



**Williams, Saul. *The Dead Emcee Scrolls: The Lost Teachings of Hip-Hop*. MTV Books, 2006.**

## **Chapter 22**

Not Until you've heard RKM (Rakim) on a rocky mountaintop have you heard hip-hop.  
Extract the urban element that created it  
and let an open wide countryside illustrate it.

Riding on a freight train in the freezing  
rain listening to Coltrane. My reality went  
insane and I think I saw Jesus. He was  
playing hopscotch with Betty Carter who  
was cursing out in a scat gibberish for  
not saying butterfingers.

And my fingers run through grains of sand  
like seeds of time. The pains of man.  
The frames of mind which built these frames  
which is the structure of our urban super-  
structure.

The trains and planes could corrupt and  
obstruct your planes of thought so that  
you forget how to walk through the woods  
which ain't good' cause if you never  
walked through the trees listening to Nobody  
Beats The Biz then you ain't never heard  
hip-hop.



## Chapter 23

And you don't stop. And you don't stop.  
And you must stop letting cities define you.  
Confine you to that which is brick and cement.  
We are not hard people. Our domes have  
been crowned with the likes of steeples.

That which is our being soars with the eagles  
and the Johnathan Livingston Seagulls. Yes, I  
got wings. You got wings. All God's children  
got wings. So let's widen the circumference  
of our nest and escape this urban incubator.

The wind plays the world like an instrument.  
Blows through trees like flutes. But trees won't  
grow in cement. And as heart beats bring  
percussion fallen trees bring repercussions.  
Cities play upon our souls like broken drums.

We drum the essence of creation from city  
slums. But city slums mute our drums and  
our drums become humdrum 'cause city slums  
have never been where our drums were from.  
Just the place where our daughters and sons  
become offbeat heartbeats.

Slaves to city streets. Where hearts get broken  
when heartbeats stop. Broken heartbeats become  
break-beats for [rappers] to rhyme on top.