

SISTER ACT

Let the gleeful lover be on guard.  
Melpomene and Thalia are perverse twins  
who, giggling, sometimes swap their masks  
to hide behind false faces: One weary  
of man's embrace, one craving it.

Some swains are wise to the sibling game,  
their own a swaggering chase of chance.  
They trust amusement waits beneath  
the dolorous visage they follow:  
Her muffled laughter, half-skipping feet--  
it's Comedy, of course,  
sweet Thalia reveling in her old tricks.

One playful suitor grabs her sleeve.  
Black-hooded robe and baleful features fall,  
her uncovered countenance exactly  
the same. Her wiry fingers lock  
around his pulsing wrist; she, like he,  
amazed he doesn't resist her hollow eyes.  
Not even when honest Thalia dances by  
and pauses in the wings.

He casts her a sidewise glance, then doffs  
his cardboard smile and stays onstage  
beside Melpomene--the captor and captive,  
uncaring which is which  
but that they have each other, all.

--Glenna Holloway