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## Hartman Cemetery, January, 1980

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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