



Car Culture and Rock and Roll in Postwar America – Lyric Excerpts

“No Money Down” (1955)

Performed by Chuck Berry

As I was motivatin' back in town
I saw a Cadillac sign sayin' 'No Money Down'
So I eased on my brakes and I pulled in the drive
Gunned my motor twice then I walked inside

Dealer came to me said "Trade in you Ford
And I'll put you in a car that'll eat up the road
Just tell me what you want and then sign that line
And I'll have it brought down to you in a hour's time"

I'm gonna get me a car
And I'll be headed on down the road
Then I won't have to worry
About that broken down, ragged Ford

Well Mister I want a yellow convertible four door De Ville
With a Continental spare and a wide chrome wheel
I want power steering and power brakes
I want a powerful motor with a jet off-take

I want air condition, I want automatic heat
And I want a full Murphy bed in my back seat
I want short-wave radio, I want TV and a phone
You know I gotta talk to my baby when I'm ridin' alone

Yes I'm gonna get that car
And I'm gonna head on down the road
Yeah, then I won't have to worry
About that broken down, ragged Ford

“Rocket 88” (1951)

Performed by Jackie Brenston and His Delta Cats

You women have heard of jalopies
You heard the noise they make
Let me introduce you to my Rocket '88
Yes, it's great, just won't wait
Everybody likes my Rocket '88
Baby, we'll will ride in style movin' all along

V-8 motor and this modern design
Black convertible top and the girls don't mind
Sportin' with me, ridin' all around town for joy
Blow your horn, rocket, blow your horn!

“Fun, Fun, Fun” (1964)

Performed by the Beach Boys

Well she got her daddy's car
And she cruised to the hamburger stand now
Seems she forgot all about the library
Like she told her old man now
And with the radio blasting
Goes cruising just as fast as she can now

And she'll have fun, fun, fun
Till her daddy takes the t-bird away

Well the girls can't stand her
'Cause she walks, looks, and drives like an ace now
(You walk like an ace now, you walk like an ace)
She makes the Indy 500
look like a Roman chariot race now
(You look like an ace now, you look like an ace)
A lotta guys try to catch her
But she leads them on a wild goose chase now
(You drive like an ace now, you drive like an ace)

And she'll have fun, fun, fun
Till her daddy takes the t-bird away

Lyric Excerpts, Continued

“Little Deuce Coupe” (1963)

Performed by the Beach Boys

Well I'm not braggin' babe so don't put me down
But I've got the fastest set of wheels in town
When something comes up to me he don't even try
Cause if I had a set of wings man I know she could fly
She's my little deuce coupe
You don't know what I got

Just a little deuce coupe with a flat head mill
But she'll walk a Thunderbird like she's standin' still
She's ported and relieved and she's stroked and bored.
She'll do a hundred and forty with the top end floored
She's my little deuce coupe
You don't know what I got

“Racing in the Street” (1978)

Performed by Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band

I got a sixty-nine Chevy with a 396
Fuelie heads and a Hurst on the floor
She's waiting tonight down in the parking lot
Outside the Seven-Eleven store
Me and my partner Sonny built her straight out of scratch
And he rides with me from town to town
We only run for the money got no strings attached
We shut 'em up and then we shut 'em down

Tonight, tonight the strip's just right
I wanna blow 'em off in my first heat
Summer's here and the time is right
For goin' racin' in the street

We take all the action we can meet
And we cover all the northeast state
When the strip shuts down we run 'em in the street
From the fire roads to the interstate
Some guys they just give up living
And start dying little by little, piece by piece
Some guys come home from work and wash up
And go racin' in the street

Tonight, tonight the strip's just right
I wanna blow 'em all out of their seats
Calling out around the world, we're going racin' in the street