

RUMINATIONS FROM SHINBONE ALLEY

once upon a time
there was a happy mailing list
that talked about irish music
where everyone loved each other
or wait maybe that s too strong
everyone respected one another
or wait another minute that s not right either
okay then how about this
colon
everyone put up with one another
more or less
and there were the occasional little disagreements
carried out in a gentlemanly slash womanly way
but the amount of acrimonious commentary
was low
and only one guy had the capability
of p asterisk asterisk ing everybody off
and i do mean everybody
once in a while
but he went somewhere else
thanks be to god
and we talked about tunes and modes and groups
and cars and school and good things to eat
oops sorry that s another list
the britney spears fanclub list
to which i also belong and no more need be said
on that particular topic
but getting back to the irish music list
as i said it was mostly pretty cool
but then something grotesque happened
and the way i figure it our beloved planet
must have passed through the tail of a comet
and humanity breathed in a hell of a lot
of noxious something or other
undetected by the usual instruments
and stuff started falling apart
and people didn t even pretend to like
or respect each other

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and there were big wars
and little wars
and little little wars
some of them were necessary
i suppose
but most were not
a music mailing list isn't the place
i humbly submit
for even the tiniest war
the vast booming sound we have heard
all too often recently
is the unhappy sound
of inflated egos crashing
off one another
like beachballs of pride
parenthesis
if i may be permitted the use
of a simile in this place and time
close parenthesis
the hissing noise that comes
from your faithful computer
is the serpentine sound of scorn
and dislike
and dare i say comma in some cases comma
envy question mark
discussion of the ornamentation
on b c boxes
for example
need not be the occasion for
vast expenditure of scornful wildean wit
not to mention precious
broadband
a simple question
about e period g period wexford trombone styles
need not result
in threats of banishment
or serious bodily harm
or innuendi about an individual's
sanity or sexual proclivities

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not every exchange
between rational individuals
need degenerate into
a three stooges cyber hyphen shtick
if you will pardon
the exotic reference
maybe the old saw
about not making ourselves look good
when we make somebody else look silly
is appropriate
carriage return line feed
so for heaven s sake
let s lay off the
posturing
let s call a halt
to the backbiting
let s agree that we all make
typographical errors
and similar faulty judgements
and move on with our lives
as mehitabel the cat said to me the other night
as she elegantly nibbled a fish head
outside the local session pub
where tunes were going hot and heavy
archie i cannot for the life of me
see
what these eejits have to fight about
even in my days as cleopatra
there was never music like that
when i was marie antoinette
it was nothing but quadrilles
and danses macabres
whatever they were
begod i d have given my emerald tiara
of which i had several
or a couple pounds of steak tartare
from the famed kitchens of versailles
for a ballyvourney jig set
sigh

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what can there be
for them to fight about
question mark
although mehitabel s moral code
is comma to put it kindly comma
flexible
her assessment of the present situation
is as usual correct
and when i last saw her
she was capering down the street
in the cold moonlight
trying to do a hornpipe step
on her three and a half legs
exclamation point
although i am a cockroach
i respectfully recommend
that you irtrad types
heed her words carefully
or risk losing something
that shouldn t be lost
the choice is yours
exclamation point
carriage return line feed
yours for more light comma less noise comma
and occasional application
of the golden rule
archie

with apologies to don marquis

