Surviving the Times

Nas

But that's the whole tragic point, my friends
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 a while
Tell me what (what) what would I do
If I could feel?I was young, I was surviving the times
Waiting for my moment, I was destined to shine
Little Ray had an NXX, I was hoping I'm next
Wanting bracelets, never had a rope on my neckUnless I was holding 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, moving on to
Move your arm in your watch
To another time on the block
'Cause this 40 Side Where they said Shorty rhymeTragedy, he used to come through all the time
I'm talking 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 micI wrote my first verse, I was about nine
I was about mine, fantasize house-buying
Met Paul, he wore some big glasses
Him and Melquan took me where G Rap livedI was happy, just getting some answers
I ain't even know what a record advance was
I'm seeing hoes sex in the studio bathroom
With rap dudes, thinking wow she moved meSame girl then, right now's a groupie
Back then, she was like the star in the movie
Large jewelry and expensive Gucci
Next stop, Paid In Full posse recruits meKnew they were some millionaires, their ropes were dookie
Eric B man looking like touch-it-he-shoot-me
You see, every time Ra didn't show
I get to record demos at attempts to blowI wonder could they tell, how did they know
Sixteen years later, here I go[Chorus: x 4]
What would I do?I'm with Akinyele in the street, trying 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 coming through a white rapperMy boy MC Serch nevertheless

Took me to Columbia, back then CBS
Chris Schwartz, RuffHouse, he was the best man
Now bugging because the label had just dropped Def JamCould you picture Russell needing 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 then[Chorus]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, laying back in the driver's seat
Held myself down, just steering the wheel
Here I am, completed my whole record deal[Chorus]What would I do?
If I could reach inside of me?
And to know how it feels to say
"I like what I see..."

Songwriters
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