

Dory Previn "Stone For Bessie Smith"

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isn't it amazing
shakes you to the bone
she bought a stone
for bessie smith
she bought bessie smith
a stone
she got it for
her grave-site
on a temporary loan
but she forgot
she had not paid
for her own
she forgot she had not paid
she forgot she had not paid
after all the contracts
and arrangements had been made
she went to bessie's grave
and marked it with a stone
but she still
had to pay for her own

she went home
to her class reunion
where a class-mate
he confessed
she wouldn't want this
getting out
but she used to be the best
in school she was a nice girl
as descent as the rest
though she never was
conservatively dressed

isn't it amazing
you think she could've known
she bought a stone
for bessie smith
she bought bessie smith
a stone
she got it for
her grave-site
on a temporary loan

but she forgot
she had not paid
for her own
she forgot she had not paid
she forgot she had not paid
no sooner had the letters
on the deed begun to fade
when her ashes had been scattered
been battered and been blown
she still had to pay
for her own
she knew
miss gloria swanson
on a tv show they met
they talked across
a hundred years
miss gloria's with us yet
but janis was a gambler
who'd already lost a bet
and the time had come
to settle up
her debt

isn't it amazing
shakes you to the bone
she bought a stone
for bessie smith
she bought bessie smith
a stone
she got it up
for bessie
on a temporary loan
but she forgot
she had not paid
for her own.

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