

Renegade

Kae Tempest

I'm a renegade
Out for the truth
I will shout from the rooftops
You can find me
Hanging about down in New Cross
Or sitting it out on my stoop with my shoes off
Shaking my head
Because too many are too lost

But you can recognize me because I'm you, mate
It's never too late to see deeper than the surface
Trust me, there's so much more to it
There's a world beyond this one
That creeps in when your wits have gone soft
And all your edges start shifting
I mean it
A world that it breathing
Heaving its shoulders and weeping
Bleeding through open wounds
That's why I'm grieving
Down on my knees and I am feeling everything that I'm feeling
So come here
Give me your hand
Because I know how to hold it
I will write every single one of you a poem
And then I'll set them all on fire
Because I am stunned by how the light in your eyes resembles
Brightening skies
Mate, I would fight for your life like it was mine

But I'm writing tonight
I got a jam jar of wine
I'm rolling smokes
Spitting bars to myself with a swollen throat
Sitting out by the river catching the holy ghost
Thinking about how it feels every time you hold me close

I'm not flesh I'm all energy
I care about genius
I don't care about celebrity
You only build them up to burn their effigies

And there's more
I can feel it so raw
And it's calling me back to before
That's why I walk through the landscapes
That's why I grip the mics hard until my hands shake
But they're more illuminated than the masons, mate
I stand straight faced with the mania just inches away
But I never flinch
I got ink in my veins
I don't care for the surface I care about the infinite
I carve a niche and hide within it
I lay down in the garden with the spirits
Asking pardon from the elders
They tell me:
"Child, every minute is the minute to begin it, make it broader"

But the thing that gives me strength
Oh, it brings me such torture
Mate every single time the seasons change
I get completely overwhelmed
Fuck it I hold the helm
Like the hilt of my sword
I'm a born worker
I'm the second best MC not enough people have heard of
The first, that was con, I've got a thirst coming on
I'm an old soul, but I maintain a young mind
And Blake showed me
Those who don't exhibit their influence
Are only holding candles to the sunshine

So if you want to talk just come find me
Me, I'll be on Lewisham Way watching a door melt away
Look, I used to spit these bars out to strangers on trains
I couldn't hold it down I had a brain full of flames
I used to hang about with the alchies on the benches in the park
They used to talk about their lives
They told me why they walked out on their wives
Mate, I used to storm the stages uninvited
Far too excited
I had something to say and I couldn't hide it
But then I learnt about patience
And I learnt about stamina
And every single moment stacked up
And it all added to the present
So now I keep cool and I consult the essence
And I give thanks for every blessing

But look, everything is so physical here
You know the alcoholic and the offie
Filling up his trolley until the world disappears
I'm so hungry for something sustainable
Something with truth, something unchangeable
Something like you, in your room while the rain
It falls and the windows are open
And it's splashing on my skin like the sea breeze
You can love me forever but never need me
I'm fucking sure that you can be what completes me

So this one, is for the hopeless romantics
It's for the broken, the stranded, the pure
The puerile, the pedantic, the fearless
The frantic, living in the belly of the beast
With the rats and the rancid and the blanketed streets
And we starve while they banquet and feast
But Banquo will rise
He's got a message for the guilty
This one's for the hard living
Filthy, the gutter mouths
This one's for the city that built me
That will knock me down if I don't learn right
I burn bright
I'll turn might into meager in a blink of an eye
So come on, meet me at the bar
I'll raise my drink to the sky
And I will show you that you're fucking incredible

We're not flesh, we're all energy
I care about genius

I don't care about celebrity
Don't give a shit about the hype
I really care about integrity
I mean you only build them up to burn their effigies, anyway
And me, I'm getting closer to my essence every day
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