

The Sidewalks

J-Live

Yo, I grew up on the chill side
The no big deal side
Where staying alive was no problem
The other east side
Projects and condos
Somewhere in between downtown and harlem
It's not quite accurate to claim half
Either side was ever either all this or all that
Some projects apartments be decked out fat
Some condos still packed with roaches and rats
But if New York is a concrete Jungle
My old earth kept me in the zoo where it wasnt so wild
Who wouldn't want to find a way to make it safe for a child
As a teenager I learned to escape for awhile
But you know what they say being out of your element
Whether giraffe, monkey, lion, or elephant
In school they said I was on the right track
But in the school of hard knocks I done got left back
Nowadays no knocks get left
My left knocks back
Some say might makes right
So my rights ain't light
But whether giving beatdowns or getting down on beat
You're not likely to see me or consider me street

But from the sidewalks I see how it's rough out there
I see the extra large dosage of life ain't fair
From the sidewalks I see how the gas don't last
In the streets and you crash when you go too fast
From the sidewalks trust shit is Just as real
Even if your lifestyle ain't kill or be killed
From the sidewalks Chris Rock got you gassed
But I'm that smarter than y'all nigga that'll whoop your ass

Yo, I love New York, I am New York
The way I spin break beats, make beats and talk
The way I eat, sleep, drink, f**k, spit, and walk
The way I build and destroy cause that's how I was taught
I'm feeling Philly for now, I don't get home sick
I'm still close enough to the Yanks, Giants, and Knicks
It's still city to city Just different bricks
See I don't divide by places, man f**k that shit
It's a different state, but similar state of mind
See every city got the same theme underlined
A battleground for the lives of the dumb and blind
Ya heard?
Please believe that it takes all kinds
We all got to get over in our own way
Place to stay, peace to lay, and a pay day
I get mines the legit way
But no telling what I do to protect mines
So you best respect my
Kindness for weakness, face for fear
Common mistakes are made until the cards are played
But don't step to my door thinking something is sweet
Or we won't even have to take it all the way to the street

Cuz from the sidewalks, corners that I clean and own
Never f**k with the sanctity of my home
From the sidewalks, I rep from New York to Philly
So from Broadway to Broad Street you got to feel me
From the sidewalks, I know how to hold it down
On my own when I come through and visit your town
From the sidewalks, Chris Rock got you gassed
But I'm that smarter than y'all nigga that'll whoop your ass

Yo, from the sidewalks, I been watching Hip-Hop grow
And vice versa from school battles to my own show
I watch skills evolve and the necks up blow
Motivated by the love for the art and the dough
I seen people influenced by the next man's flow
To the point that it controls where they content go
But if there's 8 million stories and a handful of rappers
We can't all be pimps, players, and gunclappers
It sounds sexy coming out your stereo, right?
But then you wonder why we still getting stereotyped
Like we a whole generation of
Want to be thugs and soon to be hoes
Like that's Just how it go
But everybody in the city ain't ghetto
We all not slanging rocks and toatin' metal and
Everybody in the ghetto ain't gangster
Waiting for a reason to stomp, shoot, and shank ya, and
Every gangster in the ghetto ain't stupid as you
Advocating that bullshit the way that you do
Like there's no consequences or repercussions
Like we don't even think first, before we start bustin'
But whatever's clever son, I let them tell it
Why should I play the role of zealot Just for y'all to repel it
I'd rather rep for the rest of us with real talk
So I'm out like that
J transmitting live from the sidewalks

(From the sidewalks....)