SHIP OF DEATH

FOR BASS/BARITONE AND PIANO

POETRY BY D.H. LAWRENCE

MARTHA HELEN SCHMIDT
Ship of Death

Now it is autumn and the falling fruit
and the long journey towards oblivion.

The apples falling like great drops of dew
to bruise themselves an exit from themselves.

And it is time to go, to bid farewell
to one’s own self, and find an exit
from the fallen self.

Have you built your ship of death, O have you?
O build your ship of death, for you will need it.

The grim frost is at hand, when the apples will fall
thick, almost thunderous, on the hardened earth.

And death is on the air like a smell
of ashes!
Ah! Can’t you smell it?

And in the bruised body, the frightened soul
finds itself shrinking, wincing from the cold
that blows upon it through the orifices.

And can a man his own quietus make
with a bare bodkin?

With daggers, bodkins, bullets, man can make
a bruise or break of exit for his life;
but is that a quietus, O tell me, is it quietus?
Surely not so!

O let us talk of quiet that we know,
that we can know, the deep and lovely quiet
of a strong heart at peace!

How can we this, our own quietus, make?

Build then the ship of death, for you must take
the longest journey, to oblivion.

And die the death, the long and painful death
that lies between the old self and the new.

And everything is gone, the body is gone
completely under, gone, entirely gone.
The upper darkness is heavy as the lower,  
    between them the little ship  
        is gone  
    she is gone.  
It is the end, it is oblivion.

    Wait, wait, the little ship  
drifting, beneath the deathly ashy gray  
    of a flood-dawn.

    Wait, wait! even so, a flush of yellow  
and strangely, O chilled wan soul, a flush of rose.

A flush of rose, and the whole thing starts again.

The flood subsides, and the body, like a worn sea-shell  
emerges strange and lovely.  
And the little ship wings home, faltering and lapsing  
on the pink flood,  
and the frail soul steps out, into her house again  
filling the heart with peace.

    Swings the heart renewed with peace  
even of oblivion.

Oh build your ship of death, oh build it!  
for you will need it.  
For the voyage of oblivion awaits you.

    D. H. Lawrence

    Excerpts from *The Ship of Death*
Ship of Death
I. Bid Farewell

D. H. Lawrence

Martha Helen Schmidt

\[ q = 44 - 52 \]

Now it is autumn and the falling fruit and the long journey towards

\[ \text{living.} \]

The apples falling like great drops of dew to
bruise them-selves an exit from them-selves.

And it is time to

go, to bid fare-well to one's own self, and find an exit from the

fallen self, the fallen self.
Ship of Death
II. Have you built?

D. H. Lawrence

Martha Helen Schmidt

\( \sum \)
The grim frost is at hand, when the apples will fall thick, almost thunders, on the hard cold earth. And death is on the air like a smell of ashes!
Ah!

Can't you smell it?

And in the bruised body,

frightened soul finds itself shrinking, wincing

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Ship of Death
III. A strong heart at peace

D. H. Lawrence

Martha Helen Schmidt

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{O let us talk of } \text{qu} \text{iet that know, }\text{th} \text{at}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{we can know, the deep and love} \text{ly}
\end{align*}
\]
How can we this, our own quietus,
make?
Ship of Death
IV. The Longest Journey

D. H. Lawrence

\[ q = 120 - 132 \quad \text{Aggressive} \]

\[ \text{Build then the ship of death,} \]

\[ \text{for you must take the longest} \]

\[ \text{journey, to oblivion.} \]

\[ \text{And die the} \]

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death, the long and painful death that lies between the old self and the

ew, between the old self and the

new.
Ship of Death
V. Oblivion

D. H. Lawrence

\[
\text{\textit{Desolate and Dirge-like}} \quad \text{p}
\]

And everything is gone, the body is gone completely under, gone, entirely gone, entirely gone, totally gone. The upper darkness is

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Moving forward

heav - y as the lower,  

be - tween them the lit - tle ship is

Moving forward

gone,  

she

is gone.  

It is the
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Ship of Death
VI. Wait, wait!

D. H. Lawrence

Martha Helen Schmidt

Wait, wait, wait, wait, the little ship drifting,

beneath the deathly ashy gray of a flood-dawn.

Wait, wait! Wait, wait! even so,
a _ flush of yellow _ and strangely, O chilled wan soul, A

flush ____ of rose. _ A flush of rose ____ and the whole _

thing starts a gain. _
Ship of Death
VII. The soul steps out

D. H. Lawrence

\[ \frac{1}{2} \] 52 - 56  Tranquil

\textit{mp}

flood subsides, and the body, like a

worn seashell emerges strange and
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