

Rituals of Resilience by I Self Devine

Album Lyrics

Grand Rising

Welcome/ new horizons/ where the mind is/
More than just land and sky/ I'm intertwining/
Planets/ spinning alignment/ with assignments/
Slightly/ pivoted to the Suns divineness/
Unseen but felt like air/
Everything is extravagant done with flair/
From the way that we walk/ we glide we there/
Textures of the hair and clothes we wear/

Rebirth but we never died/
Survived genocide/ then gentrified/
Look me in my eye/ I could never hide/
Shining so bright/ we can't let it slide/
Jim Crow laws to Apartheid/
Fake jewel in the crown we living offsidess/
/Make home in a foreign land/
/Decolonize is the master plan/
/Monotonous symphony of agitation/
Locked in no emancipation/
/ Feel my pain/ in my skin/ from within/
/ Feel my joy/ in my soul/ we gon' win/

/Make and suspend judgement/
Alarm clock for sleepers awake justice/

/Beauty in our limitations/
Visual/ cultural/ preservation/
Elevation/ levitation/
Repetitious/ meditation/

Lord Help me

I stand in amazement/ at this occasion/
No longer we caged in/
/Galaxies float out of spaces/
On earth occupy spaces/
Migrate/ many locations/
This a reckoning/ tapping in/ checking in/
On the run being chased/
Authorities in ya face/
The whiteness of the gaze/
/Hatred/ fear and the rage/
/Once gone/ then they feel pain/
/Kick in the guilt and the shame/
No ceiling/ no walls/
No borders/ no laws/
Everything is in flux/ down moving up/
Everything's off/
I'm on the block/ in the trap/ pivot/ stop and react/
Lost in the ghetto/ morph and adapt/
Always in motion thoughts interact/

Lord help me/
Break the chains and get healthy/
Break the bank and get wealthy/
Can't believe what they tell me/

Defend black woman/
Defend the land and Black children/
If we don't/ we not building/
Pump the breaks/ we need yielding/
Shadow work/ we need healing/
Police/ gun down and killing/
/My aura got rhythm/
Resiliency/ the baptism/
I feel the need/ but lack wisdom/
Rage attack the whole system/

Lord help me/
Break the chains and get healthy/
Break the bank and get wealthy/
Can't believe what they tell me/

We are Soldiers

Over and over/ create culture we are soldiers
Fighting off vultures/ create culture we are soldiers meet

A celebration/ for coming up/
Tense in ya body for when they running up/
Survival swimming in concrete/ with zombies/
The ambush promptly/ upon me/
How shall I respond? Calm?
Peaceful? shall I bear arms?
Negotiate/ overthrow or appropriate/
Isolate/ clash on site/ or we co-create/
/Feeling like we made it/
But the cadence/ of the cave- in was major/

Full collapse/ no time to relax/
Flat on my back had to adapt/
/The rebellion escape was sabotaged/
/Agents of repression was at large/
/Steadily assume/ informants in the room/
/Finger in the wound/

Over and over/ create culture we are soldiers
Fighting off vultures/ create culture we are soldiers meet

Lord Wiling

The pressure of moving on/ check cashing/
800 junk cars signs in the back end/
Boarded up houses/ barbed wire fences/
Liquor store churches/ barbershops renting/
/ Black culture not defined by a boundary/
Everywhere the Sun sets/ there you find we/
/Always trying to put us in our place/
And tell us how to occupy space/
Streets and locations/ cultural landmarks/
Like/ Seneca Village/ that's underneath parks/
Erasure/ buried in the maze of/ planned hate/
Developed in the landscape/
Great migration/ moving 6 million/
From the South to North we keep building/
Lord willing/ post reconstruction/
Integration/ economic suffering/
Burning neighborhoods down to the ground/
Many displaced/ nobody made a sound/
Live amongst the lost and the found/

Wit no wealth to move around/

Prohibited/ containment/

Removal/ enslavement/

When 33 meets 12

Life over death/ death over life/ mental flight/

Dream deep and sleep light/

Feeling Christ-like/ through the inner-verse I ignite/

Climbing 33 flights of stairs/ to new heights/

Through the vertebrae/ might heard 'em say something different

Deliver us from evil and fear divine wicked/

Lower physical vibration near death/

I ascend from the root to the crown through my breath/

Asa the sun never sets/ over Africa/ Kemet/

Descendants of obsidian stones we give bless/

I rise through the pineal gland and expand/

12 disciples/ or cranial nerves is kicking in/

What a gift it is/ no coincidence/ what a shift it is/

Emerged transformed like a chrysalis/

On earth/ place of worship black church/

Creator and redeemer/ demons/ black dirt/

I came on this earth knowing what to do

So much to be harvested/ harvesters are few

Toward newer galaxies/ this to be true

So much to be harvested/ harvesters are few

My intelligence quotient/ left my television broken/

Melanin in my skin/ from skeletons in the ocean/

Thought provoking/ my mind is potent/ My tribe was chosen/

My hemoglobin/ was stolen/ put on ice and then frozen/
Life is bogus/ If only I could focus/
My mother in law was Diagnosed with Spinal stenosis/
Pain was atrocious/ doctors prognosis/
Osteoporosis/ holy scoliosis/
5 Lumbar's charged on her insurance card/
20 stitches in her arch/ left a 6 inch scar ouch/
Nonetheless/ operation was a success/
12 steps to recovery/ luckily/ she was blessed/
Misery loves company/ come and see/ be my guest/
History is a luxury/ deep underneath the flesh/
Pessimist try to argue/ but how intelligent are you?/
If you never been to Cairo/ walking on Egyptian marble/

I came on this earth knowing what to do
So much to be harvested/ harvesters are few
Toward newer galaxies/ this to be true
So much to be harvested/ harvesters are few

Joy Antagonistic

From digging graves and picking cotton/
/Scores to settle/ straight plotting/
/Symbolic combat/ a fake object/
Got your attention/ they fake watching/
Shadow of my former self/ I'm in the dark/
Darkness/ is where I bring light/ I'll build the ark/
Chaos and disorder/ the secret order/
Part of neither/ either or/ straight ether/
/I imagine what ain't here yet/
So/ as a result I'm a clear threat/
Yo/ never the goal and I hear that/

But/ I gotta liberate my spirit/ I'm fearless/
/One of one/ exist on many fronts/
Volume is turnt/ taped into everyone/
Black majestic/ joy antagonistic/
Why we got to fight for our lives/ it's so twisted/

Knowledge of the past is the keys to the future/
Not transparent/ more like translucent/
Fluent/ building off the strength of the movement/
Proving/ our resistance is congruent/
Unpacking Five hundred year drama/
Gender construct/ plus cultural trauma/
/Pan African/ the lens extravagant/
Connect the dots reveal our self-mastery/
Can't forget/ the gentle reminder/
Boundaries set/ defend and refine it/
Bout respect/ take not asking/
Bout the biz/ build or we blasting/
Here we is/ in the field and we laughing/
Feel the love/ it is ours to inhabit/
Black majestic/ joy antagonistic/
Why we got to fight for our lives it's so twisted/

This is a spiritual

This is a spiritual/
This is a ritual/ everyday miracles/
Ethereal/ grand and the minimal/
Celebration felt in the physical/

/Devotion time enters space/
Mystery trance like state/
Must stay awake/ must agitate/
Light as a feather/ must carry weight/
/Born out of struggle and hardships/
/We gon' come up regardless/
We know what God is/ we know what love is/
Stay on the ground/ stay up above its/
No trust for the government/
Intune with the covenant/
Subverse and illustrious/
Combustible substance/
Progress in the process
Justice is a must get/
One hand on the musket/
One hand on the musket/
Click clack and I'm bussing/
Sounds like percussion/
Sit back and adjusting/
This is a warzone/ hijack/
This is a hotbox/ contact/
This is a climax/ contract
This is the context / all bad/
Shut off emotion/ stuck in the motion/
We had the notion/ create the potion/
This is illusion/ create confusion/
Create division/ no more inclusion/
/ Breaking walls down/ preexisting/
Perceptions vehemently/
Clandestine/ come and get me/
Klan destined/ fear and envy/
Stolen moments/ on stolen land/
Convinced/ not to understand/
With the upper hand/ tryna reprimand/

Last stand/ with no command/

One hand on the musket/
Click clack and I'm bussing/
Sounds like percussion/
Sit back and adjusting/

They Coming for me

Marching off the boat/ walking straight into the water/
This is not the life/ for my son or my daughter/
Liquid fills my lungs/ going in and out of consciousness/
Ancestors welcome me home/ I get acknowledgment/
Related to the physical/ somatic dimensions/
Transported back to earth/ embrace tension/
Floating over housing projects with pretty names/
Where the streets are embedded with souls/ and blood stains/
Statues and monuments/ museums of conquest/
Westernized thought process/ more like a bomb threat/
Faces and phases/ forcing you to hold your gaze/
Get uncomfortable/ engulf our pain and rage/
Non binary/ hail the black lioness/
Came out the wound of a God/ yes I am fresh/
Masculine/ and feminine/ melanated images/
Heavenly bodies converge inside my discipline/

They knocking on my window/ coming for my head/
Wanna see me under/ tryna see me dead/
I don't know the reason/ tryna figure out/
Tryna do me dirty/ tryna take me out/

Stepping out the front door there was no escape/
C.R.A.S.H unit/ bullets flying/ yellow tape/
Gang initiation/ you was getting scraped/
Or you was on super with the suit and the cape/
Section 8/ two rooms no drapes/
It was curtains/ we pro black no hate/
I was searching/ looking for a space and a place/
I was hurting/ searching for my pops on skate/
uncertain/ but I knew I had to put the work in/
Work it/ till the whole thing short circuit/
Circus? Ani- mals in the jungle/
Herd mentality thousands will jump you/
Jack you// and run you/ brake you/ and gun you down/
Is the sound when death is the virtue/
Feel the whip stinging/ pardon my upbringing/
Seeing blood leaking/ For no apparent reason

They knocking on my window/ coming for my head/
Wanna see me under/ tryna see me dead/
I don't know the reason/ tryna figure out/
Tryna do me dirty/ tryna take me out/

Get to it

We go with the motion/ we go with the plan/
we been check to check/we been hand to hand
We been through the fire/ fingers worked the land /
We been left for dead you don't understand/
Struggle and defending/seeking to exist and/
Speak it to existence/ dealing with resistance/
For the living dead/ sleeping while awake/

This is a procession/ you might need protection/
Picking and selecting/ accepting and rejecting /
Focused on the mission/ absorbing the lessons/
Struggle is a blessing/ suffering and stressing/
Entrance and an exit/Life is a projection/

Let's get it/
Get to it/
Stay steady/
Keep moving/

Feel my energy/ see my empathy/
Before they empty me/ dissect/ lynching me/
/Remember me?/ You tried to kill/
Murder and rape/ but I am still/
I am still/ I am steel/
Resilient/ built with an iron will/
Risking my life/ paying the price/
Rolling the dice/freedom is a sacrifice/
Black power/ block power/
Black faith/ Black dollars/
Black pain/ Black problems/
Black gains/ Black scholars/

Let's get it/
Get to it/
Stay steady/
Keep moving/

Gentle Reminder

Thanks and praise for those living/
Thanks and praise for those dead/

Ancestors/ ghosts and all spirits/
Through me I hope your well-fed/

Not off wine and stale bread/
Arms extend we ascend/
Stretch our hands and say prayers/
Make amends for our sins/ let the church say amen/

Funerals to attend/
Deep in debt I descend/
Success I want in/ unrest to no end/
Stuck in sand with no wind/

Rise up from the abyss/
Futures hopeful not grim/
We begin where we end/
Leave the past where it is/

Go get it/ Go find it/
This a gentle reminder/
I'm wit it/ cosigner/
This a gentle reminder/
I'm in it/ I'm bout it/
This a gentle reminder/
We coming/ they doubting/
This a gentle reminder/

Speaking in code/ double the meaning/
Breaking the mold/ love is the feeling/
Fist in the air/ down for the kneeling/
Theatrical flair/ we in the building/

Ain't kicking us out/ we built this/
Ain't no breaking our spirits/ we resilient/

Keep breaking through these ceilings/ we brilliant/
More peace/ black love/ and fulfillment/

Cure any ailment/ bitter medicine/
Sweet poison/ enemies hellbent/
Straight to the helmet/ smooth like velvet/
Access memory just like an elephant/

Even though we all know/ seen it/ and felt it/
Our very presences/is seen as a weapon/
Those that have been sheltered/ see us get threatened/
They wanna be us/ but can't see the essence

Go get it/ Go find it/
This a gentle reminder/
I'm wit it/ cosigner/
This a gentle reminder/
I'm in it/ I'm bout it/
This a gentle reminder/
We coming/ they doubting/
This a gentle reminder/

Aspiration

Aspiration/ master every situation/
Intuition navigating us to higher places/
Multiple layers/ many degrees/
Signals and symbols/ conceive to achieve/
Our rhythm perfection/ creation electric/
Truth is elusive/ music the message/
Culture the weapon/ the healing injection/
Keeping me sane/ giving protection/
The ritual love/ below and above/

Supporting the family/ hand and the glove/
Something that go together/ like happiness and pleasure/
Grounded in the present/ dreaming forever/
Life is a treasure/ embracing the joy/
Choosing to build/ not to destroy/
Falling or flying/ living or dying/
The struggle is timeless/ rely or defying

Without the struggle baby how we gon progress/
Instead of the outcome I'm focused on the process/
Ulterior motives all the real gone di-tect/
And I can't wrap my head around it/

Complex/ with the concepts contest/
Onset/ with the process/ progress/
Quonset/ built to conquest/ nonsense/
Goblins/ fear the lockness/ mindsets/
Convent/ create/convicts / admonish the prophets proofs/
In the deposits/ enriching the pockets truth/
To the promise overhead like a soffit/
Made/ museums from projects/ from coffins/ to comets/
From/ modest to rockets/ turn losses to profit/
Resilient/ civilians/ shine brighter than objects/
Revealing/ brilliance/ in spite composites/
Warmth from suns unknown/ that's engrained in the optics/
Distilling/ dominions/divinity/ children/
Healers concealed/ as hammers/ protecting our feelings/
/No ceilings/ when your planetary in ya dealings/
Appealing to the demons/ so flavor they stealing/

Without the struggle baby how we gon progress/
Instead of the outcome I'm focused on the process/
Ulterior motives all the real gone di-tect/
And I can't wrap my head around it/

I Feel it

Related to the physical/

Somatic/ emphatic/it's visceral/

/Feeling every emotion/literal/ the motion/

Similar to floating/ over land and ocean open/

Sleepwalking still empathetic/

Black aesthetic/ magnetic/

In survival mode/ got the code/ and they want my soul/

Diamonds and they want my gold/

Been took'n/traumatized still shook'n/

Paranoid and I'm still looking

/I feel it in my body/

Unresolved tensions/ unpacked dimensions/

Familial extensions/ negative intentions/

Occupy/ renting/ space as its pent in/

Wellbeing and my future threatened/

But they tell me that it's not happening/

Overreacting/ stop acting/

Dismissing facts and/ got me backed in/

Feel it in my body I know that for sure/

Feel it inside I can't take no more/

Feel it in the gut/ coming straight from the core/

Bottom/ of the bottom/ rising up on 'em all/

The was/ and the who will be/ can't help but to feel me/

Unrelated familial/ you don't know me but owe me/

Trap me/ but cannot hold me/

Dim a star/ must wanna burn/ many live/ but never learn/
Still at the head when tables turn/
Got the code/ and they want my soul/
Diamond in the rough/ how I still shine?/
Searching for a love I couldn't locate/
'Til I looked within/ found it been mine/
Since then I've been possessed/with this possession/
And obsessed/ with wielding weapons/ that defy odds/ outlive time/ (not just rhymes)
The mouth/ you labeled smart/ in hopes to quiet/
Speaking life/ and sparking riots/

Justice often mirrors violence/
Even when I'm silent/ body language fluent/
Dipped in whatever/ I'm clever You hate but still pursuant/
Ironie Henrietta Lacks/ lacked nothing at all/
Evidence and common sense we fly even when pushed to fall/

Feel it in my body I know that for sure/
Feel it inside I can't take no more/

Feel it in the gut/ coming straight from the core/
Bottom/ of the bottom/ rising up on 'em all/

Toward newer galaxies

Toward newer galaxies we arriving/
Tap in/ frequency we is vibing/
Calling on calling out we vibrant/
All about timing/ we shinning/

I'm in the streets feeling peace/ there's no police/
Is this a dream/ I'm on scheme/ thinking supreme/

On my deen/ self-esteem on high beam/
New regime/ catching steam/ move as a team/
Against patriarchy/ examine that/ dismantle that/
Look inside I can handle that/
Inner reverie/ glorified melodies/ soul treasury/
Feel the vibe/you can't measure we/
We escape through the culture music and dance/
Subversion merging rhythm and trance/
/Strange fruit/ sudden loss of innocence/
Rituals of resilience as a sedative/
A road map to the heaven sent/ black intelligence/
From the past tense/ to the relevant/
Take wit no consent/ like the HeLa cells/
/In unmarked graves/ where our leaders' dwell
Ancestors as tour guides/ lead us well/
/This is what you make it/ heaven and hell/
/Depending how you dwell and excel/
Clientele plus personnel/never fail/

Not all of us are here/ but we see each other/
Not all of us are here but we need each other/
Not all of us are here/ but we see each other/
Not all of us are here but we need each other

A culture keeper/ tho it can't be kept/
I keep a record for the people/ a griot in flesh/
Each breath/ speaks life/ so we don't greet death/
Erasure, or a statement like, "quiet as kept"/
Adept/ at how they do us/ as well as our influence/
I am in confluence/ with all in the movement/
We all in if moving/ choosing's/ an illusion/ our melanin is union/
Proof is/ the way they've tried to diffuse it/
Or use it when everything else was deemed useless/
Truth is/ right in front of us for real/
So we got a couple homies that we running up the hill/

Life is a red pill/ take a swallow/ have a seat/ peep what's revealed/
Making ends meet/ ain't a tweet/ it's a skill/
Our ingenuity/ was never something they could kill/
We ill/ like sick with it/as long as we stick with it/
Black power is intrinsic/infinite/ still/
It takes collaboration if we really gon' build?/
Channel up/ tune in/ I'm talking energy fields/

Let 'em know

I was tryna forget/ blood and the sweat/
Hung by the neck/gun to the chest/under arrest/
Stressed/ under duress/ oncoming threat/
Move to protect/ unrest everyday a test/
/Here I am in the flesh at my very best/
Only time I can rest/ is when it's death/
Only time I can breathe/ is when I'm free/
Only time I can grieve/ is never seen/
Who am I ?/ my existence is do or die/
Fighting suicide/ going through it/ tryna purify/
Stimuli/ I'm getting high/ desensitized/
/Traumatized frontline on the other side/
/Staring at the sky/ tryna leave earth/ see what heaven do/
Weight so heavy it will bury you/
Carry you/ to a another place and dimension/
Tryna get whole/ I'm bent and fragmented/

Let em know/ whether it be rain hail or snow/

We gon make it through/ we gon take it to em never lose/
Let em know/ everything we do it's a go/ coming from below/

We gon overthrow/ that's the goal/

I was trying to redeem/ find inner peace/
Living in between/ nightmare to dream/ might intervene/
/Fight/ flight or freeze/ you can never seize/
Living under siege/ ride on my enemies/
Even/if/ it/ is me/ that I can see/
That's in my way/ I'll grind/ 'til I can be/
In harmony/ in tune/ I oversee/
Rotate like the sun/ that is over me/
Intersection of misogyny and racism/
New Jim Crow hard to escape prison/
Hood passes revoked/ no cookout/
Stop snitching/ judge threw the book out/
Stereotypes we laugh they exaggerated/
Then send back to you/ examine ya hatred/
Which is really terror/ deep inside the mind/
If we took a deeper look what we gon find?/

Let em know/ whether it be rain hail or snow/
We gon make it through/ we gon take it to em never lose/
Let em know/ everything we do it's a go/ coming from below/
We gon overthrow/ that's the goal/

Let's begin

Please/ attend/ let's/ begin/
Take/ the oath/ pledge to win/
See/ the skin/ deep within/
Free/ of sin/ move the wind/
We/ are here/ to bring the truth/

See/ the pain/ aim to soothe/
Got/ ta think/ Got/ ta move/
Got ta act/ got ta choose/
So centered/ full figured/
/Illuminate light when we enter/
/Turn summer into winter/
/Get it started like finna/
Bigger/ better/ stable/ clever/
Sever/ negativity/ pull the lever/

Gotta/get it/ gotta keep it/
Breaking/ bread/ not a/ secret/
Set it/ out/ make it/ frequent/
Stepping/ in/ never reaching/
I am/ one/ with the/ people/
Equal/ levels/ never/ evil/
Regal/ strong/ never/ feeble/
Outta/ pocket/ we gon see you/
Lethal aim/ lens/frame/
Vantage/ point/ ain't the/ same/
Mental/ games/ tricks lame/
You gon change/ calling names/

Textures and patterns

Synergy of textures/ sketches and photos/
Silk fabrics/ found materials logos/
Gathering of colors/ bathed in the vivid/
Sights and the sounds/ of the true and living/

Relationship to color/ yes we built pyramid sculptures/
Rhythm of the black body/ feel the structure/
Black woman is God/ energy conductor/
Fluidity/ yeah that's my mood till infinity/
Fashion/ textiles and the fabrics/ elaborate/
Iridescent/ interactive/
Sense of patterns/ embroidery/ ceramics/
Complex collage/ mixed with Black magic/
Skin glistening/ to thrive is to gain/
/Stitch and thread together what remains/
Emerald greens/ aquamarines/
Geometric/ imagination/ dreams/
Patina/ pigment/ and hue/
Frame builder/ for the melanated view/
Veil and disguise/ in front of the eye/
Only/ half of the picture the rest is lies/