

# Know Yourself

Kae Tempest

If you saw the younger you, what would you say to them?  
I would say, "Thanks." I would say "Peace"  
I'd tell "Soon child, you're going to find release"

Long time coming to right now  
Pipe down  
Lifetime looking for things I thought I found already  
Falling to the floor like I'm alright I'm steady  
I send myself back so I can tell me  
Twenty years deep in the rhymes and beats  
And I'm still so far from finding peace  
Every line is a ladder I can climb through time  
So I walk straight faced through the winding streets  
I eat the bread of rhythm I drink them milk of rhyme  
But I've been carrying a bag of shame that's bigger than me  
Dragging it behind me up an endless staircase  
Until the day I realised  
This doesn't mean what I think it does  
I don't need to carry this forever  
I left it in the clearing by the firepit and ran  
Back to the child I was - looking for an elder  
I saw myself there  
Took myself by the hand

When I was young I sought help from my older self  
I came into my head, I told me know yourself  
When I was young I sought help from my older self  
I came into my head, I told me know yourself...

I was 17, heaven seemed close enough to touch  
I had never been happier  
Chest against the barrier watching Wu Tang  
My own character starting to bloom  
I was learning how to capture a room in two phrases  
20 years deep in the rhymes and beats  
Close my eyes and speak  
Down the wires of time  
I go back to the child I was  
When I put myself on the line  
I had to beg for the mic  
I had to deal with the ignorance  
I had to get better  
I wanted bigger things  
These days those days are far away  
I try and catch them in my sights, but they start to fade  
Now I sit amongst crate loads of rhyme books  
And I think about the old days that the time took  
I thank the little me that put the work in, like -  
Could you picture me when you were spitting sixteens?  
Surfing the top deck - Penning them bars  
Underage in the clubs taking charge of the mic?  
Precocious little nothing with the world in your sights -  
I am on it now. I will  
Work harder, this is peace to the kid I came after  
(Peace to the kid I came after)  
The words are the bridge between the present and the past  
I know myself at last

When I was young I sought help from my older self  
I came into my head, I told me know yourself  
When I was young I sought help from my older self  
I came into my head, I told me know yourself

Know yourself  
Know yourself

Soon child you're going to find release (Soon child you're going to find release)