugh)

If you wonder why, ask, "What's the matter?" (Yeah)

[Chorus]

'Cause I been working hella hard, shit ain't really working out

I been praying to the Lord, shit ain't really working out

I been looking to the stars, keep my head up in the clouds

Shit ain't really working out, shit ain't really working out

Shit ain't really working out

[Interlude]

Quiet, don't explain

What is there to gain

[Verse 2]

Shit, shit ain't really working out, huh

Now I got a little bread, got my niggas working outta town

Baby, your ass fat, I can see you working out, shit

And you got a new job? Tell me, how that shit working out? Heh

Heard you doing pretty good, yeah, people talk, word of mouth

Wasn't 'round when you had the dirty house

Now they won't leave when you kick 'em out

These type of people can't stick around

Only down when there's liquor 'round or the spliff around

That's why I don't fuck with niggas now

Well, I fuck with all my niggas, you know the difference

You been living with tunnel vision

You and all of your friends are like wonder women

Wonder Woman working for it, if you ever wanted something

Searching for a purpose, I see what you on

The difference in how you be using your gifts

In the midst of the shit that you dealing with

Really specific, you paid attention, panoramic

You got the vision like a fer-de-lance

You attack and you kill it, sinkin' your teeth with the venom

Kinda like me with these instrumentals

Or the pen and the pencil or off the temple

Pimpin' since been pimpin', keep it sensible

Since you winning, you a object of ridicule

Objects appearing closer than you ready for

Obviously, you don't know what's ahead

But that's the reason you can work 'til you dead

[Chorus]

I been working hella hard, shit ain't really working out

I been praying to the Lord, shit ain't really working out

I been looking to the stars, keep my head up in the clouds

Shit ain't really working out, shit ain't really working out

Shit ain't really working out

[Outro: Zack Fox]

C'mon, bruh, come to the booty club one time

Throw some of that Dreamville money

Throw some of that Dreamville money at these hoes, bruh

They got dreams too, nigga

They got shit to do too, nigga

They got dreams too, bruh-bruh

Y'all Dreamville, uh, ayy-ayy, ayy-ayy, uh-uh

Next time you see that nigga J. Cole, bruh

You tell that nigga the same thing, man

I fuck with y'all niggas, bro

Why that nigga J. Cole, got all this money

Look like he 'bout to borrow somebody charger or something

"C'mon, bruh, let me get your charger, bruh

Let me get my shit to uh, uh, ten percent

And I'll give that shit back to you, bruh bruh"

C'mon, bruh, flex some of that Dreamville money, let me see it

#### Jesus Forgive Me, I Am A Thot - JPEGMAFIA

Written by: JPEGMAFIA

Released in 2019, the song features provocative lyrics that challenge traditional notions of morality and religion, while also addressing issues of race, police brutality, and political corruption. The song's title, which combines religious imagery with sexual slang, is a deliberate provocation that highlights the contradictions and hypocrisies of American culture. JPEGMAFIA's lyrics, which are both confrontational and introspective, reflect a deep dissatisfaction with the status quo and a desire for radical change. "Jesus Forgive Me, I Am a Thot" is a powerful and provocative work of art that challenges listeners to confront the social and political realities of our time.

**Lyrics:**

[Intro]

Oh (You think you know me)

When we rappin'? (Deadly)

Uh

[Verse 1]

Pray (Pray), pray

Pray you get comfy in your disguise (Uh)

Pray for my thots on the other side (Side)

Pray for my children I can't provide, I'll feel 45

Pray when you shoot, it's a homicide

Pray for my haters, they terrified

Nigga, come kill me, I'm verified

But I'm still alive, yeah, I'm still alive

Pray that I end up like Charlize Theron

I'm so confused, I ain't hard to find

I push you pussies beyond the pine

Hope you get some shine, hope you get some shine

It come out the pocketbook every time

Feel like I'm shootin', I'm shiftin' time

Dressed in your grandmama's hand-me-downs, pussy nigga

Huh, sucka, I'm prominent, I was anonymous

I been in front of you every time

This ain't a bridge, it's a collared crime

I put my soul into every bar (Man)

Into every verse, into every rhyme (Shit)

[Chorus]

I can't feel my face, oh God

SMH, no ASMR (Huh)

Show me where the prophets go

Show me how to keep my pussy closed

She said, "You better count your blessings for real"

Amen (Woo!)

[Verse 2]

Pray (Pray), pray

Pray for my babies, they doin' time

Pray that these crackers don't Columbine

I just pray that I peak before my decline

Make 'em hit recline

You know my shooter a proper dime, clarity

Nigga, these bullets get entered in clip

And go into the Kimber that hit your spine

Britney, this a sign

Pray you grow healthy and hit your prime

Ooh, I should pray for a better line

But I don't wan' make all my peers resign

2035, I'll be 45

They say the church leave us all behind

Speaking in tongues like I'm David Byrne

Bitch, I turn a threat to a nevermind, nevermind

Pray for all of these niggas been lyin' and frontin' for company

Bitch, I'm a diva, no punk in me

Fuck you want from me? I'll put you under me, nigga (Oh)

I put your soul in a struggle bar

[Chorus]

I can't feel my face, oh God

SMH, no ASMR (Huh!)

Show me where the prophets go

Show me how to keep my pussy closed

She said, "You better count your blessings for real"

Amen

[Outro]

Praise the motherfuckin' lord

(Oh, dead-dead-deadly)

#### Dr. Whoever - Aminé

Written by: Charlie Brown, Pasqué, & Aminé

"Dr. Whoever" is a song that addresses issues of mental health, self-care, and societal pressures. Released in 2018, the song features lyrics that explore Aminé's own struggles with mental health and his journey towards healing and self-discovery. The song's title, which references a fictional doctor, is a nod to the often-overlooked importance of mental health and the need for greater awareness and support for those struggling with mental illness. Through his music, Aminé encourages listeners to prioritize their own mental health and well-being, and to challenge the societal pressures and expectations that can contribute to mental health issues. "Dr. Whoever" is a powerful and poignant work of art that speaks to the importance of self-care and the need for greater understanding and support for those struggling with mental illness.

**Lyrics:**

[Skit: Rickey Thompson]

Sad on your motherfucking b-day? Bitch, what the fuck?! Don’t you realize you popping? Every time you walk in the room, you break necks. Necks?! But you telling me you sad on your motherfucking b-day?

[Intro: Aminé]

Yeah

Yeah

Ahem

Yeah

[Verse 1: Aminé]

I sit here and tell you my problems, that’s how this work, right?

I’m s’posed to be open and honest, but I got time, right?

My niggas having seshes, and I’m doing sessions

Can’t man up if masculinity your only weapon

Man, I’ve thought about suicide a hundred times

But I'd hate to disappoint and see my momma cry

Birthdays these days be the worst days

'Cause I know I’m getting older and not happier

Me and my father love each other, but we barely show it

He hates that I left home, and the lawn is now his to mow it

He look at my generation and think that fashion's over

I'll kill my sister if she ever model Fashion Nova (True)

I'm always on a flight (Mm), or I'm in a hurry (Yeah)

I miss when losing my virginity was my only worry (Yeah)

Back when putting on a condom had me really scary (Scared)

And milkshakes were the only time we'd eat a cherry (\*Pop\*)

I think learnin' how to eat pussy from someone who eat pussy

Is better than learnin' from someone who doesn't

And that's word to my ex, and that's word to my tongue (Yeah)

And that's word to the woman who had my heart beatin' drums (Drums, drums)

Yeah, love is what I cherished and Ms. Parrish (Yeah)

Flew all the way to Paris and we made out on my terrace (Yeah)

I kept it on the low-low, 'cause I was in love (Love)

And the shade I had in my room was already enough ('Nuff)

I'm going on some dates, and I'm making some plans

But it's hard to find some love if the girl is a fan (Fan)

And after we fuck, she want a picture with me

She got me feeling like Paper Boi, but I cry when she leaves, yeah

[Chorus: Aminé]

These intros ain't meant to be bangers

They meant for you and me so we'll never end up as strangers

Will Ferrell's ass can't even handle this weather

Tune in your speakers and please be my Dr. Whoever

I said, I said, these intros ain't meant to be bangers

They meant for you and me so we'll never end up as strangers

Will Ferrell's ass can't even handle this weather (Woo)

Tune in your speakers and please be my Dr. Whoever, yeah

[Interlude: Aminé]

Yeah

Uh-huh, uh-huh

Woo

Yes, sir

Yeah

Look (Skrt)

[Verse 2: Aminé]

Boy, you looking big mad

When you see a young brother up in first class (Yee)

And you damn right, my ego like Lavar Ball (Yuh)

They hate to see a black man who can't get blackballed (Skrt)

I said my paper long (Yuh), my paper long (Yuh)

You damn right, bitch (Bitch), my paper long (Hunh)

It's that yellow, mellow, fellow, yeah, that Yellowstone (Hey)

Play the cello for the fellows, fake as silicone (True)

I went from plaque in my teeth to having plaques on the wall

Gold album with platinum records

Who woulda thought? (Uh-huh)

Young nigga, like Jigga, tryna make me a boss

I'll take my mama to Louis

And take your girl to the Ross, nigga (Rrring)

Back in the muthafuckin' building (Yuh)

Your boo thing want my children (Yuh)

My net worth gon' be billions (Bih)

Shorty gimme head like ceiling (True)

Dick disappear, chameleon (True)

And like I'm motherfucking rolling (Yee)

My whip bought, it's not stolen (Brrr)

[Chorus: Aminé]

These intros ain't meant to be bangers

They meant for you and me so we'll never end up as strangers

Will Ferrell's ass can't even handle this weather

Tune in your speakers and please be my Dr. Whoever, yeah

[Verse 3: Aminé]

Hey, Doc, do I tell em how I actually feel? (Yeah)

Or do I see a therapist and numb the pain with the pills?

This for niggas play tough, won't even smile in mirrors (Nah)

"And we learned to fuck hoes off trial and error"

Friday nights, where them broke niggas ball out

And Aminé be the name that your girlfriend gon' call out (Call out)

To all my niggas with some melanin, let your feelings settle in

If you feeling worthless (Yeah), you should probably go and tell a friend (Tell it)

Yeah, but, I should take that advice

This year has been crazy, what the fuck is my life? (What?)

My best friend got married, you can bet that I cried

I met Spike and Brad Pitt; no malls, I'm Saks Fifth, nigga (Errr!)

[Skit: Rickey Thompson]

Get your shit together, and turn the fuck up!

#### Big Poppa - The Notorious B.I.G.

Written by: The Notorious B.I.G., The Isley Brothers, & Chris Jasper

"Big Poppa" by The Notorious B.I.G. is a quintessential hip-hop track that captures the essence of the East Coast rap scene of the 1990s. Released in 1995, Biggie's braggadocious lyrics about his newfound wealth and fame were especially significant because they challenged the original stereotypes of poor Black Americans perpetuated by mainstream media. "Big Poppa" also samples the classic song "Between the Sheets" by The Isley Brothers, adding to its repurposing of contemporary Black music to create a new story. The song came at a time when hip-hop was emerging as a dominant force of American music and culture and challenged the conventional notions of success and ambition.

**Lyrics:**

[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. & Puff Daddy]

To all the ladies in the place with style and grace

Allow me to lace these lyrical douches in your bushes (Uh)

Who rock grooves and make moves with all the mamis?

The back of the club, sippin' Moët is where you'll find me (What?)

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

Mad question askin', blunt passin'

Music blastin', but I just can't quit

Because one of these honeys Biggie got to creep with (That's right)

Sleep with, keep the ep a secret, why not? (Uh)

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 (Come on)

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

C-notes by the layers, true fuckin' players (Uh)

Jump in the Rover and come over, tell your friends jump in the GS3

I got the chronic by the tree cuz (Let's go)

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

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 honeys gettin' money, playin' niggas like dummies

I love it when you call me Big Poppa

You got a gun up in your waist, please don't shoot up the place (Why?)

'Cause I see some ladies tonight that should be havin' my baby (Uh), baby (Uh)

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

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

Soon as he buy that wine, I just creep up from behind (That's right)

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 (Come on)

Plans to leave, throw the keys to Little Cease (Uh-huh)

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 (G)

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 Ls while you do me

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

I love it when you call me Big Poppa

Throw your hands in the air if you's a true player (Come on, yeah)

I love it when you call me Big Poppa

To the honeys gettin' money, playin' niggas like dummies (Uh)

I love it when you call me Big Poppa

You got a gun up in your waist, please don't shoot up the place (Why?)

'Cause I see some ladies tonight that should be havin' my baby, baby (Uh)

[Verse 3: The Notorious B.I.G. & Puff Daddy]

(How you livin', Biggie Smalls?) In mansion and Benzes

Givin' ends to my friends, and it feels stupendous

Tremendous cream: fuck a dollar and a dream (Heh)

Still tote gats, strapped with infrared beams (That's right) (What?)

Choppin' Os (Uh-huh), smokin' la in Optimos

Money, hoes and clothes: all a nigga knows (All a nigga knows)

A foolish pleasure? Whatever

I had to find the buried treasure (For what?), so grams I had to measure

However, livin' better now, Coogi sweater now

Drop top BMs, 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 (That's right), alright?

Is that aight wit' you?

Yeah, keep bangin'

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

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 honeys gettin' money, playin' niggas like dummies (Uh)

I love it when you call me Big Poppa

You got a gun up in your waist, please don't shoot up the place (Why?)

'Cause I see some ladies tonight that should be havin' my baby, baby (Uh)

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

Check it out

Nine-fo' shit for that ass, uh

Puff Daddy, Biggie Smalls, Junior M.A.F.I.A.

Represent, baby, baby, uh

#### Hair Down - SiR & Kendrick Lamar

Written by: Michael Uzowuru, Jeff Kleinman, Mike Hector, Kendrick Lamar, & SiR

**“**Hair Down” is a song that highlights the importance of self-care and self-love in the Black community. . The song's title is a reference to relaxing and letting one's guard down. In Lamar’s verse, he mentions that “Calabasas ain’t the move, that’s where everybody live” which is a reference to a neighborhood in Los Angeles that comes off as ignorant because it is a very wealthy neighborhood. Lamar could be making fun of people who can afford to live in Calabasas as the people who live there most likely have the means to live elsewhere.

**Lyrics:**

[Verse 1: SiR]

I been goin' silly for the Westside (Westside)

You might catch me rollin' where the reps ride (Real reps, real reps, real reps)

Ain't no opposition, I'm the best, right? (Yeah, yeah)

I might take my city on a test drive (Test drive)

You don't wanna see me on a good day (Oh no, oh no)

You don't wanna see me on a bad day (No, no, no, oh no)

I was just a nigga with some hoop dreams (Hoop dreams)

Now, I'm in the league, bitch

Now, I'm in the lead, bitch

I can slam dunk but I just layup (I just layup, ayy)

Smokin' marijuana 'til I, ooh (Ooh), what? (What?) wake up

May not understand me 'cause it's all real (I'm all real, all real)

And I don't really give a damn how y'all feel (No, no)

[Chorus: SiR]

Baby, I'm just tryna let my hair down (My hair down)

Baby, I'm just tryna let my hair down (My hair down)

Everybody's watchin', I'm aware now (I'm aware now)

But I can't find a reason I should care now (I should care now)

Baby, I'm just tryna let my–

[Post-Chorus: SiR]

If I take off my cool, do you promise to stay?

If I give you my heart, would you throw it away?

Do you mean what you say when you tell me you love me?

Do you really?

Do you really?

[Verse 2: Kendrick Lamar]

Itty-bitty bitch is a numerologist

Got your number where I live

I'ma get you outta pocket like a quarterback blitz

That's a everyday faucet, make it wet, make it rinse

Skeletons in your closet but your past don't exist

Got a pad on your list, got a pad on your lock

Calabas' ain't the move, that's where everybody live

Plus the mountain is hot, you forgot what you got, ah!

Hol' up, nuisance (I say it, I say it, I say it)

I recommend 'em all with acoustics (I say it, I say it, I say it)

I recommend a bed for the juices (I say it, I say it, I say it)

I recommend you live where the truth is (I say it, I say it, I say it)

Psychedelic views and infinity pools, yeah, checking out

Once I sweat them edges out

Hair down like vanity

I got the fuck-ups, I got the damage fees

I got the gold dust, I got the anesthesia

When you chose up, this ain't a fantasy

We 'bout to go up, see underhanding me never got no love

But understandin' me maybe can mold us and–

[Chorus: SiR]

Baby, I'm just tryna let my hair down (My hair down)

Baby, I'm just tryna let my hair down (My hair down)

Everybody's watching, I'm aware now (I'm aware now)

But I can't find a reason I should care now (I should care now)

Baby, I'm just tryna let my–

[Post-Chorus: SiR]

If I take off my cool, do you promise to stay?

If I give you my heart, would you throw it away?

Do you mean what you say when you tell me you love me?

Do you really?

Do you really?

#### Formation - Beyoncé

Written by: Slim Jxmmi, Pluss, Mike WiLL Made-it, Swae Lee, & Beyoncé

"Formation" is a political anthem that highlights issues faced by the African American community. The song talks about black identity, police brutality, and the cultural significance of black heritage. The lyrics also celebrate Beyoncé's Southern roots and her black pride, while challenging the stereotypical perceptions of black culture. The song's release on February 6, 2016, the day before Trayvon Martin's would-be 21st birthday, holds significant meaning as Trayvon Martin's death became a symbol of police brutality towards black people. "Formation" became a powerful symbol of black empowerment and a call to action for the Black Lives Matter movement. Through her music, Beyoncé gave voice to the struggles of the African American community and helped ignite a larger conversation about race, police brutality, and social justice in America.

**Lyrics:**

[Intro: Messy Mya]

What happened at the New Wil'ins?

Bitch, I'm back by popular demand

[Refrain: Beyoncé]

Y'all haters corny with that Illuminati mess

Paparazzi, catch my fly and my cocky fresh

I'm so reckless when I rock my Givenchy dress (Stylin')

I'm so possessive so I rock his Roc necklaces

My daddy Alabama, momma Louisiana

You mix that negro with that Creole, make a Texas bama

I like my baby heir with baby hair and afros

I like my negro nose with Jackson Five nostrils

Earned all this money, but they never take the country out me

I got hot sauce in my bag, swag

[Interlude: Messy Mya & Big Freedia]

Oh yeah, baby, oh yeah I, oh, oh, yes, I like that

I did not come to play with you hoes, haha

I came to slay, bitch

I like cornbreads and collard greens, bitch

Oh, yes, you besta believe it

[Refrain: Beyoncé]

Y'all haters corny with that lluminati mess

Paparazzi, catch my fly and my cocky fresh

I'm so reckless when I rock my Givenchy dress (Stylin')

I'm so possessive so I rock his Roc necklaces

My daddy Alabama, momma Louisiana

You mix that negro with that Creole, make a Texas bama

I like my baby heir with baby hair and afros

I like my negro nose with Jackson Five nostrils

Earned all this money but they never take the country out me

I got hot sauce in my bag, swag

[Chorus: Beyoncé]

I see it, I want it, I stunt; yellow bone-it

I dream it, I work hard, I grind 'til I own it

I twirl on them haters, albino alligators

El Camino with the seat low, sippin' Cuervo with no chaser

Sometimes I go off (I go off), I go hard (I go hard)

Get what's mine (Take what's mine), I'm a star (I'm a star)

'Cause I slay (Slay), I slay (Hey), I slay (Okay), I slay (Okay)

All day (Okay), I slay (Okay), I slay (Okay), I slay (Okay)

We gon' slay (Slay), gon' slay (Okay), we slay (Okay), I slay (Okay)

I slay (Okay), okay (Okay), I slay (Okay), okay, okay, okay, okay

Okay, okay, ladies, now let's get in formation, 'cause I slay

Okay, ladies, now let's get in formation, 'cause I slay

Prove to me you got some coordination, 'cause I slay

Slay trick, or you get eliminated

[Verse: Beyoncé]

When he fuck me good, I take his ass to Red Lobster, 'cause I slay

When he fuck me good, I take his ass to Red Lobster, we gon slay

If he hit it right, I might take him on a flight on my chopper, I slay

Drop him off at the mall, let him buy some J's, let him shop up, 'cause I slay

I might get your song played on the radio station, 'cause I slay

I might get your song played on the radio station, 'cause I slay

You just might be a black Bill Gates in the making, 'cause I slay

I just might be a black Bill Gates in the making

[Chorus: Beyoncé]

I see it, I want it, I stunt; yellow bone-it

I dream it, I work hard, I grind 'til I own it

I twirl on my haters, albino alligators (Twirl)

El Camino with the seat low, sippin' Cuervo with no chaser

Sometimes I go off (I go off), I go hard (I go hard)

Take what's mine (Take what's mine), I'm a star (I'm a star)

'Cause I slay (Slay), I slay (Hey), I slay (Okay), I slay (Okay)

I slay (Okay), I slay (Okay), I slay (Okay), I slay (Okay)

We gon' slay (Slay), gon' slay (Okay), we slay (Okay), I slay (Okay)

I slay (Okay), okay (Okay), I slay (Okay), okay, okay, okay, okay

Okay, okay, ladies, now let's get in formation, I slay

Okay, ladies, now let's get in formation, 'cause I slay

Prove to me you got some coordination, 'cause I slay

Slay trick, or you get eliminated, I slay

[Bridge: Beyoncé]

Okay, ladies, now let's get in formation, I slay

Okay, ladies, now let's get in formation

You know you that bitch when you cause all this conversation

Always stay gracious, best revenge is your paper

[Outro]

Girl, I hear some thunder

Golly, look at that water, boy, oh Lord

Work Cited

*Dall·E*. DALL·E. (n.d.). Retrieved March 14, 2023, from https://labs.openai.com/ (For Cover Photo)

*Song Lyrics & Knowledge*. Genius. (n.d.). Retrieved March 14, 2023, from https://genius.com/