

## The Stage

The first word that an actor says on stage  
Must have the power to make you all his own  
And draw you to a world that is not yours  
So that the situation which you see  
Is more your own than any life you live.

You are brought out so that with every breath  
You search for meaning in the words you hear  
And if the actor then should draw his hand  
Across his face, you are compelled to ask  
Is this some unexpected thing he does  
Or has he lost his line and played for time.

He pauses all composed and turns to face  
The audience, who wait, caught in suspense.  
He smiles a little; then he bends to kiss  
His mistress, who without a single word  
Is all the tender ecstasy of love.

Off stage, the horses canter. Dusk has come.  
A lute is played. The lovers fall in death.  
The curtain hovers. It begins to fall;  
And silence slowly walks across the stage.  
We sit wrapped up, completely lost to view  
To all we know; how we should live each day.  
This is the sovereign power, which is the play  
When lovers leave the letters on a page  
And we step out to join them for a while.

EWAN MACPHERSON