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Hartman Cemetery, January, 1980

Bob De Smith Dordt College, bob.desmith@dordt.edu

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Hartman Cemetery, January, 1980

How mechanical the casket roller And the one-way catches that click Shut to hold the railed box so tight.

Six strong sons of sons
Lift equally the dead weight—
Six hundred pounds of flesh
And its accruements.

The undertaker utters quiet advice To six living, Advice as smooth and perfect As the muffled Motors which Whirr him into How regular a hole.

There is no spirit in it, Except for a chilly wind Which whisks The preacher's Benedicte To heaven.

Robert J. De Smith