

I Stand Alone

Robert Glasper

Sometimes we feel alone
But alone ain't always wrong

Alone in a crowded room
My mind made up like a powder room
I'm the sun, giving the clouds some room
I shine, shine like the hour noon
Tune is to stay in step with every day men
And women, the rythm of the realness
Still I'm Legend like Will Smith
In the presence of the fake I am a real gift
Open it, hoping it will be something dope in it
Movement of the people getting motion sick
We ride on the highs and lows of it
On the Southside we got hosed for it
Standing up like Rich Pryor
We get fire and inspire
About the prospect of get higher
Messiah on the throne
Grew up around the stones
The ranger, so I stand alone

I'm flying high up in the sky
I will not run, I will not hide
I stand alone, I stand alone
I stand alone, I stand alone
The only test is to survive
I will succeed I will not die
I stand alone, I stand alone
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Success it is, we blessed to live
Not just my kids, want the best for his
Progression lives where the lessons is
I got my own, God bless the kid
In the mid part of Babylon
Listening to Farrakhan
In the parks of Avalon
Streets we would battle on
Got the good book in my carry on
Life is a race, I'm the marathon
Man on the moon, give the boy some room
Rose from the concrete, told you I would bloom
Situation brought out the hero
A little black 13 year old
The voice of the Lord in my earlobe
Telling me my purpose I could see it clearer
Revolution in the execution of lyrics
Spirit of Gil Scott, Marvin Gaye, modern day I say

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The irresistible appeal of Black individuality - where has all of that gone?

The very people who blazed our path to self-expression and pioneered a resolutely distinct and individual voice have too often succumbed to mind-numbing sameness and been seduced by simply repeating what we hear, what somebody else said or thought and not digging deep to learn what we think or what we feel, or what we believe.

Now it is true that the genius of African culture is surely its repetition, but the key to such repetition was that new elements were added each go round. Every round goes higher and higher. Something fresh popped off the page or jumped from a rhythm that had been recycled through the imagination of a writer or a musician. Each new installation bore the imprint of our unquenchable thirst to say something of our own, in our own way, in our own voice as best we could.

The trends of the times be damned. Thank God we've still got musicians and thinkers whose obsession with excellence and whose hunger for greatness remind us that we should all be unsatisfied with mimicking the popular, rather than mining the fertile veins of creativity that God placed deep inside each of us.