

To a Nightingale

by [Michael Shindler](#) (July 2024)



The Nightingale Sings, Mikhail Vasilievich Nesterov (1919-23)

You sang to Keats
So happy
In the Roman streets
And then
To Shelley
Full fathom five
Where the sun meets
The Tyrrhenian Sea.

But to revive
And hear it again,

That simple song in waning light,
The triumph of comedy
In the night,

In the stillness, the silence
The lull in the light's violence
In the dark, with the dead,
In hearts given to dread:

Sing a song
Brownish bird,
Sad and long,
Without a word;

Sing, muse to muses,
And more to men,
With uses and abuses
To hear again;

Sing, to hear and
Never forget;
To survive
And say amen,
But stand
In debt;

Sing, color the air
Without a country,
Without a care,
In the night,
On the page,
To rhymer's delight,
On the stage,
On Good Friday,
In a bad play.

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