

Talib Kweli, The Manifesto

Manifesto this is what we want to see happen
for my peoples still breakin graf writin and rappin
I rock the mic right and exact my life's my sacrifice
Take my mic and I'm like a Chinese man with no rice
Oh yeah we flippin through the pages of time to find design
Like Vaseline on the faces of Black Georgia we shinin
Deeper than petroleum jelly we in the air like conversations
on celly and just appear like stretch marks on bellies
after givin birth you had to let go, you playin for life
The Manifesto, here comes the beat because I said so keep pushin
I got the cushion for the seat of your soul
Back in the day they stole our smile, so we clothe our teeth in gold
and we frontin, from nigga to kid, to Son of God
It's wild dependin on labels for man woman and child
My style just is, all that's seen and all that's heard
God gave us music so we play with our words
So when Tek be in constant meditation like a monk
while Kweli speaks in tongues to get your intellect drunk
yo we bound to take over the 90% of your brain that you ain't usin
To us it's life or death we keep you chosin

Every shook eye ain't seen, every goodbye ain't gone
Ain't no rest for the weary yo forever it's on
The Manifesto, establishes a hip-hop order
Movin upon the face of the water, like Reflections

Aiyyo all the real MC's can meet me outside
So we can decide how we gonna change the tide
like the moon we on the Earth takin a ride around the Sun
Now Son we only just begun, and the journey's far from done
We all miss you, what your brain gone fishin like Walter Mosley?
There's an MC that can hold me, supposedly?
No one could come close to me, only, the family really know me
Hip-Hop's last hope like Obi Wan Kenobi
Through your television I'm shinin light like a train
Comin out like earthworms when it rains, bringin it
like the C.I.A. be bringin in crack cocaine bailin out of planes
with the George Bush connections, I push Reflection
like I'm sellin izm, like a dealer buildin the system
Supply and the demand it's all capitalism
Niggaz don't sell crack cause they like to see blacks smoke
Niggaz sell crack cause they broke, my battle lyrics
get concious minds provoked and ghetto passes revoked
cause we surrounded by the evil, you know that the people's minds
is feeble they believe in it, even if it don't make sense
This makin dollars shit, don't take a scholar to
see what's goin on around you, either you widdit or you ain't
is what it comes down to, have you forgotten?
We pickin 100% designer name brand cotton
They still plottin, my Third Eye is steady watchin

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(Yeah see that's what I'm talkin about, it be the slaughter man
We need to break it down because these heads
they don't know what they talkin about
Frontin all this nonsense, yo break it down)

From open mics to solutions I got a collage of answers
and a ten point program, just like the Black Panthers
One: First respect yourself as an artist

If you don't respect yourself then your rhymes is garbage
Two: Make sure your crew is as tight as you
cause when them niggaz fallin off they gonna bring you down too
Three: Understand the meaning of MC
The power to Move the Crowd like Moses split the seas
Four: Know your shit and don't ever be blunted
If you don't know what your words mean then your rhymes mean nothin
Five: Kick facts in the raps, and curse with clarity
What's a curse when language is immersed in vulgarity
Six: We gonna fix industrial poli-tricks
Shit they made an artform out of ridin dicks
Seven: We soldiers for God needin new recruits
So if you rhymin for the loot then youse a prostitute
but Eight: Acknowledge that you need food on your plate
In order to say your grace make sure your business is straight
Nine: We buildin black minds with intelligence
and when you freestyle, keep the subject matter relevant
Ten: Every MC grab a pen
and write some concious lyrics to tell the children
I'll say it again, every MC find you a pen
And drop some concious shit for our children
The Manifesto!