

I was born in the beast's belly  
Running through the streets smelly  
Daytime, summer hot like a fleece skully  
Running 'round, no shirt on, throwing dirt bombs  
Chasing little girls that had skirts on  
If we wasn't on the block then we going swimming  
Public pool, feeling the butts of grown women  
Little shorties trying to stroke ass  
Swam in our shoes cause on the bottom was broke glass  
On two hand touch I had a nice team  
After the game, nana threw down money for ice cream  
Yup, and Good Humor had the best stock  
Some days I had to chase the truck to the next block  
And if we got in a fight, you might get it  
I was quick to pick up some shit and hit a nigga with it  
It didn't matter, either bottle or stick, or a half a brick  
I look back and I laugh at the shit  
I had four different fights with the same guy  
I won two, lost one and one was a tie  
We always kept score like that  
It was raw like that  
I kinda wish now was more like that  
It's funny how the hood make you, it could break you  
If your mind ain't strong enough then it could take you  
I used to wish that I could rise above it  
I'd love it  
But I was too young to understand the size of it

They say the name of the game is "survival"  
Open the door I'm alive on arrival  
And when I'm in I ain't trying to leave  
You don't know what I'm trying to achieve  
I'm trying to breathe

(Just breathe) Just breathe  
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Uh huh, just breathe

By the time I hit the age of 16 I wanted major cream  
On the block, trying to shine like a laser beam  
If you had the Gucci frames then the coochie came  
It was all about the cats that had designer names  
I couldn't get the shit that some got  
I didn't sell crack rock, I didn't have a wicked jump shot  
I was known for rapping, keeping it popping  
Finally I got a summer job, sweeping and mopping  
Bringing home like four and some change was so strange  
No more wearing them jeans with no names  
I started dressing trying to out flash  
So Fresh and So Clean clean like I was Outkast  
A couple friends had another route  
If they thought she had money on her, they'd knock your mother out  
I had to see we wasn't kids now

Same cats that played on the block with was doing bids now

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From the past up until the present  
To growing up and reaching adulthood from an adolescent  
I see them 20 inch rims, I understand why you got those  
Riding through Brooklyn, hitting potholes  
It's just a way to tell yourself that you finally made it  
Don't give a damn if the rest of the world kind of hate it  
Nobody understand the wild type of shit we facing  
And all we had to do to rise above the situation  
They don't understand the platinum chains and ice rings  
They don't realize we never had no nice things  
I'll always remember, how I started out though  
Don't ever forget, how it was without doe  
This feels good like a swim in the gym  
Representing for my women and men, feel me again  
C'mon

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