

Mortiis

"A Soldier's Dream"

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(Mos Def speaking)

I'm not gon sing a song or nothing.

Um, what that term they call it post traumatic stress syndrome? That thing that
Uh, soldiers will get. I think a lot of people get that. It's like when you
Experience somethin and uh, it affects you for a long time afterwards. I guess
Everything works that way. Certain things have more impact than others.
Sometimes it visits you in your dreams or when you're quiet or just at peace or
Trying to be at peace. A lot of soldiers get it. A lot of common people get
It. A lot of the time common people are soldiers, that's just the way it works
Out.

This is a soldier's dream

The other night I was tumbling towards an uneasy sleep
When I had discovered myself
Atop the sweet sticky firmament of my dreams.
Daybreak came and discovered me
With my fantasies pasted to my face.

I can't look at you right now.
"Show me your eyes," she says.
"Later," he says. "Now, now." "NO!"

Shame is a prison you know.
Yeah, well discretion is a fortress
You're starin and lookin too closely.
There's so much about me that I hide
That careful eyes will recognize.
If you look closely you'll notice
That the pattern on this soft cloth shirt
Is made of workin men's sweat
And prayin folk's tears.

If you look closer you'll notice
That this pattern resembles
Tenement row houses, project high rises,
Cell block tiers,
Discontinued stretches of elevated train tracks,
Slave ship gullies, acres of tombstones.
If you look closer, you'll notice
That this fabric has been carefully blended
With an advanced new age polymer (oh man, that's
nice)
To make the fabric lightweight
Weatherproof, and durable.
All this to give some sort of posture and dignity
To a broken body that is a host for scars.
I am the new landmark. I am the museum of injury.
Soldiers visit me and admire me quietly,
Whispering amongst themselves. You're no soldier.
Your soft bright eyes never have to
Survey the battlefield,
Much less it's collected relics of which, I am one.
So, my flesh bullet-ridden remains hidden
Underneath these soft fabrics
Which I carefully select
That stand in for how I used to feel,
For how I remember feeling,
For how I dream about feeling,
For how I feel about you.
And now your curious fingers want to search
Beyond this tender armor.
I can't look at you right now

(This is my rifle there are many like it but this one is
mine) 2x

Your eyes are too careful,
Collecting it all arranging it all;
Surgically, robotically, exactly.
I can't look at you right now
But that doesn't matter because
You can look at me and the longer that
I don't return your gaze,
The harder that your gaze
Starts to run across my back
Like a nervous policeman's hands:
Brisk, intent, anxious for discovery.
If discretion is a fortress
Then you're threatening to destroy it
By simply standing at the gates
And refusing to leave.
I can't look at you right now,
But you can look at me. Do you see me?

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