Surviving The Times

Nas

But that's the whole tragic point, my friends
What, what would I do if I could suddenly feel
And to know once again that what I feel is real?
I could cry, I could smile, I might lay back for awhile
Tell me what, what would I do if I could feel you?I was young, I was survivin' the times
Waitin' for my moment, I was destined to shine
Little Ray had an NSX, I was hopin' I'm next
Wantin' bracelets, never had a rope on my neck
Unless I was holdin' Taiyeh chain 'Rest In Peace'Even though that night you flipped on us, you warned us
If you came back and we still on the corners, we goners, movin' on to
Move your arm and your watch to another time on the block
'Cause this 40 Side where they say shorty rhyme
Tragedy he used to come through all the timeI'm talkin' Juice Crew, not what the word define
He had a sister named Erin, for sure was fine
That was my first crush, I bought my first mic
I wrote my first verse, I was about nine
I was about mine, fantasize house-buyin'Met Paul, he wore some big glasses
Him and Melquan took me where G Rap lived
I was happy, just gettin' some answers
I ain't even know what a record advance wasI'm seein' hoes sex in the studio bathroom
With rap dudes, thinkin' wow, she moved me
Same girl then, right now's a groupie
Back then she was like the star in the movieLarge jewelry and expensive Gucci
Next stop, Paid In Full posse recruits me
Knew they were some millionaires, their ropes were dookie
Eric B man lookin' like touch it he shoot meYou see, every time Ra didn't show
I get to record demos at attempts to blow
I wonder could they tell, how did they know
Sixteen years later, here I goWhat, what, what would I do?
What, what, what would I do?
What, what, what would I do?
What, what, what would I do?I'm with Akinyele in the street, tryin' to get us a deal
G Rap tried to get us to sign to Cold Chill
But Fly Ty didn't have the contract we wanted
Clark Kent just signed Das, he didn't want usRussell said I sounded like G, the nigga fronted
Reef and Matty C offered me a little money
Shit, a little funny, feel a little laughter
Rebel of hip-hop comin' through a white rapperMy boy MC Serch nevertheless
Took me to Columbia, back then CBS

Chris Schwartz, RuffHouse, he was the best man
Now buggin' 'cause the label had just dropped Def JamCould you picture Russell needin' a check, man?
But he smart, he plotted a plan for Polygram
Life is ill, again life's a movie
Then, the roster's Cypress Hill, Nas, and FugeesBefore I sold records, no promotion
The rap world like, what's all this commotion?
Went plat', mad bottles I'm toasting
20/20 hindsight, but how did they know thenWhat, what, what would I do?
What, what, what would I do?
What, what, what would I do?
What, what, what would I do?Invincible, lyrical, miracle man, huh
But back to the matter at hand
'Cause ten years ago we all strived to be twenty-five
Some cats didn't make it aliveDated some stars but respect their privacy
Copped mad cars, layin' back in the driver's seat
Held myself down, just steerin' the wheel
Here I am, completed my whole record dealWhat, what, what would I do?
What, what, what would I do?
What, what, what would I do?
What, what, what would I do?What would I do if I could reach inside of me?
And to know how it feels to say, I like what I see

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