

Air

A short opera

Characters:

He – a tenor or a baritone

She – a soprano or a mezzo

Crowd – a choir or a smaller ensemble

Airport. The terminal is almost empty. Then people start to appear from every direction with their luggage.

CROWD

Air, air, in the air, air...

Airport terminal - terminal pain.

Maimed, maimed, maimed,

Named we are...

Hey! Again, again and again.

Main thing is wait (hate).

Straight ahead –

Ahead bits and pieces,

Pieces and bits -

Empty seats (unoccupied), empty time,

Empty time,

Hoarding time, time

Before boarding,

Borderline, boarding line,

Boarding line,

(Boarding) crowd – proud to (aroused by) wait(ing)

At a gate, at the gate

To heaven,

Heaven seventh...

Heaven seventh

At eleventh hour

Sour grapes for us (you)

Hating (dating, mating with) each other,

Throwing each other

Under the same, the same,

The same (insane) bus!

Us! Us! Us!

Two people come from the opposite sides, look at the gate number, notice each other, blush and seat down prepared to wait for boarding. He looks at her sneakily hiding behind the screen of his laptop afraid to appear weird.

HE

You... I like you... I like you?

I can't seem to look away...

I'm being ridiculous! (no clue)

We are grown-ups!

Us – we are grown-ups, adults...
Known ups and downs
In the cult, enter...
Altered... Altered...
All in the cult of likes –
Yikes!
Thumbs up and down
Up and down, down and up...
I'll never come,
Never come close to you.
Who are you? Who are you?
I can't seem to look away...
On my way up and down,
On my way... away, away...

She takes an apple out of her bag, notices him staring, drops the apple, and retrieves it awkwardly from under her seat. He moves to help her catch the apple but almost drops his laptop instead.

SHE

I'm dropping my apple,
You're dropping yours...
Falling, falling, falling...
All in!
I'm failing,
Falling, falling
Up and down
Up and down my mood scale.
Falling, crawling...
Sprawling on the floor...
Or? Or... Hey!
Stay, stay with me!
Stay with me, please,
My pleasure, my dream!
I'm at ease with you
My fear, my fear of new...
Pleasure of known,
I'm so at ease with you...
At so much ease with you.

He keeps hiding behind his screen very red in the face.

CROWD

Delayed! Delayed! Delayed!
Your flight is delayed!
The lady and the gentlemen!
Your flight's delayed!

HE *(not even noticing the delay)*

There's no way,
You wouldn't like me –
Anyway...
I need to know
Whether you'd liked me

In some realm, some day?
No way, anyway...
You'd swipe past me
Fast, fast, faster...
Cast me aside
I abide, I (we) abide

TOGETHER

By the rules,
By the rules of engagement
Of sorts of souls...
Of souls!

EVERYBODY

We try out, live together
Before stage's even set.
I bet, it's better
We'll be later,
We'll be late...

HE *(continues)*

I'm in a vortex of anxiety!
You thought I stared
I dared, I'm scared!
Oh, what despair!
I (we) can't look away...
Your face's like a magnet,
I feel hot!
Oh, is it hot here?
Or is it not...
Am I just an idiot?
No doubt!
No doubt I am!
An idiot!

CROWD

No doubt – you are!

A person with a huge suitcase comes dragging it over everyone's feet causing a commotion and a murmur of 'sorries' and 'it's o'ks' and 'no worries' and gloomy stares. The two people almost talk to each other but do not dare to eventually.

SHE

I have no clue!
Clueless, clueless me...
We? We...
Are we here?
In the mist of sheer bliss...
Of kisses,
Kisses and hugs...
Rug from under (my) our feet
Pulled.
Drugged, dragged away
All day. Every day.

Oh, what a drag!
Walking on eggshells
All day. Every day.
To brag, brag on the net,
On the tiny screens
Get kicked in the shins –
Each picture like a kick in'e shins.
That happens a lot.
What, what can I do?
Stay alone...
Stay true...
Stay true to myself,
To you.

She stands up and walks away.

HE

My name is login,
My name's a writing on a coffee cup
Up...
Up and down my throat
I brought it on myself...
Upon,
Upon myself sell...

SHE (*comes back with a cup of coffee*)

Sip, tweet and quip!
Quick, quick! Please,
Quickly disappear!
Dissolve all –
All feeling.
Reeling, reeling, reeling... (*together with the ensemble*)
All ink on my arms
Sums, sums, sums it up...
My body – carcass I live inside,
Soul's portable device,
My vice, my vice –
Ice princess – soul on ice.
Your eyes on me!
All eyes on me!
Your eyes see me –
Can't un-see!
Don't be coy!
Oh, joy! Oh, joy! Oh, joy?

EVERYBODY

Air we breathe,
Air we live in,
Air that goes through us...

PEOPLE IN THE CROWN ECHOING EACH OTHER

Delayed! Delayed!
Your (our), someone's flight's delayed!
Laid in front of you (us)

Left and right
Your (our) flight.
Out right...

ALL TOGETHER

Air we live in,
Air we breathe,
Air we stare through...

HE (*looks through a huge glass window at a slowly coming plain*)

Like a bird of prey
It'll devour us.
Pray, pray to the bird of prey.
(Bird of prey) will devour us...
And then *PUFF!*
Up in smoke and down in flames...
I shouldn't think that.
That's stupid, really!
Tepid, decrepit fear...
Oh, dear...

CROWD

Up in the air!
Let's go up in the air!

SHE AND HE (*echoing each other*)

What's her (his) name?!
What's my name?
What's her (his) name?!
We're the same!
(Are we the same?
We're so the same...
That's insane?)
Nothing's solid
It's all up in the air!

Everybody stand up and form a queue.

HE (*clumsily collecting his stuff*)

I'm such a loser!
Oh, yes, I am!
Damn!
Damn you – damn us...
Damn me more!
Damn me more!

The crowd is moving and they end up next to each other in the queue.

SHE

Damn it!
I don't want to live a movie script!
Stupid dramedy, dumb!
Meddling in our lives!
Reality –

Aching, abating, alienating.
I'm swearing and I'm sweating
As a result of all this.
As a result I'm hating myself...
And you!

HE

A bull in the china shop!
I'm the bull in the china shop
Who likes a bull in the china shop?
Another bull in the china shop!
Can there be two bulls in the china shop?
Can we be two bulls in the china shop?
Maybe?

CROWD

Can two bulls in the china shop
Make little calves in the china shop?
Will they?
They can, but will they?
Will they, then?

SHE and HE together

Shall we?
Do I want to?
Do I want to?
Do we want to,
Really?
Really, what do we want?

TOGETHER

Reality – subjective!
Subjects of
Our wishes, our dreams
They appear, they seem...
We see... We seem.
What is wrong with you?
What is wrong with me...

*The crowd is moving closer to the boarding gate. Finally, **SHE** and **HE** are next to the desk.*

AIRLINE EMPLOYEE

Place thirteen F.
And yours thirteen D!
Enjoy!
Your flight!
Have a nice one!
(I'm done! Oh, I'm so done!
None, none, none of you
Can understand,
Can get...
Game's set!

CROWD (in unison with 'game'): Lame!

Game's played... Game's played...
Get laid! Please, at least, get laid...

SHE

Hair on my arms stands!
To arms!

HE

I'm dead inside!
Mad at faith!
Alive!

SHE

So, alive!
Darn it!
To arms!
Hands won't help,
Mine're sweaty...

HE

Oh, my deity...
I'm ready!
Or am I?

CROWD

Please, proceed for boarding!
It's time to depart!
Be close, be one, be part!
Be apart...
Part of'e game've been played...
You seem to get it?
You seem to guess...
Second...
Always second-guess...

The crowd and our pair slowly move toward the boarding gate. HE and SHE look at each other sneakily...The sound trails away.

THE END?