

Wrote My Way Out

Nas

I wrote my way out
When the world turned its back on me
I was up against the wall
I had no foundation
No friends and no family to catch my fall
Running on empty, with nothing left in me but doubt
I picked up a pen
And wrote my way out (I wrote my way out)

I picked up the pen like Hamilton
Street analyst, now I write words that try to channel 'em
No political power, just lyrical power
Sittin' on a crate on a corner, sippin' for hours
Schemin' on a come up, from evening'to sun up
My man awaitin' trial, misdemeanors we younger
Courtroom prejudice, insufficient evidence
Jailhouse lawyers, these images still relevant
Flickerin' lights inside my project hall
Sickenin', the mice crawl all night long
And '87 Reaganism, many pages I've written on
Writin' songs about rights and wrongs and bails bonds
Master bedroom, bigger than the crib that I was raised at
I'm the architect like I wrote the code to Waze app
I'm driven, black Elohim from the streets of Queens
The definition of what It Was Written means
Know what I mean?

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I really wrote my way up out of 6E
Develop relationships with fiends, I know they miss me
Before the metrocards, it was tokens, I did the ten speed
Never had wrote a rhyme in my life, what was a sixteen?
At sixteen, arrested in housin', trips to the mountains
Came right back, trappin' off couches, watchin' for mouses
Only tools we was posed with, had a spot, smoke lit
The hate is just confusion, pay attention how them jokes switch
Diadora was my favorite, the Mark Buchanans
Mama couldn't afford them, I learned everythin' on the border
That's a big 8, Clicquot parties with private dancers with no mixtape
Bumble Bee Tuna, now we could get steak
I persevered, composition, I kept it close
Competition near, I'm a Spartan without the spear
Three hundred rhymes, it was written before I wrote it
Opportunity knockin', might miss it, that window closin'
This poetry in motion, I'm a poet

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High speed, dubbin' these rhymes in my dual cassette deck
Runnin' out of time like I'm Jonathan Larson's rent check
My mind is where the wild things are, Maurice Sendak
In withdrawal, I want it all, please give me that pen back
Y'all, I caught my first beatin' from the other kids when I was caught readin'

"Oh, you think you smart? Blah! Start bleedin'"
My pops tried in vain to get me to fight back
Sister tapped my brains, said, pssh, you'll get 'em right back
Oversensitive, defenseless, I made sense of it, I pencil in
The lengths to which I'd go to learn my strengths and knock 'em senseless
These sentences are endless, so what if they leave me friendless?
Damn, you got no chill, fuckin' right I'm relentless
I know Abuela's never really gonna win the lottery
So it's up to me to draw blood with this pen, hit an artery
This Puerto Rican's brains are leakin' through the speakers
And if he can be the shinin' beacon this side of the G.W.B and
Shine a light when it's gray out

I wrote my way out
Oh, I was born in the eye of a storm
No lovin' arms to keep me warm
This hurricane in my brain is the burden I bear
I can do without, I'm here (I'm here)
Cause I wrote my way out

I picked up the pen like Hamilton
I wrote my way out of the projects
Wrote-wrote my way out of the projects
Picked up the pen like Hamilton
I wrote my way out of the
Wrote-wrote my way out of the projects
I wrote my way out
Picked up the pen like Hamilton
I wrote my way out of the

(I wrote my way out)
Really, I saw like a hole in the rap game, so if I wanted to put my little two cents in the game, then it would be from a different perspective
(I wrote my way out)
I thought that I would represent for my neighborhood and tell their story, be their voice, in a way that nobody has done it
Tell the real story