Born In Puerto Rico

Paul Simon

I was born in Puerto Rico
We came here when I was a child
Before I reached the age of sixteen
I was runnin' with the gang and we were wildHe keeps lookin' but he don't recognize me
Some guy from Lexington or Park
Red beans and rice from kitchen windows
It's supper time and the barrio is darkNo one knows you like I do
Nobody can know your heart the way I do
No one can testify to all that you've been through
But I willI was born in Puerto Rico and my blood is Taino
Spanish Caribbean, my soul
We came here wearing summer clothes in winter
Hearts of sunshine in the coldYour family rented this apartment
You'd watch the street lamps from your perch
In the sacramental hour, your stepfather in black
Preached the fire of the Pentecostal ChurchNo one knows you like I do
Nobody can know your heart the way I do
No one to testify to all that you've been through
But this willI was born in Puerto Rico
Came here when I was a child
Small change and sunlight
Then I left these streets for good
My days as short as they were wildYour features blurred in every grainy photo
And fading headline of the Daily News
Wiltwyck School for Criminal Children
Auburn, Brooklyn House of D
Dannemora, Sing Sing, Attica, Greenhaven
Twenty years inside, today you're freeYou cannot even read your story
The pages piling up in shame
Before the words released you
The guard would kill the light
The night you took The Capeman for your nameI was born in Puerto Rico
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