Radio Baghdad

Patti Smith

Suffer not your neighbor's affliction Suffer not your neighbor's paralysis But extend your hand, extend your hand Lest you vanish in the city and be but a trace Just a vanished ghost and your legacy

All the things you knew, science, mathematics, thought Severely weakened like irrigation systems In the tired veins forming from the Tigris and Euphrates In the realm of peace, all the world revolved All the world revolved around a perfect circle

City of Baghdad, city of scholars Empirical humble center of the world City in ashes, city of Baghdad City of Baghdad, abrasive aloof

Oh, in Mesopotamia aloofness ran deep Deep in the veins of the great rivers That form the base of Eden And the tree the tree of knowledge Held up its arms to the sky

All the branches of knowledge
All the branches of knowledge, cradling, cradling
Civilization in the realm of peace
All the world revolved around a perfect circle

Oh, Baghdad, center of the world City of ashes with its great mosques Erupting from the mouth of God, rising from the ashes Like a speckled bird, splayed against the mosaic sky

Oh, clouds around, we created the zero
But we mean nothing to you, you would believe
That we are just some mystical tale
We are just a swollen belly that gave birth to Sindbad

Scheherazade, we gave birth
Oh, oh, to the zero, the perfect number
We invented the zero and we mean nothing to you
Our children run through the streets
And you sent your flames, your shooting stars

Shock and awe, shock and awe Like some, some imagined warrior production Twenty-first century, no chivalry involved No Bushido

Oh, the code of the West long gone
Never been, where does it lie?
You came, you came through the West
Annihilated a people and you come to us
But we are older than you, you come, you wanna

You wanna come and rob the cradle
Of civilization and you read, yet you read

You read genesis, you read of the tree You read of the tree beget by God That raised its branches into the sky

Every branch of knowledge
Of the cradle of civilization
Of the banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates
Oh, in Mesopotamia aloofness ran deep

The face of Eve turning, what sky did she see What garden beneath her feet, the one you drill You drill pulling the blood of the earth Little droplets of oil for bracelets, little jewels Sapphires, you make bracelets

Round your own world, we are weeping tears Rubies, we offer them to you We are just your Arabian nightmare We invented the zero but we mean nothing to you Your Arabian nightmare

City of stars, city of scholarship Science city of ideas, city of light, city City of ashes that the great Caliph Walked through his naked feet formed a circle

And they built a city, a perfect city of Baghdad In the realm of peace and all the world revolved And they invented and they mean nothing to you Nothing to you, nothing

Go to sleep, go to sleep my child Go to sleep and I'll sing you a lullaby A lullaby for our city, a lullaby of Baghdad Go to sleep, sleep my child Sleep, sleep, run, run

You sent your lights, your bombs
You sent them down on our city, shock and awe
Like some crazy TV show

They're robbing the cradle of civilization They're robbing the cradle of civilization They're robbing the cradle of civilization

Suffer not the paralysis of your neighbor Suffer not but extend your hand