

BEFORE YOU WERE BORN

I could memorize my poems
and declaim them from stages
in avant-garde spaces and
coffee house traces of
somebody else's ideas
and call it performance art,
but I already did that
before you were born.

I could put them on stages as a one-man show
or in the mouths of pros and blow you away
with the passion story of my life
and call it avant-garde post-modern
deconstructivist language theater,
but I did that too, when you
were still in grade school.

I could live on the streets
sleep in abandoned buildings
drink cheap rotgut
take whatever drugs are offered
and tell you to go fuck yourself
when you tell me to give up
the life of a poet and get a job,
but I already did that
before you were a gob of spit
hanging from the lip of
Charles Bukowski who had a
nice secure job at the post office back then.

I paid so many dues for the life of
the poet I lived, I once nailed all my shoes
to a board and called it art and then
tore it apart so I could wear them again.

I suffered, I starved, and so did my kids,
I did what I did for poetry I thought
and I never sold out and even when I did
nobody bought.

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(from the CD "Lost Angels")