

MURDER AT MIDNIGHT

In Memoriam Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, Betrayed and Murdered In The American Class War, August 22, 1927.

I.

"Both are dead."

Dead.

Press the button. Turn on the juice.

Dead.

Waiting, waiting.

For what?

Two wops to sit down in a chair

And be dead.

Show's over.

Time to go home, go to bed.

Time to forget, put it out of your head.

Dead.

(Death. Grim Reaper. Symbolic. Cloak. Hood. Scythe.

Skull.)

Dead.

Both.

I walked out into the huge soft night.

No light.

Someone had strangled the stars.

II.

Seven years to make a shroud.

Seven years to make it strong enough

To hold the whole of life.

(Wonder how long it takes to make an electric chair?)

Seven years for two wops.

Dying.

Dead.

"Massachusetts is too proud——"

Seven years to make a shroud.

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III.

CITY

JAIL

HUNGER

WORKER

SUBWAY

DEMPSEY

BABE RUTH

JESUS

STRIKE

STARVATION

MURDER

DEATH

IV.

Three men in frock coats playing dice.

Three men and a fourth playing with skulls.

Fingers weblike and precise.

Caressing calmly the fluttering dice.

Harvard accents glide like gulls

From lips like nooses hard and strong.

What are the stakes? How long, how long?

Four men in frock coats playing dice.

Dice. Are they loaded?

Loaded. Bloated.

Four bloated frock coats playing with skulls.

V.

And on two faces hangs the mask

Of the immobile anguish of the years.

This is the honorable task

Of those unbitten by subtle doubts or fears.

Climb, you lousy wops, into your holes.

The god of the Fullers and Thayers will care for your souls.

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