

# SEVEN MOOD-SHARDS FOR AN OPERA BUFFO

For FA

## I PRELUDE

*She's admirable in every way  
But speaks not yeah nor nay  
She'll not respond to any thing  
that doesn't pull her string  
(Although the muse be summoned -- hey!  
you can't just make her sing...)  
Yet still I hover, still I ling-  
-er, hoping we might meet  
among the roses that once lay,  
two leg-lengths from her feet.*

## II INTERSONNET

How still my phone,  
how mute voice-mail:  
No message there  
but old and stale  
and when I check it  
I must fail  
to hear the voice  
I long to hail.

And yet in Bar-  
celona's murk  
a hundred inter-  
net nodes lurk  
where Australasian,  
Yank and Turk  
converge, museum-  
time to shirk,

glare at the screen  
and click to pass  
photons through na-  
notubes of glass.  
These fly, like kestrels  
swooping down,  
whilst I can only  
dream, with sighs  
of sucking, in  
the fornix  
of your thighs  
the life-giving elix-  
ir in your down.

### III MARBLE

Once, long ago, in Italy, alone  
with Roman marbles, I kissed the lips of Venus.  
And on my tongue her lips were firm and cold,  
her beauty undisturbed, her stare unmoved  
by pressure of my lust. And I thought, then,

*My perfect love once found would be like this:  
white marble uncorrupted by my kiss.*

I did not then imagine how the heart  
must from warm living flesh first have been torn  
before the marble by the sculptor's art  
as Venus, and immortal, could be born

I did not then imagine how within  
the placid marble a lost heart remained  
that had not wanted to be turned to stone  
nor locked, unmoved, in marble, and alone.

#### IV PERSEPHONE

*Who would have thought my shrivelled heart  
Could have recovered greenness? It was gone  
quite underground...*

*George Herbert*

Before I met you the old myths of Earth,  
of Hades or Persephone, rebirth  
of goddesses lost in dark winter's night  
meant nothing to me. Their quaint antique might  
once awesome, now seemed but of little worth  
a topic for light anecdotal mirth.

But I knew nothing then of the dark blight  
that can sink like a Zeppelin to its berth  
upon a cheerful heart and choke it tight  
a black and freezing cloud, with weight and girth  
smothering hope, extinguishing delight.

O may the yearning love with which I burn  
melt ice to blood, and herald your return,  
O my Dark Princess, O my Queen of Light.



## **VI UNMAKING WAVES:**

(with theft from IR)

In quest of unimagined More  
these waves had travelled far, enrapt,  
upon unfathomed seas where they would long  
for deeper swells to make them yet more strong.  
Now, faltering in the shallows, sapped  
of strength, they sputtered as they lapped  
muttering some half-forgotten song,  
upon the desultory shore.

## VII ORBIT: AN EPILOGUE

*in the past  
there has been too much moonlight and self-pity*  
Philip Larkin

Your orbit singed me like a burning star  
I trembled at how close, and at how far  
Our souls could touch, and veer. Perhaps I lacked  
The wisdom to know fantasy from fact

And of how stubbornly trifles can mar  
Our sense of what we want and who we are:  
Tripping on the chains of our freedoms' pact  
I scarcely ever quite knew how to act.

The wordy quips wrought by my feeble art  
To celebrate our faith in Love as Lark  
Lie impotent now that we lie apart

Yet nothing can erase the cherished mark  
Your brief comet-love etched deep in my heart  
Like frozen lightning in the looming dark.

