

# Civil Obedience

Sage Francis

And you'll know it was me by the trail of demos  
Spare me the details, e-mails, memos  
Dookie-gold chain letter to whom it may concern  
Put this around your neck until your hangin on my every word

Stalkin', walkin' in my big black boots  
I'm the DLY artist with thick grass roots  
Had a couple managers as a youth  
I was too young to know better but I was like  
"What does a manager do?"  
Now one of them he saw dollar signs in my skin color  
The other, he said to keep it undercover  
Post-VIP Posse, Pre-Internet Nazi era  
Powers of suggestion suggested I be what I'm not and that's not me ever  
From Lasienega to Meadowbrook Drive  
Never looked surprised  
Cut to the chase with metal hooks and knives  
Now it's battle time, I stepped in the arena  
Thirteen year old gladiator freak with a fever for the flavor of a fight on  
the mic  
Follow the leader  
Mistachuck was the surrogate father  
Krs-One, the teacher  
There I was, sneakin into clubs  
Beat an emcee to the punch over instrumentals dubbed  
From tape deck to tape deck  
Pause tape mix at breakneck speed  
The only whitey in sight  
That doesnt make me realer than you, or faker than you  
But I'm authentic, forget it  
Started breakin rules  
Ten years later still hadnt stopped  
Won the biggest battle in a Metallica shirt before the album dropped  
A week later, smashed the trophy at a show  
It was takin up the space that I needed to grow

Pop pop goes the weasel (the weasel)  
Drop drop goes the easel (the easel)  
This is hip hop for the people  
Stop callin it emo (waah)

I know a kid who thinks he's hip hop cause he buys it  
I know a kid who thinks he's hip hop cause he never buys shit  
Underground or mainstream  
Some are bound to change schemes  
Y'all weren't doin this dirt  
When Jeru came clean

Before the Freddie Foxxx conflict with DMX  
Around the time Jay-Z and Nas's girl had sex  
I used to wake up every morning on a hard wooden floor  
Livin in Brooklyn with a car I couldnt afford  
And if I wasn't hangin out in front of Fat Beats records, I was in the facto  
ry, mailing my 12-inches  
Nowadays, the DJs don't even spin wax  
So fuck a promo copy, buddy, you can download the track  
Seratooo promo sexual laptop

A hollow existence in a bottle  
Ya' sip sip and swallow  
I tripped quick then followed a path that made sense  
Started out with a live band then worked with turntablists  
Now I strike a match with the back of my front teeth  
And light up the stage with just speech

I remember the days Ken and Dave let me crash on their couch  
And I saved what I could and put the cash in my mouth  
When I played in my hood I had a fraction of outs  
Til Atmosphere put me on and now I'm packin the house  
Since the mid-80s this has been a game of cat and mouse  
It's funny hearin all the shit these rappers brag about  
Knowin all of them are walkin around with massive doubts  
Talkin bout it's only status and platinum plaques that count

Pop pop goes the weasel (the weasel)  
Drop drop goes the easel (the easel)  
This is hip hop for the people (the people)  
Stop calling it emo (wah)

Irony is dead, it's so motherfucking dead, I was there by it's deathbed  
And the last words that it said  
Was "Whiiiiite boyyyyy"

I'm Still Sick with an independent record labek  
I built quick just when I got Sick of Waiting Tables  
Then in the blink of an eye I waged War  
As a Known Unsoldier with a soul you can't pay for  
I ran a business on my own two legs  
Known to beg if I needed to with Home Grown bootlegs.  
I cut and pasted images of my face and then sloppily placed 'em in a case. S  
trange Famous. I stayed True when School was in Session.  
Went to college to buy time, that shit was expensive.  
So I shamelessly self-promoted  
The radio station would open doors and opportunities  
Eventually made it to Oakland where anticon accepted me with open hands  
Journals fot Personal on a one dollar advance.  
Non-Prophets had a hope that a UK label smashed, so I crossed out my eyes an  
d signed to Epitaph  
This is the hustle of an emcee  
The Distrust is Healthy  
In a dirty industry where the promises are empty  
I'm more honest than friendly  
More handsome than sexy  
Let me bring you up to speed, Humans do a Dance that's Deadly