

Joanna Newsom, Sawdust & Diamonds

From the top of the flight
Of the wide white stairs
Through the rest of my life
Do you wait for me there?

There's a bell in my ears
There's a wide white row
Drop a bell down the stairs
Hear it fall forever more
Hear it fall forever more

Drop a bell off of the dock
Blot it out in the sea
Drowning mute as a rock
Sounding mutiny

There's a light in the wings
Hits this system of strings
From the side while they swing;
See the wires, the wires, the wires

And the articulation
In our elbows and knees
(makes them jerk in the breeze)
Makes us buckle and we couple in endless increase
As the audience admires

And the little white dove
Made with love, made with love
Made with glue and a glove and some pliers

Swings a low sickle arc
From its perch in the dark
Settle down
Settle down
Settle down my desire

And the moment i slept
I was swept up in a terrible tremor
Though no longer bereft, how i shook
And i couldn't remember
And then the furthestmost shake
Drove a murdering stake in
And cleft me right down through my center
And i shouldn't say so
But i know that it was then or never

Push me back into a tree
Bind my buttons with salt
Fill my long ears with bees
Braying 'please, please, please,
Oh you ought not!
No you ought not!"

And then this system of strings
Tugs on the tip of my wings
Cut from cardboard and old magazines
Makes me warble and rise like a sparrow

And in the place where i stood
Is a circle of wood
A quarter to which you chop and you stack in your barrow

And it is terribly good

To carry water and chop wood
Streaked with soot, heavy booted and wild-eyed

As i crash through the rafters
And the ropes and the pulleys trail after
And the holiest, holiest belfry burns sky high

And then a slow lip of fire
Moves across the prairie with precision
While somewhere with your pliers and glue
You make your first incision
And in a moment of almost unbearable vision
Doubled over with the hunger of lions
'Hold me close', cooed the dove
Who was stuffed now with sawdust and diamonds

I wanted to say 'why the long face?'
(slowly slip away with your long face)
Sparrow perch and play songs of long face
Burro buck and bray songs of long face
Sings 'i will swallow your sadness and eat your cold clay
Just to lift your long face
And though it may be madness, i will take to the grave
Your precious long face
& though our bones they may break & our souls separate
Why the long face?
And though our bodies recoil from the grip of the soil
Why the long face?'
(it was not my mistake,
It was not your miskate;
There is a bell beneath the lake
And verily the spell begins to break
And verily the spell begins to break)

In the trough of the waves
Which are pawing like dogs
Between pale-faced and grave
As i write in my log
And then i hear a noise from the hull
Seven days out to sea
And it is the damnable bell
And it tolls, i believe, that it tolls
It tolls for me!
And it tolls for me!

And though my wrists and my waist
Seem so easy to break
Still my dear i would have walked you to the edge of the water

And they will recognise
All the lines of your face
In the face of the daughter, of the daughter, of my daughter

And darling we will be fine
But what was yours and mine
Appears to be a sandcastle that the gibbering wave takes

But if it's all just the same
Then say my name, say my name,
Say my name in the morning so that i know when the wave breaks

I wasn't born of a whistle
Or milked from a thistle at twilight
No, i was all horns and thorns
Sprung out fully formed, knock-kneed and upright

So enough of this terror we deserve to know light
And grow evermore lighter and lighter
You would have seen me through
But i could not undo that desire

Oh-oh, oh-oh-oh desire
Oh-oh, oh-oh-oh desire
Oh-oh, oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh desire

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