

Unholy Elixir

Kae Tempest

I touch the beginning
Animating animals and tree gods
Scratching out legends in cave walls
The days pour down into night as we watched
We mapped stars and peaks, we fought beasts
We caught food for the feast
And we walked two abreast to receive the bound wheat
The grass, black and strange
As we razed plains to ash
We laid claim, we exchanged grains, and we made pacts
And we clashed, and we strained, and the rains lashed
The young maids were brave, but they were made to lay flat
The old ways were too ingrained to make the reins snap
So we laid traps
We gave our names back to the saints
We sang out thanks and complaints
We burned fat, arranged bones in the flames
Each bird a great catch
Our songs were spells, and our spells were plain facts

She laid down in the road where the people go by
And she declared herself willing to try
I laid down beside her
But all I could see were the feet as they walked over me
That's when she told me I was holy elixir
She said, "I thought I knew the world, but it was only a picture"
She said, "We're all written in the holiest scripture
It's just we're living in this time that says no inhibitions
Get yours, keep going the distance, no limits
And don't bother protesting because nobody listens
Besides, all your solutions dissolve under scrutiny
You can't stand a note of derision
Instead, seek approval to justify your existence
Have opinions, but have no resolve or conviction
Just keep your head down
Breathe the fumes and indulge your addictions
Routine is healthy, ignore the affliction
The cost to the soul and the constant constriction
Don't consider too closely, have no intermission
Keep throwing your fists in slow repetition
Most of us manage, what makes you so different?
What makes you so different?
What makes you so
Now, you seem a bright spark
Go ahead, take the road with the pilgrims
Head for the temples of democracy
Freedom, growth, reason, liberty, hope
But don't pay attention to what's hanging from the rope
Decode the language, unfold the symbols
I'm told disciples got lost in the hillside
Following intellect, they let go of wisdom
Now they'll tell you the soul's a closed system
They sacrificed instinct to phony ambition
Now what they hold in their fists has become all that there is
But total existence needs meaning and myth
Many misjudged the way and got lost in the mist"
She said, "Your loneliness is the symptom, not the sickness"

And the moment her lips said "peace," my peace melted
I became a memory, I felt myself peel
I was atoms, I was Magnesium, I was Calcium
I was real
She said, "We are born of collision
We are divisions of a bigger vision
And yet, we run around like hamsters spinning the wheel
Spinning the wheel
Spinning the wheel
Spinning the wheel
Spinning the wheel
Spinning the wheel
Spinning the wheel
Spinning the wheel"

I was on my knees then, I was begging for pardon
I was old and I was clothed in white garments
In a vast red desert where the rocks were dark blue and varnished
That's when the voice said, "This is the garden
Now, you better start sowing or there won't be a harvest"