

Fatalist

In the aftermath of the 2003 invasion of Iraq what finally got my pen moving was the report that US army strategists had rushed to protect the Iraqi Oil Ministry, but had neglected the National Museum, and looters had pillaged or destroyed the ancient artifacts within, including most of the tablets containing the Epic of Gilgamesh, the oldest surviving written narrative.

I've gotta make a list of reasons why I'm not a fatalist
That's not a way to live with the weight of this world the way it is
Whether you push paperclips for the sake of your kids
Or shake your tits and wait tables for minimum wage and tips
Or relax in a state of bliss, trapped in the Matrix
Watching the latest clips of fallen dictatorships
Eating potato chips with flavourless dips
But to achieve weightlessness, you must believe you created this
Whether it's done consciously or unconsciously
Whether you walk nonchalantly or run constantly
Whether you live under palm trees or march to the drum's beat
Complicity comes back to haunt your sleep
And pride and obstinacy, like monsters, creep
Inside these songs of freedom the soul longs to speak
You gotta sow if you wanna reap; still, karma runs deep
Sometimes you can't see the cause of cosmic grief

In the East, soldiers roam with raging hormones
With radiophones they bring the sword to stones
And lay poor bones to decay in war zones
As the oldest poems and ancient lore known
Gets ignored and thrown on the floor when the door's blown
Looters roar home; there's no more shalom
A sore groan rises from inside the Sorbonne
As another throne tries for the glory of Rome
And when the mousetraps close, send in the backhoes
And start drillin' the plateaus, lookin' for black gold
Wherever the map shows gas, tank tracks go
G. I. Joe attacks... Damascus ho!
It's like, first to act, last to know, ain't that so
But even the biggest assholes and total wackos
Must have souls that reflect the supernatural
They just catch colds and forget about the macro

Spirit sickness grows deep as we dig ditches
And pig pen pits, asleep to the big pictures
And even those who witness the sickness just get suspicious
And turn to scriptures lookin' for reasons to burn witches

There's so many pernicious ways to earn riches
And so many kitchens bursting with vermin and dirty dishes
I hope the first thirty-six courses were delicious
And worth the risk, 'cause dessert'll be vicious
Like a circle with the center waitin' patient for penetration
Like a flag incineration on a day of veneration
In a veteran's parade, afraid of intimidation
A sleeping dragon's been awakened and the next generation
Will face the implications and waste their innovations
Building gates to defend nations against the hateful vengeance taken
On the same men impatient to put limitations
On reproductive freedom and call it bush administration

April 2003

© Baba Brinkman