

Patti Smith, Notes To The Future

Listen my children and you shall hear
The sound of your own steps
The sound of your hereafter
Memory awaits and turns to greet you
Draping its banner across your wrists
Wake up arms
Delicate feet
For as one to march the streets

Each alone, each part of another
Your steps shall ring
Shall raise the cloud
And they that will hear will hear
Will hear voice of the one
And the one and the one
As it has never been uttered before

For something greater yet to come
Then the hour of the prophets
And their great cities

For the people of Ninevah
Fell to their knees
Heeding the cry of Jonah
United
Covering themselves in sackcloth and ashes
And called to their god

And all their hearts were as one heart.
And all their voices were as one voice.

God heard them and his mind was moved.

Yet something greater will come to pass.
And who will call?
And what will they call?
Will they call to God?
The air?
The fowl?

It will not matter, if the call is true.
They shall call and this is known.
One voice and each another
Shall enter the dead, the living flower,
Enter forms that we know not.
To be felt by sea,
By air,
By earth
And shall be an elemental pledge.

This is our birthright.
This is our charge.
And we have given over to others.
And they have
not
done
well

And the forests mourn.
The leaves fall.

Swaddling babes watch and wonder
As the fathers of our spirit nations
Dance in the street in celebration

As the mountains turn pale from
Their nuclear hand
And they have
not
done
well

Now my children
You must overturn the tables
Deliver the future from material rule
For only one rule should be considered

The eleventh commandment
To love one another
And this is our covenant across your wrist

This offering is yours
To adorn, adore
To bury
To burn
Upon a mound

To hail
To set away

It is merely a cloth,
Merely our colors,
Invested with the blood of the people
All their hopes and dreams.

Our flag
It has its excellence
Yet it is nothing
It shall not be a tyranny above us

Nor should god
Nor love
Nor nature

Yet we hold as our pleasure this tender honor
That we acknowledge the individual
And the common ground formed

And if our cloth be raised and lowered
Half mast
What does it tell us?

That an individual has passed
Is saluted
And mourned by his countrymen.

This ritual extends to us all.
For we are all the individual.

No unknown.
No insignificant one
Nor insignificant labor
Nor insignificant act of charity

Each has a story to be told and retold
Which shall be a glowing thread
In the fabric of Man

And the children shall march
And bring the colors forward

Investing within them

The redeeming blood
Of their revolutionary hearts.