

We Shall Rise

To Maya Angelou

Sami Al-Arian (2005)

Like the dream of the slave

You rise
And with the scream of the brave
I shall rise

In honoring the memory of your
ancestors
You rise
With my stateless brothers and sisters
I shall rise

Like dust in the sunlight
You rise
And as ashes in a fiery night
I shall rise

You offend
Because of your existence
And I
For my resistance

You upset them
Recalling their past
And I
By holding steadfast

They may trod you in dirt
May cause me all the hurt
Inflict upon you excruciating pain
While they shut me up and detain
But they won't see you broken
Neither would my faith be forsaken

As you've never bowed your head
And never lowered your eyes
I'll continue to raise my fist
And hide my mother's cries

They may shoot you with their words
Cut me up with their swords
They may insult you with their eyes
Denigrate me with their lies
Trying to kill you with their hate
Bury me alive to seal my fate

But they'd certainly
Be shamed and fail
As the free chant and sing
On their march to prevail

So keep your head held high
As I follow you and try
And keep your beautiful smile
As I walk my first mile

They'll pressure and blame
Throw us in prison to control and tame
They'll exile and defame
Lynch us all or shoot and maim
Burn crosses with no shame
Target our children in a dirty game

But why is that a surprise?
Despite their evil and terror
Their falsehood and lies
You shall rise
And I shall rise

You're the black ocean
Leaping and wide
I'm the Mediterranean
With a stormy tide
Staying together
Side by side

It's no surprise
We shall rise
Surely shall rise
We together shall rise

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