

Rare Portraits

Talib Kweli

Gravitas, light it up
Lighten it up, brighten it up, yea
You want the grown step your bars up
You brag about the scrilla them killas lighten your cars up
Welcome to the complete history of the one known as Talib Kweli

Such a blessing, I'm making the bread leven
Descendant of Terra Firma
I'm from the era of legend
The blind to my eyesight
Too scared of the world ending
My men of spiritual essence be walking right into heaven
Ascending without the stairs, expressing without the fears
We diamonds but our minds are corrupted just like De Beers
Unravelling minds, travelling through time like Standing with the flow like
the man in the gondolier
In the park of Washington Square, locks in my hair
Louder than the bull horns we was locking 'em there
Cops would prepare to lock us up
They was scared like tales from the dark side
Summer of the Central Park five

1989 was the number, the year that I started rhyming
From Brooklyn to Staten Island them Decepticons was wildin'
Music soothing but the imagery violent as bomb threats
Therapy for the prison industrial complex
Provided the context for the with the tec nine
At Brooklyn Tech I spit it the best so they had to respect mine
I did it to death on my grind on a quest to get signed
Sorta like the tribe would always suggest we check the rhyme
An internal with Puff Daddy, confronted the Rolling with Hi Tek in the MPV t
hrough the streets of the Natti
Before graduating to Caddies was carrying crates
Shoutout to Flex all day doing records with John Forte
We was standing outside the tower devouring prey
Powerful display of bullet points that we shower and spray the block with
Back in them solid days these rappers was appetizers
I played it like I was David, I was tackling that Goliath
Attacking the open mics to the victory was decisive
This life it was so enticing, my surgery so precise
I would chop it like thin slices at parties we politic
At the country club, lighting up dutches with Pac and Big
At the crib of supernatural battling back and forth
Back before Jean was in the unsigned hype in the back of The Source
Rest in peace to sons
was liking to call you son
Cause you mine I call you son cause you shine
What's up [?], this is OG Brooklyn shit
Not for impostors, pour out a shot of vodka for them
Big L, Big Poppa, Big Pun, 2Pac
The jungle is too savage, rap true master producing the new classic
This shit is too classic it's blow to to spinal tap
I started with the Rawkus Recording we work the vinyl backwards
From DEF JUX to Loaded Lux
I'm the underground king like I'm rolling with Bun and The flow is nuts it's
solid I got the golden touch
Plus my iron sheek and I got the game and the cobra clutch

This the highest calibre do the algebra
From Yasiin Bey to Jean Grey to Pharoahe Monch
Black Thought to Common
Almost 20 years after the release of Soundbombing
And it still sound common
I'm out and on tour with the greatest, A Tribe Called Quest
And the De La's, opened for Jay Z and Nas, who else could say this?
In Vegas with Tech 9 getting faded before the gig
Only later to hit the RIO and hop on the stage with Prince
True story, I always knew the importance of great shows
Since 1992 I seen Ice Cube play Way cold, continue to pave the road for the
Kendricks and J Coles
Continue to stake gold
From making the way for Kanye to meetings with Mr. Harry Belafonte
All started on park benches with Dante
Predicting the future, so observant I'm clairvoyant
The frame can't contain it, I'm painting a rare portrait