

Sonnets III-VI (The Ishtar Sonnets)

by M. F. Sullivan

III.

With porc'lain hand she writes thy thankless verse
Like Proserpina, strapped to eb'ny throne,
Eternally paying the six-month purse
For hunger once soothed with but seeds alone.
Yet wise was she to eat just those atoms
And thus abort the coming of their fruit:
Six sickly trees, ovum flesh like cat tongues
Would be filled up with poison from their roots.
That Proserpina took on her this pain
While eschewing food to stave off hunger
Makes her a sort of savior, for it's plain
Without wisdom, she would be there longer.
 Self-saved was she, and savior yet of men:
 Come out, Kore, and see the light again!

IV.

You thank me now, but thank me better then!
You've yet to see what I can do for you,
And though you quiver like a clucking hen
I've yet to show you power precious few
Men could know without coming to madness,
For well they lack your basic self-respect.
E'en now I craft reward for your patience
To crown right choices which you would elect.

But don't forget to credit this yourself,
For though the poems are made in her name,
Her writing them for you will bring you wealth:
Your fealty to her will bring you fame.

Steadfast soul, noble, devoted to me!
Venerate her, and she will rescue thee.

V.

How does the wheel turn, my little girl?
You made of that this morning your request,
And though it's true Destiny would unfurl
By means of no man but her own behest,
Fate's not unkind to those who venerate
Her generosity and wily means:
Fortuna shines on those who would create
Odes meant to crystallize their long-held dreams.
In this, you follow a great path once trod
By those who glanced it—yes, that lucky few.
You've wandered it, unknowing and unshod,
And so it's time to give my gift to you:

All pens are golden in your winsome hand,
So soon you'll reach a signpost in this land.

VI.

O Queen of Heaven, That Art Thou Art I!
Your thunder crackles clear across this land:
No virgin Kore, but scourge of Enki
Who claimed from him the Me to give to man.
Yet take from man his life you may well just
As sacrificed as your husband, a lamb
Given over to slaughter for your lust

Or Gilgamesh's ill-fated right hand:
Twice generous, then, are all gifts from you
Whose lapis iris wets the oceaned world
That to my honor, in me you'll work through
My hands, so that bright future I'll unfurl.
 These short poems, Ishtar recommended
 With that confession, this song has ended.

