

Stand Buy Me

After graduation I renounced the life of a scholar and started promoting myself as a performer, which lead to some initial inner conflict about the artist-as-commodity.

I don't want to be free; I want you to buy me
Or at least sample me; come on, try me
Where's your brand loyalty? Stand by me
'Cause I let my livelihood define me

I'm in love with love itself, and nothin' else
I got some skills but I still feel like I'm covered in filth
I suffer in silence as science struggles to discover the wonder pill
Or five-hundred-mil potion designed to peel me open
And melt the frozen ocean within
To remind me of a time when I still felt emotion
Before my life was defined by self-promotion
I kneel with a child's devotion at the altar of fame
And inhale the foul smoke with open bronchial veins
And a smile on my face as I stoke the cauldron's flames
And I know you'll probably say that it's all part of the game
But I still thought it was strange when I started to change
And forgot my friends' names reachin' up to the stars
Now what they are is customers who pay a cover charge
And make sure my hunger for praise doesn't starve
So my love is under guard and locked in the yard
I'm talkin' hard, barkin' like a dog or a prisoner
Afraid to admit that all I want is a visitor
That isn't a business call or product distributor
But the path is blocked like a neurotransmitter inhibitor

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I'm probably dense – obviously
I've got a lot less common sense than a lot of men
Trapped in a state of REM
I can't seem to comprehend what it takes to create
An audience, and the consequence
Is a lot of empty seats at shows and no
Spot on MTV or top-ten CD
I'm an MC that flows with a lot of intensity
But when it comes to promotions there's no one as dense as me
With anti-social tendencies my over-dependence

On donated energy is the only pretense I need
To keep me from standing in the streets
Handing out leaflets to random people
Which keeps me from landing on my feet
And at the end of the week when my expenses exceed
My income, and then some, my only excuse
Is a list of the things that I didn't do
Missed opportunities and lost revenues
Probably 'cause I acted like a kid and refused
To pay my limited dues, so now I'm singin' the blues

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It's a no-brainer; I can't say it any plainer
I'm from the olden days, a golden-age entertainer
I stole a page from my favourite book when I was an English major
And translated it, so I'm known as an innovator
I'm energetic when I take centre stage, like a generator
Venerated like a sage, enraged like a demonstrator
Crazed with indignation 'cause my cause is so just
I'm dedicated to makin' crowds applaud and go nuts
And my shows are sensational, but nobody shows up
And so my temptation is to just stop and close up
Shop and go back to composing dope cuts
Alone with no fuss, and ignore the drive
That I was born with to perform live
I'd rather be poor and live a normal life
Than go on tour and watch foreigners form lines
And swarm like flies or hornets to the hive
To hear my subordinates' boring rhymes
While I'm ignored at shows with forty-five
Seats where four or five people compete
For the door prize, just 'cause I'm disorganized

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