

FRED COGSWELL

## The Boy I Was

The boy I was had heart-strings wrung  
By words like 'Whore' and 'Fuck' and 'Damn.'  
When others spoke, I held my tongue.  
This silence made the man I am,

For words can be a part of all  
That use them and the things they quote  
Grow up as free and natural  
As are the horns on any goat.

My silence grew a rift in me  
Between the badness and the good.  
What others were I could not be  
But never ceased to wish I could,

Which makes a simple thing like sex  
Become incredibly complex.