

# Rare Portraits

## Talib Kweli

Gravitas, light it up  
Lighten it up, brighten it up, yea  
You want the grown step your bars up  
You brag about the scrilla them killas lighten your cars up  
Welcome to the complete history of the one known as Talib Kweli  
Such a blessing, I'm making the bread leven  
Descendant of Terra Firma  
I'm from the era of legend  
The blind to my eyesight  
Too scared of the world ending  
My men of spiritual essence be walking right into heaven  
Ascending without the stairs, expressing without the fears  
We diamonds but our minds are corrupted just like De Beers  
Unravelling minds, travelling through time like langoliers  
Standing with the flow like the man in the gondolier  
In the park of Washington Square, locks in my hair  
Louder than the bull horns we was locking 'em there  
Cops would prepare to lock us up  
They was scared like tales from the dark side  
Summer of the Central Park five 1989 was the number, the year that I started rhyming  
From Brooklyn to Staten Island them Decepticons was wildin'  
Music soothing but the imagery violent as bomb threats  
Therapy for the prison industrial complex  
Provided the context for the crime with the tec nine  
At Brooklyn Tech I spit it the best so they had to respect mine  
I did it to death on my grind on a quest to get signed  
Sorta like the tribe would always suggest we check the rhyme  
An internal with Puff Daddy, in front of the buffed patio  
Rolling with Hi Tek in the MPV through the streets of the 'Nati  
Before graduating to Caddies was carrying crates  
Shoutout to Flex all day doing records with John Forte  
We was standing outside the tower devouring prey  
Powerful display of bullet points that we shower and spray the block with  
Back in them salad days these rappers was appetizers  
I played it like I was David, I was tackling that Goliath  
Attacking the open mics to the victory was decisive  
This life it was so enticing, my surgery so precise  
I would chop it like thin slices at parties we politic  
At the country club, lighting up dutches with Pac and Big  
At the crib of supernatural battling back and forth

Back before Jean was in the unsigned hype in the back of The Source

Rest in peace to Allah's sons

Shabba was liking to call you son

Cause you mine I call you son cause you shine

What's up Alyasha, this is OG Brooklyn shit

Not for impostors, pour out a shot of vodka for them

Big L, Big Poppa, Big Pun, 2Pac

The jungle is too savage, rap true master producing the new classic

This shit is too classic it's blow to [?] to spinal tap

I started with the Rawkus Recording we work the vinyl backwards

From DEF JUX to Loaded Lux

I'm the underground king like I'm rolling with Bun and [?]

The flow is nuts it's solid I got the golden touch

Plus my iron sheek and I got the game and the cobra clutch

This the highest calibre do the algebra

From Yasiin Bey to Jean Grey to Pharoahe Monch

Black Thought to Common

Almost 20 years after the release of Soundbombing

And it still sounds timeless

I'm out and on tour with the greatest, A Tribe Called Quest

And the De La's, opened for Jay Z and Nas, who else could say this?

In Vegas with Tech 9 getting faded before the gig

Only later to hit the RIO and hop on the stage with Prince

True story, I always knew the importance of great shows

Since 1992 I seen Ice Cube play [?], way cold

Continue to pave the road for the Kendricks and J Coles

Continue to stake gold

From making the way for Kanye to meetings with Mr. Harry Belafonte

All started on park benches with Dante

Predicting the future, so observant I'm clairvoyant

The frame can't contain it, I'm painting a rare portrait

Songwriters

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