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Death of Beethoven

James Franklin Lewis

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TWO POEMS

DAWN IN THE STUDY

The blind is raised; and a yellow peel of sun
 Curls on the shelf-edge.
 It has crossed at a moss-green drying earth
 And a litter of flagstones here to my window-hole,
 To repeal my night of itself with shining lips.
 It has jarred over jostling workaday columns of cars
 Here to my shelf-edge.
 And onto the still strews of erratic erudition
 It worms little peels of a scented yellow star
 Through the foliage-filterwork deciduously.
 And finely unknown streamlets, scented cords,
 Twangs of yellow,
 Bind the old staid emissions of my shelf
 To the dawn-world yonder happening into morning,
 Of which but a yellowish coil of peel matures.
 But into these books I've read me many a night,
 Poised at the shelf-edge,
 Claiming the day's delayed pay in person,
 Large-visionedly. But a yellowish obligation
 Fingers. It counts round the room bright cycle.
 And I've learned me not but a day to unmark old place.

THE DEATH OF BEETHOVEN

I'm so happy to have found the solution to these chords.
 Or should I have mentioned words?
 As a matter of fact, the clattering cluttering gravel-drive
 Hums like bees in the hive.
 Fast wings on the citadel, too, have a clubby meaningful whir,
 Like the burr of mills that were.
 There's a certain reinstated historic meaning here,
 Like a splurge of whispered tear.

Or take that last inspired quartet he sawed in half
With the awful genius of a laugh.
I have heard his saw involving deep in the state-of-things,
More awfully than a music sings.

How solve these chords of laughter, which he killed and evoked?
In a rude state of mirth, he joked.
He sawed his barren mountain through a plenteous plain
Six months before he shook at pain.

There was thunder that night. Sky full of unmelodious chords,
Saw-thunder, bass-noise, Jovian words.
He cursed. He laughed some saw-brained laugh, and shook his fist.
Shook at the thunder. Laughed and hissed.

"Clap for me now. The comedy is over, friends,"
He said.—Biography defends
Against the curse of laughter, of romance, of great beauty dead
Men sniveled, whimpering on his head.

JAMES FRANKLIN LEWIS

THE ENEMY

The troubles of eternal mind
Are not resolved in earthly wrath;
But souls are weak, and force is blind
As hail that stones a woodland path.

Behold the tyrant and his chain!
He tugs the world against his breast,
And seeks to model forth his pain,
Or make the earth his viper nest.

Remember Hitler . . . when the form
Of Death grows murderous in men.
Remember Hitler . . . blood will storm
Until we walk free earth again.

LINCOLN FITZELL