

## Blue Scholars

### "Joe Metro"

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I reach beneath the skin of the street with each step  
Walkin' closer to my final destination of death  
When I'm layin' to rest, I'm only savin' my breath  
The Northwest fills the lungs, heals the pain in my  
chest

Take six quarters out of the pocket  
Drop it in the box  
Hop the 48, off to pay homage  
It stops often, I jot my observations, watchin'  
Citizens walkin' off of the Joe Metropolitan  
Proletariats and wayward sons  
With old Filipino men speakin' in they native tongue  
And the day is just begun  
Greeted by the scent of a bum  
Smelling something like beer, barf, and dung  
A brother in repose in the back all alone  
Marinatin' in a pair of half-broken headphones  
Muddled in rhymes  
Same time begin to pen mine  
Appreciating God's design  
Rewind sister  
Reminds me of a smile in the back of my memory  
Wonder if I'll see her again  
Will she remember me?  
"I'm not tryin' to holler, I swear.  
I'm just weary of the way we hop a ride  
And just sit there and stare."  
Prepare for my nine o' clock work meeting  
A couple pale folks slide right by with no greeting  
But the people with my phenotype follow with a head-  
nod up  
Because we acknowledge that the shit's fucked up

North of Martin Luther King: a straight warzone  
Detours through the concrete, cranes, and bulldozers  
No, the Hill is not over still  
Every block got a coffee shop; it's overkill  
Focus, know the deal  
Dope to see Kalil back, the medicine is good again  
The feeling: illegal, and coming back to your hood

again

It's priceless, I write this, our lives are in crisis  
Most talk, but don't walk, the path of the righteous  
Despite this...

I measure each step, walkin' closer to my final  
destination of death

When I'm layin' to rest, I'm only savin' my breath  
The Northwest fills my lungs, heals the pain in my chest  
Clutch the moment, a transfer in my hand

Still listening

Lookin' out the window to the gold and the gray  
And the sun might be shinin' but it's colder than it  
seems

'Cause the weather's dialectical: there's no in-between

In walks an old soul

A First Nation native, cat's chiseled like a totem pole  
No words, as he stands and looks over us  
He gets off and says, "Have a good day, you  
foreigners."

I, crack a smile one time for the acknowledgement  
Northbound, now we start to pick up more college kids  
They try to study on the ride

To make up for the fact that they probably kicked it  
hard last night

And I ponder if it's time to save up and get a car  
And pay for the gas that we're takin' from the war  
I'd miss all the colorful faces, the places, and spaces  
I've embraced with

The faith that I can rest and raise kids here even with  
these cats set

Trippin'

Bringin' '95 back again, same old conditions  
From Reagan, to Bush, to Clinton, to the Bush the 2nd  
No matter the neighborhood in the city you're reppin'  
It's gettin' serious y'all

You can even hear the rebel call

Gettin' off, leavin' hella pieces on the walls  
Seen it all, sittin' sideways with my townmates  
Only place left where majority is brown-faced

Now we headed downtown to trade our labor for cash

I thank the navigator once and walk fast

I walk past the next round of cats to jump on it

Locked in deep thought, we ride around in silence

And cross Rizal Bridge

I watch each step, walkin' closer to my final destination  
of death

When I'm layin' to rest, I'm only savin' my breath  
The Northwest fills the lungs, heals the pain in my  
chest

I remain blessed, steppin' on rain with each step  
Eyes heavy from the lack of the cousin of death  
When I'm layin' to rest, I'm only savin' my breath  
The Northwest fills the lungs y'all, you know the rest...

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