Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five, “The Message” (1982)

It's like a jungle sometimes  
It makes me wonder how I keep from goin' under

Broken glass everywhere  
People pissin' on the stairs, you know they just don't care  
I can't take the smell, can't take the noise  
Got no money to move out, I guess I got no choice  
Rats in the front room, roaches in the back  
Junkies in the alley with a baseball bat  
I tried to get away but I couldn't get far  
Cause a man with a tow truck repossessed my car

Don't push me cause I'm close to the edge  
I'm trying not to lose my head  
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Standin' on the front stoop hangin' out the window  
Watchin' all the cars go by, roarin' as the breezes blow  
Crazy lady, livin' in a bag  
Eatin' outta garbage pails, used to be a fag hag  
Said she'll dance the tango, skip the light fandango  
A Zircon princess seemed to lost her senses  
Down at the peep show watchin' all the creeps  
So she can tell her stories to the girls back home  
She went to the city and got so so seditty  
She had to get a pimp, she couldn't make it on her own

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My brother's doin' bad, stole my mother's TV  
Says she watches too much, it's just not healthy  
All My Children in the daytime, Dallas at night  
Can't even see the game or the Sugar Ray fight  
The bill collectors, they ring my phone  
And scare my wife when I'm not home  
Got a bum education, double-digit inflation  
Can't take the train to the job, there's a strike at the station  
Neon King Kong standin' on my back  
Can't stop to turn around, broke my sacroiliac  
A mid-range migraine, cancered membrane  
Sometimes I think I'm goin' insane  
I swear I might hijack a plane!

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A child is born with no state of mind  
Blind to the ways of mankind  
God is smilin' on you but he's frownin' too  
Because only God knows what you'll go through  
You'll grow in the ghetto livin' second-rate  
And your eyes will sing a song called deep hate  
The places you play and where you stay  
Looks like one great big alleyway  
You'll admire all the number-book takers  
Thugs, pimps and pushers and the big money-makers  
Drivin' big cars, spendin' twenties and tens  
And you'll wanna grow up to be just like them, huh  
Smugglers, scramblers, burglars, gamblers  
Pickpocket peddlers, even panhandlers  
You say I'm cool, huh, I'm no fool  
But then you wind up droppin' outta high school  
Now you're unemployed, all non-void  
Walkin' round like you're Pretty Boy Floyd  
Turned stick-up kid, but look what you done did  
Got sent up for a eight-year bid  
Now your manhood is took and you're a Maytag  
Spend the next two years as a undercover fag  
Bein' used and abused to serve like hell  
Til one day, you was found hung dead in the cell  
It was plain to see that your life was lost  
You was cold and your body swung back and forth  
But now your eyes sing the sad, sad song  
Of how you lived so fast and died so young so

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